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## The Digital Turn in Geopolitics: *Gojek*'s Strategy of Digital Space and Its Geopolitical Implications

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*Received: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020; Revised: 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020;*

*Accepted: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020; Available online: 20<sup>th</sup> June 2020*

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### **Abstract**

*Digital transformation has revolutionized all aspects of life due to its connectivity capability. However, the discipline of contemporary Geopolitics has not discussed it in-depth, and is still pinned towards the modern geopolitics discourse focusing merely on regional geopolitical constations. This article aims to enrich the intellectual discourse on postmodern geopolitics embracing the digital turn in geopolitics. Focusing on non-state actors, this study scrutinizes Gojek, an Indonesian decacorn startup company, by asking how Gojek's strategization of their digital spaces results in geopolitical implications. Epistemologically, this article utilizes Foucaultian governmentality and the concept of power-knowledge to understand geopolitical power of Gojek and explain how they construct their information power. This study finds that Gojek constructs their power through building digital spaces which connects the customers with Gojek's partners. The empire of connectivity which Gojek has established does not merely give them power in the digital realm but also in real politics. There exist some geopolitical implications because of Gojek's strategizing of digital space such as (i) the emergent information power of digital connectivity; (ii) the use of information-based startup as means of Indonesia's diplomacy; (iii) the emergent power of the person who designs and leads the construction of digital spaces. Further research with a different sample is required to enrich the discourse on digital turn in geopolitics since this research only scrutinizes a case in one of the developing countries.*

**Keywords:** *Postmodern Geopolitics; Digital Space; Governmentality; Information Power; Gojek*

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**How to Cite:** Muhammad, A. M. (2020). The Digital Turn in Geopolitics: *Gojek*'s Strategy of Digital Space and Its Geopolitical Implications. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial*, 19 (1): 40-57 (doi: 10.14710/jis.19.1.2020.40-57), [Online]

**Permalink/DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.14710/jis.19.1.2020.40-57>

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## INTRODUCTION

As technologies have been incorporated into numerous aspects of life, the phenomenon of digital transformation could not be utterly ignored. It is an inevitability that this phenomenon will transform social interaction tremendously in the future since technology innovation is still far to reach its peak of stagnancy. There is no single and universal definition of digital transformation since it may vary according to those who perceive the phenomenon. From the perspective of private actors, the phenomenon is defined as the “[u]se of new digital technologies, such as social media, mobile, analytics or embedded devices, in order to enable major business improvements like enhancing customer experience, streamlining operations or creating new business models” (Fitzgerald et al., 2013). This definition tends to be used since the practice of digital transformation is commonly led by the business sector. Yet, the definition is not deemed to be sufficient to explain what digital transformation is. Thus, digital transformation should be defined more broadly as the use of digital technology which affects or influences all aspect of human life, including business, public government and social interaction within society (Reis et al., 2018). With this broad definition of digital transformation, it is possible to dramatize the phenomenon as a fruitful problematization for intellectual discourses in the discipline of Geopolitics.

Referring to Leibniz's notion of relational-space, the connectivity which has been created by the internet definitely could be considered as space which also can become a research object of Geopolitics. Leibniz's theory of relational-space is contrary with Newton's notion of physical space which believes that space is absolute and should be physical (Evangelidis 2018). In understanding the concept of space, Leibniz argues that “space is that which results from places taken together” (Leibniz and Clarke, 2007: 36). This understanding of space enabled us to consider the connectivity which has been created by the internet as a novel space which is commonly known as digital space. This digital space is believed to be more powerful than the physical space because the word "boundary" is not listed in the dictionary of digital space (Smith, 2017: 125). The phenomenon of this novel digital space is similar to the phenomenon of novel non-European land at the age of exploration. It is new and humans can “colonize” that digital space by constructing their digital empire by connecting people through the internet (Miranda et al., 2015). The discovery of this digital space should have been welcomed by the discipline of Geopolitics since the research on this type of space can fruitfully contribute to the discipline. Therefore, as the phenomenon of digital space has been permeating into society, the discipline of Geopolitics is inevitably in need to encourage the digital turn. The alarm of the emergence of the digital turn has been voiced by O Tuathail who leads the discourses of postmodern Geopolitics in 1998 when the internet only connected 24 percent of people in the world (NTIA and ESA, 2002; Ó Tuathail and

Dalby, 1998). O Tuathail's depiction of postmodern characteristics is grounded with the periodization of geopolitical order by Agnew and Corbridge and the division of geopolitical nature by Luke (Ó Tuathail, 1998: 27).

Understanding the fact that geopolitics is now in the era of transnational liberalism characterized as enlargement geopolitics and the third nature of geopolitics characterized as postmodern informational capitalist, O Tuathail formulates what he calls as postmodern geopolitics for the sake of contesting the modern geopolitics. In his conceptualization of postmodern Geopolitics, he provides five characteristics of postmodern Geopolitics: (i) global space is imagined and presented through telemetric visualization (Geographic Information System); (ii) McWorld versus Jihad are the conflicting actors; (iii) technology and information will become a new coin and a new source of power in international politics; (iv) new aspects of security raised involving the use of technology such as cybersecurity; (v) the connectivity power contests the sovereign power of state (Ó Tuathail, 1998). Grasping the potentials of technology and information and its implication with the relational notion of space, O Tuathail pushed the limitation of Geopolitics by stating if "geo-graphing has already become info-graphing, geo-politics become info-politics" (Ó Tuathail, 1998: 31). Considering O Tuathail's words and the occurrence of hyper-connectivity, we can no longer postpone the discussion on technologies and information through the lens of Geopolitics.

The hyper-connectivity happening today is undoubtedly designed by companies that connect people through an online platform. Therefore, it is beneficial to focus the research on the private actors since they possess power in the digital realm because of their governance of people connectivity. Understanding the power of private actors, the article scrutinizes a private actor which is working on the data-driven technology in one of the developing countries because the relationship of the government of developing states with startup companies is unique – they are mutually benefitting each other (Xavier 2017). From the perspective of the company, they need the power of the state to help them to expand their business to other countries. On the other hand, from the perspective of the government, they consider the data-driven technology as part of their soft power which needs to be expanded in other countries. Hence, this article picks Gojek, one of the largest data-driven startup companies in Indonesia as the research object. This article addresses the question of how Gojek's effort to strategize digital space affects the geopolitical power relations. Furthermore, the article aims to contribute to the theorization of emergent power in the study of geopolitics by not focusing on the state actor but to the private actor. The article is also meant to further the discussion on the use of information technology in politics which has

been discussed by Nurlinah, Haryanto, and Sunadi (2019) who analyzed the disparity between e-government and human resources in the village.

Addressing the research question, this article utilizes the concept of power from Foucaultian perspective to understand how Gojek's effort to strategize digital space results in geopolitical implications. Foucault distinguishes three types of power, namely sovereign, disciplinary and governmentality (Lilja and Vinthagen, 2014). First, sovereign power is understood as the exercise of authority in particular territory without any interference from outside entity, taking its forms like the enforcement of domestic law in nation-states. Second, disciplinary power is defined as the exercise of power in disciplinary means by an authorized institution such as schools and military academy, taking its form through the dissemination of power-knowledge on what is expected to do. Third, governmentality is the distribution of centralized power among the populace through conducting the conduct of the people. With this approach of power understanding, Foucault says that "power is everywhere" and "comes from everywhere" (Philp, 1983: 34). Thus, governmentality is utilized as the method to understand Gojek's power in creating the digital space with their possession of data and information about the supply and demand of a particular population.

Foucault introduces the concept of governmentality as an approach to understand the concept of power in its broadest sense. In Foucault's neologism, governmentality is the combination of governmental and rationality which is associated with the willingness of the governed to be governed by the government (Foucault, 1991: 87). Governmental is referred to the conduct or activity which is intended to shape, guide or affect the conduct of people (Gordon, 1991:10). With this definition, governmental is referred to as an activity rather than an adjective associated state government which is commonly understood. On the other hand, rationality refers to the act of thinking systematically and clearly to realize the ideality of something (Gordon, 1991: 10). He suggested that before someone or something conducts governmentalization, the government must first define what they can control. Furthermore, he argues that rather than governing people which is too vague and unclassified, it is more effective and efficient to govern the population which makes the people recognized and visible (Foucault, 1980: 170). With this governmentality approach, this article can understand Gojek's strategization by defining what they can govern and how the ideal situation of the governed. It is the ubiquitous and unorganized *Ojek* drivers who are passively waiting for their customers that become the object of the Gojek's government (the governed). For the aspect of rationality, it is the digital space of Gojek application that becomes the strategy to govern the behavior of *ojek* drivers and the customers.

The understanding of the strategy here is also derived from the Foucaultian perspective which treats strategy as productive logic. “The function of strategic logic is to establish the possible connection between disparate terms which remains disparate. The logic of strategy is the logic of connections between the heterogeneous and not the logic of homogenization of the contradictory” (Lobo-Guerrero, 2012: 311). The effort to strategize digital space by Gojek here is understood through the lens of productive logic in which Gojek productively constructs the digital space of the connectivity of the customers and the *Ojek* drivers through their application. This logic is utilized as an analytical instrument to understand the digital space that Gojek has created by analyzing prominent services that Gojek has provided.

This article aims to contribute theoretically to the discourse of power relation by examining the digital space as a strategized space that data-based application has created. The data analyzed in this paper includes primary data that is taken from *Gojek* sources and secondary data that is taken from previous literatures and researches. As the data is mainly non-numerical, the paper applies qualitative approach as its methodology. Utilizing the concept of power-knowledge, this article addresses the emergent power of information in this era of digital transformation to grasp Gojek’s information power. Utilizing the concept of governmentality and the productive logic of strategization, the discussion is continued by analyzing the strategized digital space that Gojek has created by examining the e-services that Gojek has created through their online application. In the end, the article closes the discussion by providing geopolitical implications resulted from the construction of digital space of Gojek. The conclusion drawn is designed to be an open-ended discussion since the discourse on digital turn in Geopolitics still needs further and broader theoretical discussion.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Geopolitics of Information**

In 2017, *The Economist* argues, “The world’s most valuable resource is no longer oil, but data” (*The Economist*, 2017). The resource is one of the important aspects in the practice of global politics since the scarcity of resources is one of the underlying reasons motivating the struggle among nations. The reason why the region of middle-east become a geopolitical hotspot in contemporary politics is inevitably due to their possession of the oil. Proving that information is substituting oil as the new coin in international politics, the comparison of largest global companies in 2008 and 2018 is provided below. In 2008, largest companies in the world are mostly oil and gas companies in Table 1. Among the 10 largest companies, 6 companies are oil gas companies such as PetroChina, Exxon, General Electric, Gazprom, Royal Dutch Shell, and

Sinopec. Information and technology companies such as China Mobile, Microsoft, and At&T are just minorities in the list. Yet, within only ten years, the order is turned upside down. In 2018, technology and information companies are dominating the list without giving any space for oil and gas companies. Those technology and information companies are Apple, Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Facebook, Tencent, and Alibaba. The data indeed proves the emergent power of technology and information.

**Table 1.** Largest Companies in 2018 vs 2008

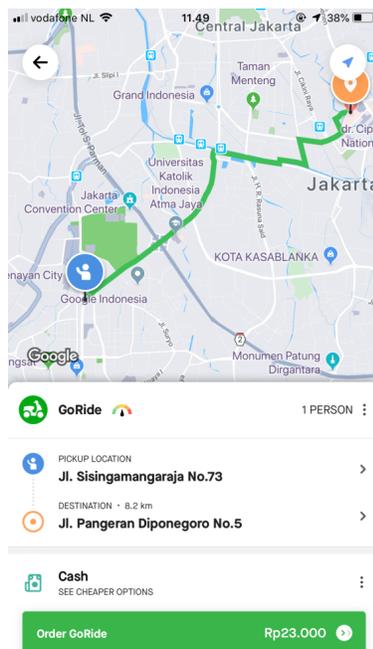
2018				2008			
Rank	Company	Founded	USbn	Rank	Company	Founded	USbn
1	Apple	1976	890	1	PetroChina	1999	728
2	Google	1998	768	2	Exxon	1870	492
3	Microsoft	1975	680	3	General Electric	1892	358
4	Amazon	1994	592	4	China Mobile	1997	344
5	Facebook	2004	545	5	ICBC (China)	1984	336
6	Tencent (China)	1998	526	6	Gazprom (Russia)	1989	332
7	Berkshire	1955	496	7	Microsoft	1975	313
8	Alibaba (China)	1999	488	8	Royal Dutch Shell	1907	266
9	J&J	1886	380	9	Sinopec (China)	2000	257
10	JP Morgan	1871	375	10	AT&T	1885	238

*Source: Bloomberg in MilfordAsset.com (Johnston, 2018)*

Keohane and Nye distinguish three types of information namely strategic, commercial and free (Robert and Nye, Jr. 1998). Strategic information is referred to the confidential information which is protected by the state for the sake of national interest such as intelligence information. Subsequently, commercial information is referred to the information which is commonly used by private actors for the sake of market expanding or other commercial activities such as sales reports. Lastly, free information is just ordinary information which does not give any added value such as citizen information. Revising the opinion of Keohane and Nye distinction of information, Rosenbach and Mansted argue that the distinction is no longer relevant or already blurred since all information is strategic. With its strategic power, all kind of information is now being the most valuable resource (Rosenbach and Mansted, 2019: 5). At the history of the development of technology and information, information is now experiencing the time when its importance at its peak. Rosenbach and Mansted (2019) revealed four facets of power of information

which can take a role as an important source of power. The theorization of Rosenbach and Mansted's facets of the power of information is useful since it could examine Gojek's exercise of information power.

First, information bears the potential to affect actors' behavior. In the case of Gojek, this facet of power has been demonstrated flawlessly since it has transformed the practice of business through the governance of information. At the time when Gojek was not existed yet, the transaction of *ojek* was done in conventional way in which *ojek* drivers waited at their base and the customers should come to their base. Gojek as an online platform came to provide information about the demand of the customer (order) to move from point A to point B and the supply of services by showing the drivers nearby who were willing to take the order. The information about the demand-supply that Gojek has provided has revolutionarily transformed the way Indonesian customers use transportation. The customers left the conventional transaction and moved to Gojek application since it provided more reliable information and the convenient method by only clicking Gojek's services at their smartphone. However, the success of Gojek triggered the conventional drivers to hold the act of demonstration and physical violence towards the Gojek's driver since they financially felt harmed because their customers left them and decided to be the subscribers of Gojek services (Prasetya, 2017). In philosophical eyes, their anger is not fundamentally rooted in the left of their customers but on their poverty of the information about their customers' needs.



**Figure 1.** Goride Order Simulation

*Source: Personal Documentation*

Second, data or information could be utilized for better decision-making. What makes customers decide to use Gojek rather than the conventional *ojek* is that Gojek provides the certainty of the transaction. When Gojek did not exist yet in Indonesia, the negotiation between the customers and the *Ojek* drivers was based on merely the empirical calculation of the *ojek* drivers and the customer. In other words, the *ojek* drivers and their customers share the same amount of power since both of them are allowed to set the price and conduct the negotiation regarding the travel fare. After the existence of Gojek, they came to be the fair and powerful third-party between the customer and *ojek* drivers by providing the exact information about the travel distance and the travel fare in respect to the travel distance. For instance, with Gojek, traveling from Jl. Sisingamangaraja to Jl. Pangeran Diponegoro covering 8.2 km will be charged 23.000 IDR (1.48€) in Figure 1. Without the calculation of Gojek, there was no certainty of the travel fare. With the same distance of travel, conventional *ojek* drivers were able to set up a higher price than that. Because of the information about the calculation of the travel fare, the customers feel that they are making a better decision rather than negotiating with conventional *ojek* drivers.

Third, information plays a central role in generating the wealth in contemporary economy which embraces the use of digital technology. According to research conducted by the Demographic Institute of Economics and Business of Universitas Indonesia (2019), Gojek contributed 44.2 trillion IDR (3 billion USD to the economy of Indonesia in 2018. Today, the company of Gojek is worth more than 10 billion USD due to its progressive speed of growth (Farras, 2019). In their start of the business in 2010, Gojek only had 20 *ojek* drivers as their employees (Yuniar, 2017). Yet, within only 9 years, with their information and data processing, they could become one of a few Asian startup companies which become Decacorn company. In the broader view, the Indonesian digital economy can contribute approximately 150 billion USD by 2025 and help Indonesia to reach its economic growth trajectory of 7 percent (Das et al., 2016). With those statistics, it is an inevitable fact that information and data play a significant role in generating wealth respectively for micro and macro economy of states.

Fourth, what makes information is more crucial than ever before is the existence of internet due to its ability to engineer the scope, scale, and speed of information distribution. Internet with its cloud storage system enables companies like Gojek to restore and process all information which is recorded in their system, commonly known as Big Data. Gojek's big data ecosystem utilizes complex data process software such as Google BigQuery and Google Cloud Storage (Gabriel, 2018). With this data architecture, all data of transaction record of Gojek's customer is not removed yet they are recycled and reused for their artificial intelligence software (Widjaja, 2017). Gojek uses data to more smartly predict customer's point of pick up and suggest recom-

mended restaurants in their gofood services. Furthermore, this data process aims to maximize the convenience of the customers when they use Gojek service so that the customers are addicted to always use Gojek service (Zuhra, 2017).

Applying the concept Foucault's governmentality and power-knowledge, Gojek exercised their power to govern their willing to-be governed population which is their ojek drivers and their customers. How Gojek governs them is through the monopoly of information. In the case of go-ride, first of all, customers need to input their needed information such as their destination and their pick up point. Having received this input, Gojek process the information and give the calculation of the distance and subsequently give the customer the information on travel fare. After the customers receive the information, Gojek disseminate the demand information to their ojek drivers and ask them either they are willing to take the order or not. This centrality of information that Gojek possess which can diminish the practice of conventional *ojek* perfectly demonstrates Foucault's power-knowledge. With their information or knowledge possession, Gojek has successfully exercised the power of governmentality in which self-governed society (Gojek's partners and customers) existed through the governance of Gojek's app. It is without doubt that the connectivity that Gojek has established has created a novel information power scratched from zero. After understanding the power-knowledge that Gojek possesses, the discussion is followed by comprehending how Gojek obtains such power through analyzing the connectivity space that Gojek has established.

### **The Super App Gojek's Digital Space Strategy**

"Super App" is the words of branding chosen by Gojek to describe themselves in one of their advertisement videos (Life at Gojek, 2019). The claim that they are super is due to its capability to fulfill the promise of the seamless flow of nearly all aspects of human needs. According to their website, they are right now providing more than 20 services ranging from transportation and logistics, food, payments, news & entertainment, and daily needs through their online platform as connectivity effect which is simply connecting the customers and Gojek's partners. To understand the connectivity that Gojek has established, below is the list of Gojek's services:

#### *Transport and Logistics*

1. *Goride* is an e-service in which the demand of customers to move from one place to other place is connected with the supply of service that ojek drivers provided
2. *Gocar* is a service expansion of goride utilizing the personal car of the drivers as the mode of transportation
3. *GoBluebird* is an e-service connecting the customers with one of the oldest Indonesian taxi company named Blue Bird

4. *Gosend* is an on-demand courier service which can send pieces of stuff or document with no limit on distance and usually utilizes ojek instead of cars due to its speed of delivery
5. *Gobox* is basically the same as Gosend yet it is more specific for larger items and commonly uses pickup trucks, single-axle trucks, and single-axle box trucks

#### *Food*

6. *Gofood* is a 24-hours food delivery service which connected the customers of gojek with more than 250 thousand merchants throughout Indonesia and uses gojek riders to deliver the order
7. *Gofood* festival is one of the offline platforms gathering Gojek's food partner in one particular place
8. *Gomed* is on-demand medicine delivery partnering with other online app named HaloDoc which connect patients and doctors

#### *Payments*

9. *Gopay* is the e-wallet of Gojek which could be used as the currency for paying Gojek's services or non-Gojek's services such as paying for foods or beverages in the restaurants installing the service of Gopay.
10. *Gobills* is a service which enables the customers to pay electricity bills to the state-owned electricity named *Perusahaan Listrik Nasional* (National Electric Company) and the insurance premium to the state-owned insurance company named Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Sosial (Social Security Administrator for Health)
11. *Gopoints* is a loyalty program from Gojek in which customers will be given certain points after using the services of Gojek.
12. *Paylater* is a post-paid program to maximize the enjoyment of the consumption of Gojek's services in which customer could take the services first and will be charged at the end of the month
13. *Gopulsa* is a service in which customers are allowed to top up the phone bills which could be only paid by Gopay.
14. *Gogive* is an online fundraising platform partnering other crowd-funding named *Kita-bisa.com* which uses Gopay as the payment

#### *News & Entertainment*

15. *Goplay* is a movie streaming platform which enables the customers to watch movies or series with monthly subscription
16. *Gotix* is an online sales of theater tickets which allows the customer to not wait in the long queue when they come to theaters

*Daily Needs*

17. *Golife* is another application developed by Gojek's developer as an 'umbrella' app of the on-demand services focusing on daily needs which were used to be parts of the Gojek's services
18. *Gomassage* is a service which connects the customers with the professional masseuse in which the masseuse could come directly to home of the customer or other agreed meeting point
19. *Goclean* is a service connecting trained house cleaner with the customers to clean the customers' house
20. *Goauto* is a service connecting automotive providers or individual motor and car washer with customers so that the cars and the motors could be maintained in the house of the customers
21. *Goglam* is a service which provides the treatment of salons such as hairstyling, nail care, waxing and facial service to the house of the customers
22. *Gofix* is a service connecting professional individual repairers with customers so they can fix error electronic devices in customer's place
23. *Golaundry* is an on-demand laundry delivery which connects small-enterprises of home laundry and the customers
24. *Gopertamina* is a fuel delivery service that connects the state-owned oil company named Pertamina and the customers.

*Business*

25. *Gobiz* is an application which is used by *Gojek* to connect them with the current and potential partner of merchants and restaurants.

In their advertisement video entitled "GOJEK. A Super App." at 0:46, *Gojek* present the connectivity in the form of a spider web, implying that they have successfully established the connectivity between people and their partners. Right after the show of the web, *Gojek* present a white blank space of connectivity in which people start coming as if telling that the number of the customers keeps growing in Figure 2. Furthermore, *Gojek* also portrays the connectivity between the customers and their most-used service, *Goride*, through animating that the customers only need to wait and the *ojek* drivers will come to them.

For untutored eyes, the application of *Gojek* will be considered and perceived as merely an innovation of business maximizing the use of digital technology. Yet, for geopolitical eyes, what *Gojek* has done is more than an online platform or online application. Scratching their power from zero, *Gojek* has built an empire of connectivity through receiving the information of customers' demand and tries to connect it with the supply.



**Figure 2.** The Screenshot of Gojek’s digital spaces in their advertisement video  
 Source: Youtube (*Life at Gojek*, 2019)

*Gojek* themselves are fully aware of the empire of connectivity they have built so that they depict the connectivity they have created as potentially unlimited digital space. With Foucaultian strategic logic, *Gojek*’s empire of connectivity is allowed to be scrutinized. Foucault says, “The function of strategic logic is to establish the possible connection between disparate terms which remains disparate” (Foucault, 2008: 42). The disparate terms refer to the population of *Ojek* drivers and customers. They remain a separate entity, yet with the online application of *Gojek*, the possible connection between them is created. This connectivity could be considered as digital space in the relational-notion space of Leibniz.

*Gojek* strategized their digital space by connecting certain population (people who owns a smartphone and installs the application of *Gojek*) with other population (*Gojek*’s partner: *ojek* and car drivers, state-owned companies, multinational companies, small and medium-sized enterprise). Twenty-five types of service that *Gojek* has provided means that there existed 25 digital spaces. Yet, it is not that simple since there is also a multi-layer of connectivity between particular digital spaces. *Gojek*’s digital spaces could be categorized as follows based on the type of connectivity: (i) people to people (*Goride*, *Gocar*, *Gobox*, *Golife*, *Gosend*); (ii) people to business (*Gobills*, *Gopertamina*, *GoBluebird*, *Gotix*, *Gofood*, *Gomed*); (iii) people to entertainment (*Goplay*, *Gotix*); (iv) people to their financial management (*Gopoints*, *Paylater*, *Gopulsa*, *GoGive*) and (v) *Gojek* to their partner (*Gobiz*). Among those digital spaces, the space of *Goride*, *Gomed*, *Gofood*, *Gosend*, *Gobiz* and *Gopay* is discussed more in-depth since its unique multi-layer of connectivity.

The digital space of *Goride* is different from other digital spaces of *Gojek* since it is connected with other digital spaces like *Gosend*, *Gofood*, and *Gomed*. For instance, in practice, the information on customers' demand is processed in the digital space of *Gofood* and then it is transferred in the digital space of *Goride* since the one who takes the order is the Ojek drivers. It works the same with the digital space of *Gosend* and *Gomed*. On the other hand, *Gobiz* is a strategized digital space in which *Gojek* connects themselves with their business partners such as restaurants whose information is inputted in *Gofood* digital space. In other words, *Gobiz* is the exercise of *Gojek*'s information power on the governed which possesses the willingness to be governed. As the practice of *Gojek*'s governmentality, they use *Gopay* as the currency in the empire of *Gojek*'s digital space. Furthermore, *Gojek* applies the policy of cash-burning in which *Gojek* subsidizes around \$ 365 million a year in the form discounts or promo if the customers use *Gopay* (Syahputera, 2019). This policy aims to shape the behavior of the users to use *gopay* not only in *gojek*-related transactions but also beyond it.

### **Geopolitical Implication of Digital Space**

The information power of *Gojek* is not only limited in their constructed digital space. Yet, *Gojek* has successfully leveraged its information power and convert it as the source of economic and political power. This article finds that there are at least three geopolitical implications that emerged due to *Gojek*'s successful efforts to strategize their digital spaces. First, as one of the characteristics of postmodern geopolitics, the connectivity that *Gojek* has established results in their power-knowledge which has productive social and economic implications for Indonesia. Second, as the consequence of their possession of power-knowledge, the government of Indonesia treats them as Indonesia's soft power through as part of the startup diplomacy. Third, the information power that *Gojek* has created does not only raise the power of the *Gojek* institutionally but also the power of its Chief Executive Officer personally who was appointed as the Minister of Education in the current cabinet.

As it was previously mentioned, *Gojek*'s possession of power-knowledge has economic consequence in which they have contributed 44.2 trillion IDR (3 billion USD) for the economy of Indonesia in 2018 (Walandouw et. al., 2019). *Gojek* partners also feel that they get benefit from their cooperation with *Gojek* since their average income has increased more than 40 percent compared to when they had not joined *Gojek*. Furthermore, 93% of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) partners experience an increase in transaction volume and 55% of them experience an increase in earnings. Concerning social implications, MSMEs also obtain a significant benefit because of *Gojek*, they can follow the advancement of technology and to adapt to digital transformation. *Gojek* also contribute for gender participatory since more than 70 percent

of their Golife partners are woman and 50 percent of them firmly feel that they could be independent. With these statistics of economic and social change, it is clear that the digital space that Gojek has strategized affects the real economic and social life.

Enterprises and technology could become the source of soft-power, as it is explained by the report of USC Center of Public Diplomacy (McClory, 2018). According to the report, Indonesia sits on the 9<sup>th</sup> Asian country with 40.51 of the soft-power score. Yet, compared to the Philippines who sit on the 10<sup>th</sup> rank, Indonesia's digital technology is still left behind. Struggling to strengthen its digital power, Indonesia tries to formulate policy which could push their digital power. In November 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affair organized an event named "*Kemlu* for Startup: Attracting Local and International Venture Capital Investments" (MFA, 2019). In the event, the Vice Minister stated, "Indonesia should leverage its massive potentials in the digital sector. The demographic bonus, abundant number of creative young entrepreneurs, and collaborations among the government, investors, and startups are keys to competing in the advanced digital era,". Before this year, the government of Indonesia, especially the Ministry of Foreign Affair never perceived startup as their soft-power. Yet, with the success of Indonesian startup such as *Gojek*, Indonesia is finally aware of their digital potential power.

After two geopolitical implications at the institutional level were discussed, this article also reveals a geopolitical implication at the personal level. Gojek's CEO, Nadiem Makarim, was appointed as the Minister of Education of Indonesia in the current cabinet. According to President Jokowi, the reason behind the appointment of *Gojek*'s CEO is because Indonesia needs to welcome digital transformation. He said, "Big data is crucial for the future. That's why *Mas* (Mr.) Nadiem is appointed". He further adds, "A person who understands how to implement innovations is needed. Dare to kick the box, dare to be out of the box, dare to challenge the routine, ... , I would like to connect between what is needed by the industry and our education" (Asmara, 2019). Also, a lecturer of Universitas Gajah Mada argues that "[t]he appointing of [Nadiem] is because the president is sending across a message 'hey, change needs to come, revolutionize our education system'," (Wicaksono, 2019). With those geopolitical implications revealed, it is proven that the power does not stay in digital space but also real space. The construction of digital space does have political implications for the institution who construct it and for the person who leads and designs the construction.

## CONCLUSION

*Gojek*'s digital spaces which have been analyzed through Foucault's governmentality and the productive logic of strategy reveals the power-knowledge of *Gojek*'s information and explains how they construct such power. *Gojek*'s power-knowledge refers to the power of information about the demand and supply that *Gojek* possesses which is processed at their Big Data. The power-knowledge is constructed through governing certain population (*Gojek*'s partner) and connect them with other populations (*Gojek* users). This connectivity effect results in at least three geopolitical implications. First, the digital space which is the result of connectivity effect can affect physical space. Second, the digital space could be used as one of the sources of the state's soft power. Third, the power-knowledge does not only lie at the institution which constructs the connectivity but also to the person who leads and design the construction. Thus, considering the aforementioned implication, this article concludes by stating that 'by constructing connectivity, we inherently construct power'. However, further study on digital spaces and connectivity in the discipline of Geopolitics should be conducted to embrace the digital turn in Geopolitics. Since this study only focuses on a startup in a developing country, it might be beneficial to also look at the startup in other developing countries or developed countries and further finds the pattern and conceptualization of geopolitical implication there.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank colleagues who have provided comments and criticisms so that the article becomes better.

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