

Local wisdom in online communities in various regions: A visual ethnographic review

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ABSTRACT=

The era of digitalization has changed the landscape of communication and social interaction in Indonesian society, creating a complex digital space where cultural values, traditions, and local wisdom accumulate in the frame of social media. This research aims to examine the manifestation of local wisdom in online communities in various regions of Indonesia and understand how traditional values adapt to digital technology without losing their cultural essence. This research is a qualitative study using a digital visual ethnography approach to seven locality-based online communities in four regions: @Merapi_Uncover and @Info Cegatan Jogja (Yogyakarta), @ics_infocegatansolo (Surakarta), @Infobandungraya and @infobandungkota (Bandung), and @garutupdate_ and @infogarut (Garut). Data collection was conducted through participant observation of community activities on Instagram and X (Twitter) platforms in the 2016-2025 time span, with qualitative analysis using categorization based on the manifestation of local wisdom. The results of the study identified five main dimensions of the transformation of local wisdom in online communities: (1) a non-profit orientation that adapts to commercial realities, (2) digital gotong royong manifested in sharing information and helping each other online, (3) transformation of community functions from a local focus to a multidimensional scope, (4) a digital greeting culture that maintains familiarity and kinship, and (5) the development of institutional cooperation that varies from informal collaboration to strategic partnerships.



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INTRODUCTION

The era of digitalization has fundamentally changed the landscape of communication and social interaction in Indonesian society. Social media is no longer just a platform for sharing information, but has evolved into a complex digital space where cultural values, traditions, and local wisdom accumulate within the framework of social media. This phenomenon creates a new dimension in understanding how local communities adapt to digital technology while maintaining their cultural identity and values that are deeply rooted in society. This transformation becomes even more significant as online communities based on locality begin to emerge as digital representations of social life in various regions.

Local wisdom in the context of social media can be understood as the manifestation of traditional cultural values, norms, and practices that are transformed and expressed through digital platforms. This concept encompasses how online communities use local languages, cultural symbols, communication ethics that reflect local values, and social solidarity mechanisms that adapt to the characteristics of the virtual world. In the multicultural context of Indonesia, local wisdom in social media is not limited to the preservation of traditions but also includes innovation in how local communities respond to contemporary issues, build social networks, and maintain social cohesion through digital media. This phenomenon shows that digitalization does not always erode local values but can serve as a means to strengthen and expand the reach of local wisdom.

Online communities are spread across several regions in Indonesia, such as Yogyakarta, Bandung, Solo, and Garut. These online communities are based on localities, such as @Merapi_Uncover, @Info Cegatan Jogja, @ics_infocegatansolo, @Infobandungraya, @infobandungkota, @garutupdate_, and @infogarut. These online communities represent a new form of digital social organization that integrates local interests with modern communication technology.

These communities not only function as information providers but also as spaces where local wisdom is articulated through communication methods, mutual aid mechanisms, and the formation of collective identity. The unique characteristic of these communities lies in their ability to combine the efficiency of digital technology with social values rooted in the traditions of mutual assistance, solidarity, and concern for fellow local residents. Through various visual content, language, and interactions, these communities create distinctive digital narratives that reflect authentic local identities.

Research on online communities has grown rapidly in the last decade, with a diverse focus ranging from technological aspects, user behavior, to social impacts. Previous studies such as those conducted by Rheingold (2000) on virtual communities, Baym (2015) on personal connections in the digital age, and Reese (2018) on networked publics, have provided a strong theoretical foundation for understanding the dynamics of digital communities. In the Indonesian context, research by Lim (2017) on social media and activism, as well as Ikhsantyo (2022) on local online communities, has explored various aspects of the digital community phenomenon. However, most existing research remains focused on technical aspects, political impacts, or psychological effects, while cultural dimensions and the manifestation of local wisdom within online communities have not received adequate attention.

Visual ethnographic research in the context of online communities is a relatively new yet highly relevant approach for understanding how local wisdom is expressed through digital media. This method allows researchers to analyze not only text and narratives but also visual elements such as memes, images, videos, and comment interactions, which are integral parts of digital communication. Saputri (2024) emphasizes the importance of a visual approach in understanding digital practices, while Arif (2012) develops a digital ethnography framework that can be applied to study online communities. In the context of local wisdom, the visual ethnography approach enables the identification and analysis of symbols and communication practices that reflect local cultural values articulated in digital spaces.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to understand how Indonesian society adapts local wisdom in the digital age, as well as to identify patterns of communication and interaction that reflect cultural values in the context of online communities. This research is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of digital anthropology and media sociology studies, while also providing practical insights for the development of social media platforms that are more sensitive to local cultural values. In addition, the findings of this research can serve as a reference for the development of digital policies that support the preservation and development of local wisdom in the information technology era.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a digital visual ethnography approach to examine the manifestations of local wisdom in online communities in various regions of Indonesia. Visual ethnography was chosen because of its ability to analyze not only text and narrative, but also visual elements such as memes, images, videos, captions, and comment interaction patterns that are an integral part of digital communication. The research subjects include seven locally-based online communities spread across four regions: @Merapi_Uncover (Yogyakarta), @Info_Cegatan_Jogja (Yogyakarta), @ics_infocegatansolo (Surakarta), @Infobandungraya (Bandung), @infobandungkota (Bandung), @garutupdate_ (Garut), and @infogarut (Garut). Data collection was conducted through participant observation of community activities on Instagram and X (Twitter) from 2016 to 2025, focusing on the analysis of visual content, communication patterns, interaction mechanisms among members, and the transformation of community functions over time.

Data analysis techniques employed a qualitative approach with categorization based on identified manifestations of local wisdom, including values of mutual aid and cooperation, the culture of greeting one another, the transformation of community functions, and collaboration with formal institutions. The analysis process involves identifying communication patterns that reflect local cultural values, understanding the cultural symbols used in visual content, and mapping the evolution of local wisdom practices in the digital context. Data validity is strengthened through source triangulation by analyzing multiple posts from each community over different time periods and cross-verifying consistent communication patterns across all communities studied. This approach enables a deep understanding of how online communities adapt and transform local wisdom values without losing their cultural essence in the digital space.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Online communities in various regions

Online communities based on local wisdom in several regions of Indonesia, namely Bandung, Solo, Yogyakarta, and Garut, can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. List of online communities in various regions

Category	Bandung	Solo	Yogyakarta	Garut
Online Community	@Infobandungkota @Infobandungraya	@ics_Infocegatan solo	@Merapi_uncove r @Infocegatanjogja	@Garutupdate_ a @Infogarut a
Social Media Platform	Instagram	Instagram	Instagram and X	Instagram
Profit/ Non profit Administrator (goverment/ non goverment)	Profit non goverment	Profit non goverment	Non Profit non goverment	Profit non government

2. Local wisdom in online communities

a. Non-profit

The first aspect of local wisdom seen in the Solo online community is @ics_infocegatansolo, which can be observed from the posts on the ICS account. This community often includes posts about discounts on certain services, products, information about food stalls, restaurants, or other places to eat, and so on. From the posts containing advertisements for various products, it can be inferred that the ICS account benefits from promoting these products on its platform. However, it is also possible that the ICS account does not benefit at all and merely aims to assist in promoting these products. This can be seen in December 2018, when the ICS account first began operations, they also promoted the account of a sports shoe seller, @zamdyce_secondstore, posted on December 17, 2018 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/BreSD-GBOG4/>), and the umrah travel agency @umitravelumrohsolo, posted on December 19, 2018 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/Brj4KaIhqXN/>).

This was also done in the Garut region's online community, namely @Garutupdate_ and @infogarut. At the beginning of its emergence, this account functioned as a medium for disseminating information about tourist destinations and events occurring in the Garut region, with all activities carried out without a profit orientation. However, as the number of followers increased, the account began to receive offers to promote products and services and focus on profit.

b. Gotong royong and helping one another

Gotong royong is a form of cooperation among peers without prioritizing personal gain, which can be done not only through direct interaction but also online or through indirect interaction using digital platforms such as Instagram and X social media. Currently, there are many online communities that use social media as a platform for gotong royong and helping one another through their posts. This phenomenon demonstrates the evolution of traditional Indonesian values that have successfully adapted to modern technology to serve the interests of society.

One tangible manifestation of digital mutual aid culture can be seen through the active online community @ics_infocegatansolo, which helps disseminate important information to the community in Solo. The mutual aid culture of the Info Cegatan Solo (ICS) account is reflected in its posts informing the public about a case of theft at MI Gagaksipat 1 Ngemplak on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, where through this post, the ICS account also reminded everyone to always maintain vigilance and security at school (<https://www.instagram.com/p/DGw2pcECc4n/>). The spirit of digital collaboration is also demonstrated in another post where the ICS account helped share news about an elderly couple who lost their belongings near Masjid Solihin (<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DJpntyozgDq/>), collaborating with the account @hanif_sungkar_9, the owner of the original video from the post.

A similar pattern can be seen in the online community in the Bandung area, particularly through the @infobandungkota account, which was created in August 2013 and began verification in October 2024. With 2 million followers and 20,000 posts, this online community not only focuses on delivering the latest news about the city of Bandung but also includes information about entertainment, politics,

tourism, cuisine, and more, thereby meeting the information needs of Bandung residents, including students from other regions studying in Bandung. Digital collaboration is reflected in the post dated May 13, 2024 (https://www.instagram.com/p/DJILBcFzF5h/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==) which provides information about weather conditions, as well as the exchange of information and indirect interaction in the comment section, making it easier for the general public to know the weather conditions anywhere. Similarly, the post dated May 11, 2024 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/DJvTS-hz6PI/?igsh=NW00aGwxeGs0cTZI>) provides information about a parade or convoy to be held in Bandung on May 25, sparking interaction among followers to respond and exchange information.

This digital local wisdom is further strengthened by the presence of a second online community in Bandung, @infobandungraya, created in September 2015 with 1.3 million followers and 14,000 posts, although this account is not yet verified. This account focuses on providing up-to-date information about the city and regency of Bandung, including weather updates, environmental news, crime reports, traffic congestion, accidents, and other current information. In a post dated May 14, 2025 (<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DJooxPlzqHt/?igsh=NnIwZGZsYXVsYXQy>) with the hashtag #cuacabandungraya, @infobandungraya shared information about the flooding phenomenon in the Bandung area, accompanied by a reminder for drivers to remain cautious and prioritize safety. The post sparked interactive engagement among followers, who shared information about conditions at locations and safe routes to travel, highlighting the crucial role of the @infobandungraya online community in disseminating accurate information by receiving real-time updates about the Bandung Raya region from its followers.

This digital mutual assistance movement has also grown rapidly in the Garut region through several active online communities. The @garutupdate_ account, created in March 2017 with 365,000 followers and 17,296 posts as of May 18, 2025, serves as a source of information about Garut district and its surroundings. The spirit of mutual aid is evident in posts containing requests for help from residents, such as a report on damaged roads in January 2023 shared by residents and then reposted by the account. Followers often share information and leave supportive comments on such posts, fostering a strong digital solidarity network.

The commitment to digital mutual aid in Garut is further strengthened by the presence of @infogarut, a digital media platform focused on information about the Garut region. This account was created in 2012, has 407,000 followers, and has shared 15,406 posts as of May 19, 2025. The culture of mutual aid in the form of information sharing is evident in a post on February 23, 2025, which provided information about a child who drowned in one of the water attractions in Pameungpeuk. Additionally, another post on May 17, 2025 (https://www.instagram.com/p/DJ0kUFOKE3E/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==) informs that residents discovered a mortar bomb shell in Kampung Cibadak, Sindanggalih Village, Karangtengah District, Garut, on Saturday night. With similar posts, the public, especially in Garut and its surroundings, became aware of the incident and could take the necessary precautionary measures.

c. Community function transformation

Online communities in Indonesia have undergone significant evolution in terms of content coverage and information presentation strategies, reflecting the increasingly diverse dynamics of digital society needs. This transformation involves not only changes in content focus, but also adaptation to trends and developments in communication technology. This phenomenon can be observed through the journey of several online communities that have evolved from a specific local orientation to a broader and more multidimensional coverage.

One interesting example of this evolution can be seen in the @Infogarut account, which initially was a social media account with the mission of promoting tourism potential in the southern Garut region. The primary strategy used in its early development phase was to repost content from accounts sharing tourist photos, as seen in the post from May 19, 2020 (https://www.instagram.com/p/B96JURKgRsy/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==), where they contacted the account to request permission. Over time, the content presented began to diversify, no longer limited to tourism promotion but also including local news needed by the

community. From 2023 to 2025, this account did not undergo drastic changes as an information provider for the people of Garut, but there was an expansion in the types of content shared. In 2023, the account focused more on local news, particularly events and incidents occurring in Garut, with content dominated by criminal news, natural disasters, mobile SIM schedules, Garut history or stories, and promotions for local businesses and tourist attractions. By 2024, the content began to diversify, no longer limited to local news but also including national and general news such as civil service recruitment information, social issues, and general facts about Indonesia, including discussions on elections and politics, news about potential local government candidates, and the stages of the local elections. By the end of 2024 and the beginning of 2025, the content became increasingly general and broad as the account began posting international news such as major global events, although local Garut news remained present, albeit not as frequently as before.

A similar evolutionary pattern can also be seen in the online community in the Bandung area, particularly @infobandungkota, which from the outset has not focused on a single topic, but rather on a variety of topics such as entertainment, politics, tourism, cuisine, and other current information related to the city of Bandung. Currently, its news coverage has evolved to include national news, moving beyond local Bandung-focused stories, such as information about the Indonesian Minister of Health on May 19, 2025 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/DJ0tuJtTVPm/?igsh=em1uejZqdmFiMGd0>). In addition to expanding its coverage, there have been changes in how news is presented, with more creative and interactive content, and an expansion into other social media platforms. This indicates that while there has been no transformation in function, there has been a shift toward a more dynamic and trend-following approach to news presentation. Meanwhile, the online community @infobandungraya has also undergone significant transformation. Initially, it only shared information sourced from reports or submissions by account followers, ensuring the validity of the information shared. Now, it has become more effective and informative in providing news, ranging from daily life information such as weather conditions to in-depth information like criminal activities. However, @infobandungraya has now evolved into an online community that is not only informative but also serves as a promotional platform, as seen in some of its posts about tourism promotions, cuisine, real estate transactions, and others, with the news coverage increasingly following current trends and not limited to information about the Bandung Raya region. This can be seen in the post dated May 12, 2025 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/DJjGAn8Sj4L/?igsh=MWVYXN2MTIxeXpnaQ==>), where @infobandungraya also covered the tragic event in Garut, demonstrating that the online community @infobandungraya is also following trends in sharing information through its Instagram page.

An equally interesting evolution has also taken place on the Info Cegatan Solo (ICS) account, which, judging from its first post on December 9, 2018, had the primary purpose of providing information about traffic accidents, lost items, and traffic jams around Solo. However, in the same month, the ICS account began sharing more diverse information, such as an online tire repair service in Solo posted on December 10, 2018 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/BrNciGyh1F/>), an event called Street Magic on Gatot Subroto Street, posted on December 14, 2018 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/BrWNAiGhcRb/>), and several other posts unrelated to traffic accidents, losses, and roadblocks around Solo. Nevertheless, over time, in addition to continuing to report on traffic accidents, roadblocks, and losses, the ICS account also provides updates on the latest news in Solo and its surroundings. These news items include information about new tourist attractions in the Solo Raya region, job vacancies, discount promotions from restaurants, various events such as coloring contests, cooking classes, and blood drives, as well as other information related to the Solo Raya region.

d. The culture of greeting each other

The culture of greeting is an important aspect in building closeness and interaction between online community managers and their followers. This practice reflects efforts to uphold family values and camaraderie in the digital space, albeit with varying intensities and approaches across different communities. The diversity in greeting culture creates unique characteristics that distinguish one online community from another, while still maintaining the primary goal of fostering engagement and a sense of community.

The online community @infobandungkota demonstrates a strong commitment to greeting culture through its interactive posts, as seen in the post dated May 18, 2025 (https://www.instagram.com/p/DJyRyzIpj46/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNW

FIZA==). The post contains encouraging words such as, “Even though every day is tiring, waking up in the morning feels heavy, and sleep time is very short. May there be success waiting at the end of it all.” The post prompted followers of the @infobandungkota Instagram account to comment and support one another, even though it was done online. This account frequently creates similar interactive content, following current trends, demonstrating consistency in building a connection with its community.

Meanwhile, in the Garut region, the culture of greeting is presented with a more personal approach and uses local identity. In some posts, the @garutupdate_ account greets its followers with posts like “Wargi Garut” or adds phrases like “be careful on the road,” as seen in the post uploaded on May 14, 2025. Similar characteristics are also shown by @infogarut, where the culture of greeting each other can be seen in posts dated May 12–13, 2025, which discuss tourism at Mount Papandayan. In these posts, there is a caption that reads, “Where are netizens going on vacation?” which serves as a lighthearted greeting to followers. This caption sparked interaction in the comment section, where many netizens shared their vacation experiences, particularly those related to Mount Papandayan.

Unlike communities that are active in the culture of greeting, some online communities adopt a more selective and formal approach. The online community @infobandungraya does not create much content involving greetings with its Instagram followers, which may be because the @infobandungraya account focuses more on formal news reporting. However, when scrolling down, there are some interactive content that can encourage followers of the account to engage in online conversations, such as the post on April 6, 2025 (<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DIF77S5yj7C/?igsh=bXhqNXV6ZzExNmEy>), which contains a question that prompts followers of the @infobandungraya account to comment and engage in conversation about their respective opinions. A similar pattern is also seen on the Info Cegatan Solo (ICS) account, where among the various posts, there are not many that include greetings between the admin and followers. However, there are also posts like the one on August 17, 2023 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/CwBCjYhLPto/>), which asks followers of the ICS account what the word “merdeka” means to them. In that post, many followers gave positive comments, and some also made jokes like “Can I borrow a hundred first?”

e. Formal institutional cooperation

Cooperation between online communities and formal institutions is a growing phenomenon in Indonesia's digital media ecosystem, creating synergy between the power of grassroots social media and the authority and credibility of official institutions. Variations in the intensity and form of this cooperation reflect the level of development and orientation of each online community, ranging from those that still rely on informal collaboration to those that have established strategic partnerships with various institutions. This spectrum of collaboration demonstrates the evolution of the role of online communities from mere disseminators of information to strategic partners in the dissemination of public information.

Within the spectrum of institutional collaboration, the Info Cegatan Solo (ICS) account is still at the stage of informal collaboration with its community. Based on the posts on the ICS account, so far, the account has not been seen collaborating with formal institutions such as the police or other formal institutions. The ICS account typically collaborates on posts with regular followers regarding information about missing persons, disasters, or traffic accidents and similar issues. This approach indicates that ICS still relies on the strength of its organic community network to collect and disseminate information.

Unlike ICS, the online community in the Bandung area has developed more formal collaborations with law enforcement institutions. The form of collaboration between the online community @infobandungkota and other institutions is evident in the post dated May 18, 2025 (https://www.instagram.com/reel/DJyWHG1ueAH/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzR1ODBiNWFIZA==), where the post helped disseminate information about traffic regulations and raids conducted by the Cimahi Police Traffic Unit (SATLANTAS POLRES Cimahi). A similar pattern of collaboration is also demonstrated by the online community @infobandungraya with other institutions, as seen in the post dated May 15, 2025 (https://www.instagram.com/p/DJqXL03ypcl/?img_index=7&igsh=MThxbHU4eXhnd3d6dQ==), where the post helped the Bandung City Police Department disseminate information about criminal activities in the greater Bandung area. With such collaboration, the information becomes more

accessible and widely disseminated among the people of Bandung through online communities based on social media, which helps maximize the dissemination of information to the general public.

Meanwhile, online communities in the Garut region demonstrate the most diverse range of collaborations, not limited to law enforcement institutions but also involving mainstream media and social institutions. The @garutupdate_ account now collaborates with detik. com to serve as a news platform for the public and is also partnering with the police to disseminate traffic-related information, as seen in a post uploaded on May 23, 2025 (https://www.instagram.com/p/DJ_RX4jPIQu/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzR1ODBiNWFIZA==). This diversification of collaboration is further strengthened by @infogarut_, which demonstrates collaboration with formal institutions through posts sharing official activities of the Garut Police Department. In a post related to an anti-gangsterism operation in an industrial area, the account shares a direct statement from the Police Chief and the results of a dialogue with companies, indicating that there is no gangsterism. Additionally, collaboration with formal institutions is also evident in another post uploaded on May 10, 2025 (https://www.instagram.com/reel/DJdE2xWPFs/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzR1ODBiNWFIZA==) showing the activities of the Amal Haqiqi Waste Bank distributing plastic bottle waste separators (Plincap) to several schools, such as SDIT Al-Bayyinah, Al-Masduqi International Boarding School, and SD GIS Prima Insani, where the @infogarut account was tagged in the post as a strategic effort to expand the reach of the post.

3. The Transformation of Local Wisdom Values in the Digital Context and Online Communities

The transformation of local wisdom values in the digital context reflects a remarkable phenomenon of adaptation, where traditional Indonesian values such as gotong royong, mutual respect, and concern for others have successfully transitioned into the digital space without losing their essence. Online communities across various regions in Indonesia—such as Solo, Bandung, Yogyakarta, and Garut—demonstrate that local wisdom is not only capable of adapting to modern technology but also of evolving into new forms that more effectively serve the interests of society. Although the platforms and methods of delivery have changed, the essence of Indonesia's communal values remains preserved through innovative digital manifestations that are responsive to contemporary needs.

Gotong royong, as a fundamental value in Indonesian society, has undergone significant transformation in the digital realm, yet it continues to uphold the spirit of cooperation without prioritizing personal gain. This is evident in various online community activities, such as ICS Info Cegatan Solo, which actively helps disseminate important information to the public—from reporting a theft at MI Gagaksipat 1 Ngemplak to sharing information about lost items near Masjid Solihin through collaboration with the account @hanif_sungkar_9. A similar pattern can be seen in Bandung communities (@infobandungkota and @infobandungraya), which facilitate the exchange of information related to weather, traffic conditions, and disaster alerts like flooding, where followers share updates on local conditions and safe routes. In Garut, digital gotong royong values are manifested through accounts like @garutupdate_, which shares citizen reports on damaged roads, and @infogarut, which informs the public of significant events such as the discovery of mortar ammunition in Kampung Cibadak—creating a strong digital solidarity network for public safety.

Concern for others and the culture of mutual respect have also undergone creative adaptation in the digital space through various forms of interaction and communication that preserve traditional familial values. The culture of digital greetings, for example, is applied in different ways but consistently reflects warmth and care. @infobandungkota expresses commitment through motivational posts such as, “Even though every day is exhausting, waking up in the morning is tough, and sleep is short—may there be success waiting at the end of it all,” which encourages mutual support among followers. Meanwhile, the Garut community employs local identity in greetings like “Wargi Garut” and “stay safe on the road,” demonstrating personal concern, as well as interactive questions such as “Where are netizens spending their holidays?” which encourage experience-sharing and foster community closeness. Even more formal communities like @infobandungraya and ICS Solo occasionally create meaningful interactive moments, such as discussions about the meaning of independence, which elicit positive responses and familial humor like “Can I borrow a hundred?”

The greatest challenge in this transformation is how to maintain a non-profit orientation and altruism amid commercial pressures and the demands of sustaining digital platforms. Data shows that

communities like ICS Solo have faced ambiguity in their orientation between altruism and commercialism since they began operating in December 2018, promoting various local products that may be financially profitable but can also be shared purely to help, without monetary gain. Similarly, the Garut community, which initially functioned as a medium for sharing tourism and local event information without a profit motive, began to accept commercial promotion offers as its follower base grew. Nevertheless, this transformation does not eliminate the essence of local wisdom but rather reflects a pragmatic adaptation that allows communities to remain sustainable while still serving the public interest. This is evident in the broadening of content scope, which now includes not only local but also national and international information, indicating responsiveness to increasingly diverse informational needs.

The success of transforming local wisdom values in the digital context lies in the ability of online communities to integrate traditional values with the realities of modern technology, creating a digital ecosystem rooted in the spirit of gotong royong, care, and mutual respect. This phenomenon demonstrates that Indonesian local wisdom possesses extraordinary adaptability, capable of evolving from a specific local orientation to a broader scope without losing its core identity and mission. Even the transformation toward institutional collaboration—from ICS Solo’s informal partnerships to Garut community’s strategic collaborations with *detik.com* and law enforcement agencies—reflects a natural evolution that strengthens the community’s capacity to serve the public good.

CONCLUSION

This visual ethnographic study of locality-based online communities across various regions in Indonesia reveals a remarkable phenomenon of local wisdom transformation in the digital context. The online communities discussed in this paper successfully demonstrate how traditional Indonesian values—particularly gotong royong, concern for others, and a culture of mutual respect—can adapt and thrive in digital spaces without losing their essence. Despite evolving from specific local orientations to broader scopes and facing commercial pressures as well as the need to sustain digital platforms, these communities have managed to preserve the spirit of altruism and public service through various innovative digital manifestations.

The transformation of local wisdom within these online communities encompasses five main dimensions, such as: 1. A non-profit orientation that adapts to commercial realities; 2. Digital gotong royong manifested through information sharing and mutual online support; 3. The evolution of community functions from local focus to multidimensional coverage; 4. A culture of digital greetings that maintains familiarity and a sense of kinship; and 5. The development of institutional collaborations ranging from informal cooperation to strategic partnerships.

This phenomenon illustrates that digitalization does not erode local values but instead serves as a means to strengthen, expand, and modernize local wisdom practices to remain relevant to contemporary societal needs. The findings of this research contribute significantly to the development of digital anthropology and media sociology studies, while also highlighting the high adaptability of Indonesian local wisdom in the face of technological change. The success of online communities in integrating traditional values with the realities of modern technology creates a unique digital ecosystem where the spirit of Indonesian communalism is preserved, while also enhancing the effectiveness and reach of public service. This confirms that the digital transformation of local wisdom is not merely a change in platform, but a form of continuous innovation that strengthens the community’s capacity to serve the public interest in the digital age.

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