

The Influence of Social Media and Interpersonal Communication on the Voting Behavior of Millennials and Generation Z in the 2024 Presidential Election in Indonesia

Ni Luh Putu Caosa Indryani^{1*}, Mudiwati Rahmatunnisa², Atwar Bajari³, Yusa Djujandi⁴

¹ Department of Political Science, Universitas Padjajaran, Bandung, INDONESIA.

² Department of Political Science, Universitas Padjajaran, Bandung, INDONESIA.

³ Communication Science, Universitas Padjajaran, Bandung, INDONESIA.

⁴ Department of Political Science, Universitas Padjajaran, Bandung, INDONESIA.

*Corresponding Author: luh21001@mail.unpad.ac.id

Citation: Indryani, N. L. P. C., Rahmatunnisa, M., Bajari, A. & Djujandi, Y. (2025). The Influence of Social Media and Interpersonal Communication on the Voting Behavior of Millennials and Generation Z in the 2024 Presidential Election in Indonesia, *Journal of Cultural Analysis and Social Change*, 10(4), 439-447. <https://doi.org/10.64753/jcasc.v10i4.2855>

Published: December 4, 2025

ABSTRACT

The 2024 Indonesian presidential election was dominated by young voters, with Millennials and Generation Z comprising more than half of the electorate and thus becoming decisive actors in electoral democracy. This study examines the influence of social media and interpersonal communication on their voting behavior using a mixed-methods explanatory sequential design that combined a national survey of 1,200 respondents with Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) across seven provinces. Regression analysis confirms that social media—particularly WhatsApp, YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram—significantly shapes political preferences, with Generation Z more influenced by digital narratives while Millennials tend to validate information through face-to-face discussions. Qualitative findings highlight that interpersonal communication remains essential for clarification and reinforcement of political decisions. The integration of both channels creates a complementary ecosystem in which social media provides broad reach, while interpersonal exchanges strengthen legitimacy. The study concludes that effective political communication strategies must combine the immediacy of digital media with the depth of participatory interpersonal engagement.

Keywords: Social Media, Interpersonal Communication, Voting Behavior, Millennials, Generation Z

INTRODUCTION

The 2024 simultaneous elections represent a crucial momentum, particularly due to the dominance of young voters from the Millennial and Generation Z cohorts. Official data of the General Elections Commission (KPU) in 2023 shows that the combined share of these two groups accounts for more than 56% of the total permanent voter list. This phenomenon aligns with Indonesia's demographic dividend, which reflects the high proportion of the productive-age population with significant potential to support socio-economic development as well as national politics (Oey-Gardiner & Gardiner, 2013). Millennials and Generation Z thus represent not only economic assets but also strategic political actors who play a critical role in shaping contemporary democratic dynamics.

The political characteristics and values embedded in Millennials and Generation Z differ markedly from those of earlier generations. Although popular narratives often describe these younger cohorts as apathetic and deliberately disengaged from formal politics, empirical studies demonstrate that their engagement has shifted from conventional political activities to digital participation through social media (Milkman, 2017; Hargittai & Shaw, 2013). These generations leverage information and communication technologies to access, share, and express their

political aspirations in dynamic and interactive ways, illustrating the transformation of political citizenship in the digital era (Lim, 2013; Nugroho, 2012).

The rise of social media as a dominant communication medium among younger generations has brought about a paradigmatic shift in the distribution and consumption of political information. Extensive use of platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube by Millennials and Generation Z has significantly shaped public opinion and reinforced political preferences (We Are Social, 2023). This phenomenon demonstrates that social media functions not merely as a communication channel but also as a platform for political mobilization and the dissemination of ideology, as exemplified by Thailand's Move Forward Party, which successfully engaged young voters through strategic social media campaigning (Rakhman, 2019).

Nevertheless, direct, face-to-face interpersonal communication remains highly relevant in shaping political attitudes and voting decisions. Such interactions facilitate richer exchanges through verbal and non-verbal cues, effectively fostering trust and empathy, which in turn contribute to more reflective and informed political decision-making (Devito, 2013; Mancosu, 2017). Therefore, an integrative understanding of the complementary roles of social media and interpersonal communication in the voting behavior of Millennials and Generation Z is essential.

In studies of voting behavior, the literature indicates that voter decisions are influenced by social, psychological, and rational factors, including group affiliation, candidate personality, political issues, and emotional experiences (Plano, 1985; Budiarjo, 2001; Surbakti, 2007). Among younger generations in particular, voting tendencies are largely shaped by short-term dynamics and media influence, with preferences that are often fluctuating and sensitive to majority opinion or prevailing media trends (Robinson, 1937; Van der Meer et al., 2016). Furthermore, candidates' credibility and perceived leadership quality emerge as key variables in determining political choices (Alie, 2013; Cwalina et al., 2008).

With the advancement of technology, social media has become a strategic instrument in political campaigns and mass mobilization, enabling the dissemination of messages that are personal, interactive, and far-reaching (Carr & Hayes, 2015). The 2008 Barack Obama campaign demonstrated the effectiveness of social media in activating political participation among young generations through digital platforms (Owen, 2017). In Indonesia, the role of social media in promoting youth political engagement has become increasingly significant, particularly in the context of national and regional elections, as reflected in studies examining the use of Facebook and TikTok as campaign tools (Kholisoh et al., 2019).

Interpersonal communication within political settings has also been shown to play important roles in shaping preferences and voting decisions. The classic studies of Lazarsfeld and Katz revealed how political information flows through influential individuals within social networks, significantly impacting other voters (Gilkerson & Southwell, 2015). Although digital technology mediates interpersonal communication through Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), limitations such as the lack of non-verbal cues and delayed feedback may reduce the effectiveness of digital political communication compared to face-to-face interaction (Sherblom, 2010; Venter, 2019).

Based on this theoretical framework, the purpose of this study is to examine comprehensively the influence of social media and interpersonal communication on the voting behavior of Millennials and Generation Z in Indonesia's 2024 presidential election. The study aims not only to understand the influence of each medium but also to explore their interaction in shaping the electoral behavior of younger generations. Therefore, the research findings are expected to enrich studies of political and communication sciences while providing strategic recommendations for political actors in designing effective and inclusive communication strategies.

While several previous studies have analyzed the relationship between social media and political participation among youth, they generally focused on a single dimension of media influence without integrating the role of interpersonal communication. For instance, Milkman (2017) and Hargittai & Shaw (2013) emphasized digital activism and online participation among younger generations, whereas studies by Mancosu (2017) and Lim (2013) highlighted the persistence of interpersonal communication in shaping civic engagement. However, few studies have examined the interrelationship between digital communication and direct social interaction as mutually reinforcing elements in electoral decision-making—particularly within the context of Indonesia's 2024 presidential election, where Millennials and Generation Z form the majority of voters.

This study therefore contributes a new perspective by empirically integrating the influence of social media and interpersonal communication through a mixed-methods design that combines national-level quantitative analysis and qualitative interpretation. The research novelty lies in its comprehensive approach to exploring how digital and interpersonal dimensions converge to form a complementary political communication ecosystem that shapes the voting behavior of Indonesia's young electorate. Thus, the findings enrich both theoretical discourse and practical strategy development in political communication studies.

METHODS

This study employed a mixed methods approach with an Explanatory Sequential design, combining quantitative and qualitative methods in sequence to obtain comprehensive understanding of the influence of social media and interpersonal communication on the voting behavior of Millennials and Generation Z in Indonesia's 2024 presidential election. At the initial stage, the study applied a quantitative survey using a structured questionnaire designed to measure the variables of social media, interpersonal communication, and voting behavior.

The research sample consisted of 1,200 respondents selected through a multistage random sampling technique. This method divided the population into sub-populations based on provincial regions, from which clusters were randomly chosen to proportionally represent area, age, and gender. This approach ensures a nationally representative sample that reflects the demographic and geographic distribution of young voters (Neuman, 2014). The primary criterion required respondents to be between 17 and 40 years of age, representing Millennials and Generation Z as registered in the 2023 General Elections Commission (KPU) Permanent Voter List (DPT). Data collection was conducted through both online and offline channels to ensure representativeness and broad geographic coverage. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, with multiple linear regression employed to simultaneously examine the relationships and effects among the research variables.

As a complement, the second stage of the study employed a qualitative approach through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews with selected respondents from the quantitative survey. This stage aimed to obtain more detailed qualitative data and interpret the quantitative results within relevant social and cultural contexts. The qualitative data were analyzed using an inductive thematic approach to identify key themes related to patterns of digital and interpersonal political communication in the context of voting behavior.

For the quantitative component, this study relied on surveys conducted through questionnaires. A questionnaire is a data collection technique in which a set of written statements is provided to respondents for completion (Sugiyono, 2014). To strengthen the data collection process, interviews were also conducted through FGDs. According to Yusuf (2014), interviews are events or processes of interaction between the interviewer and the informant, conducted through direct communication or questioning concerning the research object. The purpose of these interviews is to obtain information relevant to the research.

The validity and reliability of the questionnaire instruments were tested through a pilot study and the calculation of Cronbach's alpha coefficients to ensure internal consistency. Research ethics were upheld by prioritizing the principles of informed consent, data confidentiality, and respondent identity protection throughout the data collection and analysis process.

Sample Validation

In the 2024 General Election, the total number of voters reached 204,807,222, with Millennials and Generation Z comprising the majority at 113,622,500 individuals, or 56.46 percent of the electorate. To capture the voting behavior of these two generations, the study employed a sample of 1,200 respondents with a margin of error of 2.8 percent. The sample was proportionally distributed across Indonesia's 38 provinces, ensuring that the findings accurately reflect the voting behavior of Millennial and Generation Z voters.

By gender, Millennial and Gen Z voters were predominantly women, representing 51.2 percent of the sample (614 out of 1,200 respondents), while men comprised 48.8 percent (586 respondents). This distribution aligns with broader demographic patterns, as reflected in the 2023 BPS data, which indicate that the female population slightly outnumbers the male population.

The survey further showed that 12.6 percent of respondents were university students, representing a group in transition toward the labor market. Meanwhile, 35.4 percent identified as unemployed or primarily engaged in household responsibilities.

For the qualitative component, the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involved seven participants drawn from seven different provinces, selected to represent Indonesia's major regions (Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi) and to reflect areas with the largest concentration of young voters as indicated by the 2023 KPU data.

By integrating these methods, the study provides a comprehensive empirical overview of the dynamics of political communication among Indonesia's younger generations, offering both theoretical and practical contributions to the development of effective political communication strategies in the context of the 2024 election.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Social Media on Millennial and Gen Z Voting Behavior

At the population level in the 2024 election, demographic shifts were characterized by the growing proportion of Millennial and Generation Z voters aged 17–39. Alongside improvements in Indonesia's digital infrastructure,

access to information has become increasingly seamless. Consequently, Millennials and Gen Z demonstrate higher levels of political literacy regarding the 2024 presidential election. Moreover, technological advancements enable them to access alternative information sources, thereby counterbalancing narratives provided by conventional media.

In 2017, data from the Ministry of Communication and Information (Kominfo) recorded 96 million social media users in Indonesia. By 2024, this figure had risen to 139 million, equivalent to 49.9 percent of the total population. Social media has, both directly and indirectly, engaged Millennials and Generation Z in political activities, including communication with public officials and the expression of political aspirations.

Survey results indicated that 98.2 percent of Millennial and Generation Z respondents had internet access. Specifically, 99.2 percent of Gen Z respondents reported being connected to the internet, slightly higher than Millennials at 97.3 percent. These findings suggest that Gen Z is inseparable from the internet in nearly all aspects of daily life. This trend is driven by the widespread availability of affordable smartphones, low-cost data packages, and increasingly robust internet infrastructure. Insights from FGD participants reinforced this pattern, as highlighted by La Ode Bastenuddin, a 25-year-old Gen Z respondent from Sulawesi, and Levi Nur Cahyani, a 31-year-old Millennial from Jakarta:

“For us in Generation Z, it is impossible to be separated from the internet—even here in eastern Indonesia, it has become part of our daily lives.” (Basten)

“When it comes to internet connectivity, Millennials and Gen Z are basically the same. Every day, in both work and daily activities, we must always stay connected to the internet.” (Levi)

Indonesia ranks among the largest social media markets globally, with more than 167 million active users. This usage is predominantly driven by young people, particularly Generation Z and Millennials, who show strong preferences for visually oriented platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube.

Among messaging and social media applications, WhatsApp emerged as the most frequently used platform, with 98.3 percent of Millennial and Gen Z respondents reporting regular use, followed by YouTube (94.6%), TikTok (92.8%), Instagram (90.0%), Facebook (79.4%), and Twitter/X as the least used (61.4%).

TikTok continues to dominate among Gen Z, while Instagram and YouTube maintain strong popularity across both generations. Although Facebook has declined in relevance for Gen Z, it remains actively used by Millennials, particularly for accessing news, participating in community groups, and engaging with advertisements.

Millennials and Gen Z use social media as their primary source of political information (59%), compared to only 32 percent who rely on television. Online news portals were cited by 6.3 percent, while traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and other outlets were used by less than 1 percent.

Social media has emerged as the primary reference point for political information among Millennials and Generation Z, owing to its accessibility, rapid dissemination, and interactive features. However, alongside these advantages, it also poses significant challenges, including the spread of hoaxes, the intensification of polarization, and concerns regarding privacy. For both Millennials and Gen Z, social media functions not only as a source of information but also as a medium of interaction and participation in various aspects of life, including political engagement. This dynamic was highlighted by Dedek Wiradi and Salsabila Nakiyah, university students representing Generation Z:

“Every day I access social media such as TikTok, X, and Instagram. Social media has become my primary reference for political information, since a lot of political content—such as presidential campaign activities and candidates’ vision and mission—can be found there.” (Wiradi)

“I use social media to access all kinds of information, including during the presidential election. I rely on social media to learn about the candidates and their ideas, because the information is fast and comprehensive.” (Salsabila)

The dominance of social media is driven primarily by accessibility, rapid dissemination, and interactivity, which enable users to engage directly in political discussions. The statements of Wiradi and Salsabila reflect this trend, where social media serves not only as a news source but also as a tool to understand candidates’ visions, missions, and campaign strategies.

A total of 25.1 percent of respondents reported using social media intensively as their primary source of political information. This group demonstrates a high level of dependence on social media to keep up with developments related to the 2024 presidential election. Meanwhile, 32.2 percent of respondents reported using social media regularly, though not exclusively, indicating that social media serves as one of the main sources of political information without fully replacing others. Furthermore, 30.7 percent of respondents reported using social media only occasionally as a source of political information, suggesting continued reliance on traditional media such as television, newspapers, radio, or interpersonal discussions. By contrast, 12.0 percent of respondents stated that they never use social media for political information, a pattern that may reflect a preference for conventional sources or a lack of interest in political content on digital platforms.

Overall, Millennials and Gen Z acknowledged that social media significantly influenced their political choices: 66.0 percent of respondents (combining “strongly influenced” and “influenced”) admitted that social media content shaped their preferences in choosing presidential and vice-presidential candidates.

A total of **35.6 percent** of respondents stated that social media content strongly influenced their political preferences. This group is highly affected by the narratives, campaigns, or issues discussed on social media platforms. In addition, **30.4 percent** of respondents acknowledged that social media content influenced their political choices, although not as strongly as the first group, indicating that social media constitutes one of the important factors shaping their preferences. Approximately **13.0 percent** of respondents adopted a neutral stance, reporting that social media content did not significantly affect their political preferences; this group may rely more on alternative sources of information or already hold firm political choices. Meanwhile, **11.8 percent** of respondents asserted that social media content had no influence on their political choices, suggesting a tendency toward skepticism about online information or a prioritization of other factors in decision-making. Finally, **9.2 percent** of respondents reported that social media content had a very negligible influence on their political preferences, which may indicate disinterest in political content on social media or the presence of entrenched political convictions.

Social Media is a Significant Factor. The survey data indicate that social media plays a significant role in shaping the political opinions and preferences of Millennials and Generation Z. This finding is further reinforced by qualitative evidence provided by respondents from both generations. As noted by Syahid and Basten, social media has become a central arena through which political narratives are constructed, disseminated, and internalized by young voters.:

“As someone who cannot be separated from social media connectivity, during the presidential election my main source of reference in evaluating the candidates was social media. The abundance of information available there strongly influenced my choice and voting behavior.” (Basten)

“Although not my main reason for choosing, social media inevitably provided detailed information about candidates’ qualities, strengths, and weaknesses, which affected my political behavior and preferences in the 2024 election.” (Syahid).

Social media is not merely a source of information but also plays an active role in shaping political opinions and decision-making. Testimonies from Basten and Syahid further reinforce this trend. Basten acknowledged that social media serves as his primary reference point in evaluating presidential candidates, while Syahid emphasized its importance for Millennials and Generation Z in providing deeper insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates.

In the digital communication era, social media has become the main channel for Generation Z and Millennials to access political information. The findings of this study indicate that more than 80% of respondents from both generations actively use platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube to follow political issues and learn about the profiles and ideas of potential leaders. The visual, interactive, and algorithm-driven nature of social media platforms makes them highly influential spaces of political communication that shape the perceptions and political preferences of young generations.

The tendency of Generation Z and Millennials to consume political content on social media extends beyond information-seeking to the shaping of political attitudes. The quantitative survey revealed that the majority of respondents reported obtaining political information primarily from social media, rather than from conventional mass media or direct interpersonal communication. This finding is corroborated by the qualitative results of the FGDs, where Gen Z informants noted feeling a stronger connection with candidates who were active on social media and who delivered political messages in creative and authentic ways. Furthermore, the involvement of influencers and public figures in disseminating political perspectives has amplified the role of social media as a key driver in shaping political opinion.

However, the dominance of social media as a primary information source also generates significant challenges. The rapid and voluminous circulation of content heightens the risks of disinformation, hoaxes, and the dissemination of politically motivated propaganda that is often unsupported by factual evidence. Provocative and viral content tends to spread more widely than educational or analytical information, thereby shaping political discourse in potentially distorted ways. Qualitative findings further illustrate this concern: several informants acknowledged that they had shared or even believed political content which was later discovered to be inaccurate, largely due to the absence of prior verification.

In this context, the process of political choice formation through social media is both dynamic and complex. Although social media possesses the capacity to reach younger generations rapidly and extensively, the quality of political decision-making that emerges is highly contingent upon individuals’ levels of digital literacy and critical thinking. Consequently, the influence of social media should not be understood in a linear manner as a singular persuasive channel; rather, it must be situated within a broader political communication ecosystem in which multiple sources, actors, and modes of interaction collectively shape voter behavior.

Within the theoretical framework that views media as a social agent in the construction of reality, social media has evolved into a contested political arena that shapes not only public opinion but also the political identity of younger generations. Interactions on these platforms are characterized by horizontality, participation, and decentralization, enabling individuals to act simultaneously as producers and consumers of political information. As such, social media constitutes a critical arena for the formation of political behavior, while at the same time necessitating vigilance to safeguard the validity and reliability of the information being consumed.

Accordingly, the influence of social media on the political choices of Generation Z and Millennials is significant yet not deterministic. Its primary strength lies in fostering emotional proximity, amplifying contextually relevant issues, and disseminating information in formats that resonate with the communication preferences of younger generations. Nevertheless, for this process to culminate in rational and responsible political decision-making, it is essential to strengthen both political and digital literacy. Such efforts will enable young voters to critically assess and evaluate the diverse political narratives they encounter in the digital sphere.

The Influence of Interpersonal Communication with Family and Community on the Political Preferences of Millennials and Generation Z

Interpersonal communication, particularly face-to-face interactions with family, friends, and close community networks, plays a pivotal role in reinforcing voting decisions among Millennials and Generation Z. While these generations are highly active in accessing political information through social media, their decision-making is not determined exclusively by digital exposure. Rather, it is also shaped by direct, personal, and trust-based interactions within their immediate social environments, which provide validation, interpretation, and a sense of shared political meaning.

Survey data among Millennials and Generation Z indicate that close social environments—such as family and friends—have a significant influence on political preferences in the 2024 presidential election. A total of 18.2% of respondents reported that their immediate environment *highly influenced* their political preferences, while 30.5% reported that it *influenced* them. In total, 48.7% of respondents acknowledged that their close social environment had an effect on their political choices.

Although nearly half of the respondents acknowledged the influence of their immediate social environment, the majority (51.3 percent) reported feeling unaffected or adopting a neutral stance.

This finding indicates that in the context of the 2024 presidential election, social factors such as family and peers remain important elements in shaping political preferences, even though not all individuals perceive themselves as influenced by these relationships. This was further confirmed by all participants in the focus group discussions.

“Interpersonal communication with my family may influence my political preferences, but social media remains my main reference in choosing presidential candidates because it provides a more comprehensive evaluation of who the best candidate is.” (Salsabila)

“Communication with friends and colleagues strongly influences my political behavior and preferences, although I balance this by cross-checking information on social media.” (Fathu)

“As a young voter, I believe I already have the ability to evaluate each candidate’s ideas, so the influence of family and friends is minimal, since I can independently assess the candidates’ strengths and qualities through social media.” (Wiradi)

“For Millennials and Gen Z like us, family or friends are not the main reference. Their views are only used as a comparison or affirmation because young people have strong ideals and the ability to research candidates’ qualities.” (Levi)

Interestingly, while social factors remain relevant, social media continues to serve as the primary reference for many respondents in determining their political choices. As emphasized by Salsabila and Wiradi, social media offers broader and more comprehensive access to information regarding candidates. Levi further noted that today’s younger generations tend to rely more on personal research and uphold strong ideals when making political decisions.

At the same time, interest in attending face-to-face campaign events remains substantial (46.5%), although 38.7% of respondents expressed disinterest. This indicates that traditional campaign methods continue to hold value amid the trend toward digitalized political engagement. Overall, the survey confirms that Millennials and Generation Z tend to exhibit greater independence in shaping their political preferences. Social media and personal research serve as the primary drivers, whereas the influence of family and friends functions more as a comparative or confirmatory factor for existing choices. At the population level in the 2024 election, demographic shifts were characterized by a rising number of Millennial and Gen Z voters aged 17–39. With the enhancement of digital infrastructure in Indonesia, access to information has become more readily available, enabling these generations to develop stronger political literacy regarding the presidential election. Furthermore, technological advancements allow Millennials and Gen Z to access alternative sources of information, providing a balance to narratives presented by conventional media.

Although Generation Z is highly digital in its communication behavior, it still demonstrates a tendency to validate political information through interpersonal communication. FGD findings indicate that discussions with

peers, family members, or community leaders remain an important reference point to sharpen or affirm political choices initially formed through digital interactions. Direct interactions provide opportunities for clarification, confirmation, and clearer evaluation of competing political narratives circulating online.

In this regard, interpersonal communication plays a vital role amid the growing flood of information and disinformation on social media. Face-to-face discussions allow for cognitive elaboration, where individuals can test the accuracy of information, assess the logic of arguments, and evaluate the consistency of perspectives against personal and social values. Information initially received passively through social media often acquires deeper and more reflective meaning when processed through close and trusted social interactions.

Within a theoretical framework that views communication as a reciprocal process shaping political awareness, interpersonal communication can be understood as a deliberative space in which political preferences are not only shaped by persuasion but also by dialogue, clarification, and negotiation of meaning. Face-to-face interactions serve as an important medium for young generations to form authentic political convictions grounded in social experience.

Moreover, interpersonal communication helps build emotional bonds and trust in political choices. Amid a political climate increasingly influenced by image-making and instant information, direct discussions offer intimacy that reinforces both rational and affective dimensions of decision-making. For both Millennials and Generation Z, final voting decisions are shaped not only by the appeal of digital messages but also by the depth of discussion and the social legitimacy of perspectives received in their immediate environments.

Thus, the role of interpersonal communication in political decision-making is fundamental—not merely as a complement to digital communication, but as a foundation that strengthens rationality, deepens understanding, and builds confidence in political choices. Political communication strategies that rely solely on digital media without building face-to-face social networks risk losing the depth of influence required to shift or solidify the political preferences of young generations.

The Influence of Interpersonal Communication with the Social Environment and Family on the Political Preferences of Millennials and Generation Z

The advancement of digital technology has fundamentally transformed the landscape of political communication. Nevertheless, despite the wide reach and strong appeal of social media among younger generations, face-to-face interactions remain crucial in shaping voting decisions. Findings from this study indicate that while Millennials and Generation Z primarily rely on social media for political information, their final voting choices are often reinforced through interpersonal communication within their immediate social networks.

Social media serves as a primary entry point for introducing candidates, disseminating political ideas, and constructing an appealing public image. Through visual, narrative, and easily shareable content, social media enables political messages to spread widely and rapidly. Quantitative findings suggest that most respondents first became acquainted with presidential candidates and their policy agendas through platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. Furthermore, endorsements from influencers or public figures on social media strengthen the legitimacy of the political messages conveyed.

Interpersonal communication, however, serves as a mechanism for filtering and deepening the political information obtained from social media. Face-to-face discussions with family, friends, or colleagues provide young voters with a critical avenue to clarify, evaluate, and consolidate their political positions. Qualitative evidence from focus group discussions (FGDs) indicates that direct conversations promote clearer reflection and strengthen both the affective and cognitive dimensions of political decision-making. In many instances, informants reported that their final voting decisions were determined only after engaging in in-depth discussions with trusted individuals within their social networks.

The integration of social media and face-to-face communication forms a complementary political communication ecosystem. While social media enables wide-reaching and rapid dissemination of information, interpersonal communication enhances the depth of understanding and the quality of decision-making. In this context, effective political communication strategies cannot rely solely on one mode of communication. Politicians and political parties must develop approaches that bridge the digital sphere with the social realities of voters, particularly among younger generations, who exhibit complex behaviors and diverse communication preferences.

From a conceptual perspective, this integration reflects the dialectical relationship between informational structures and individual agency. Young voters are not merely passive recipients of political messages; they actively engage in shaping, interpreting, and negotiating these messages across multiple communication channels. Consequently, the effectiveness of political communication depends not only on the frequency of message dissemination but also on the degree to which these messages resonate within voters' social and psychological contexts.

The relationship between these two forms of communication is mutually reinforcing. Social media frequently serves as the initial entry point for generating interest in political issues or figures, while interpersonal

communication reinforces or refines these tendencies through deeper dialogue. Conversely, the outcomes of interpersonal interactions may prompt individuals to seek additional information via social media. This dynamic creates a layered and mutually reinforcing political communication ecosystem. In the context of the 2024 presidential election, both Millennials and Generation Z tend to prioritize substantive issues such as employment opportunities, access to education, and social welfare. They also demonstrate preferences for leaders perceived as approachable, honest, decisive, and innovative. Political messages that are attractively packaged and disseminated through social media become more effective when complemented by interpersonal approaches that foster emotional closeness and trust.

Within the conceptual framework that positions voting behavior as emerging from the interplay between communication structures and individual social dynamics, the integration of social media and interpersonal communication constitutes a strategic factor in shaping the political choices of younger generations. Candidates who successfully synergize robust digital communication with authentic interpersonal engagement are more likely to cultivate trust and foster political loyalty among Millennial and Generation Z voters.

This study highlights the critical importance of employing multidimensional political communication strategies that are attuned to generational characteristics and that effectively bridge digital platforms with everyday social realities. In an increasingly fragmented political landscape, the capacity to manage and integrate cross-channel communication emerges as a key determinant in promoting meaningful and sustainable political participation among younger generations.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that social media exerts a significant influence on the voting behavior of Millennials and Generation Z in the 2024 Presidential Election. A total of 59% of respondents reported relying on social media as their primary source of political information, with WhatsApp (98.3%), YouTube (94.6%), and TikTok (92.8%) emerging as the most frequently used platforms. The accessibility, rapid dissemination of information, and interactive features of these platforms position social media as the dominant tool for acquiring political knowledge. Nonetheless, extensive social media use also introduces challenges, including increased exposure to unverified information, the spread of hoaxes, and heightened polarization of public opinion. Notably, Generation Z appears more reliant on narratives circulating on social media and is more susceptible to emerging political trends, whereas Millennials continue to consult multiple information sources before making electoral decisions. In addition to social media, interpersonal communication also contributes to shaping the political preferences of both generations, though the degree of influence varies. Millennials continue to rely on face-to-face interactions as a key avenue for political deliberation, particularly through discussions with family, friends, and community networks. In contrast, Generation Z places greater emphasis on digital interactions and tends to give less weight to conventional forms of political communication. Among both generations, the most effective interpersonal campaigning strategies are humanistic and participatory in nature, including *blusukan* (direct visits to communities) (20.6%), sports or entertainment activities with the public (20.4%), and open dialogues within academic or community settings. Emotional closeness cultivated through direct interaction can enhance political engagement among Millennials, whereas Generation Z demonstrates a stronger preference for digitally mediated approaches featuring visually appealing and interactive elements.

Overall, this study highlights that social media and interpersonal communication have complementary impacts on shaping the voting behavior of Millennials and Generation Z. While social media serves as the primary source of political information for young voters, interpersonal communication remains essential for strengthening trust and validating information. Thus, the effectiveness of political campaign strategies in the 2024 Presidential Election largely depends on the ability of candidates and campaign teams to balance and optimize both aspects.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alie, M. (2013). *Kredibilitas dan kualitas kepemimpinan dalam pemilihan umum*. Jakarta: Pustaka Politik.
- Budiarjo, M. (2001). *Dasar-dasar ilmu politik*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia.
- Carr, C. T., & Hayes, R. A. (2015). Social media: Defining, developing, and divining. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 23(1), 46–65. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15456870.2015.972282>
- Cwalina, W., Falkowski, A., & Romero, A. (2008). Political image and candidate appeal: A study of political marketing strategies. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 7(2), 105–122. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377850802076369>
- Devito, J. A. (2013). *The interpersonal communication book* (13th ed.). Boston: Pearson.
- Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). (2023). *Democracy index 2023*. Economist Intelligence Unit.

- Gilkerson, L., & Southwell, B. G. (2015). Opinion leaders and the diffusion of political information. *Journal of Communication*, 65(1), 81–101. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12138>
- Hargittai, E., & Shaw, A. (2013). Digitally savvy teens? Exploring the social and technical skills of young internet users. *Social Science Computer Review*, 31(1), 56–69. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439312467754>
- Hidayatun, S., & Widodo, A. T. (2013). Penerapan metode problem solving untuk meningkatkan aktivitas dan hasil belajar kimia siswa. *Journal Chemistry in Education*, 2(2), 165–171.
- Kholisoh, N., Rahmawati, A., & Maulana, I. (2019). Penggunaan Facebook dan TikTok dalam kampanye politik di Indonesia. *Jurnal Komunikasi Indonesia*, 8(1), 45–60.
- Lazarsfeld, P. F., & Katz, E. (1955). *Personal influence: The part played by people in the flow of mass communications*. New York: Free Press.
- Lim, S. S. (2013). The digital generation and political participation. *Media and Communication*, 1(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v1i1.72>
- Mancosu, M. (2017). Face-to-face political communication: The role of interpersonal communication in politics. *Communication Research*, 44(2), 256–280. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650215614375>
- Milkman, R. (2017). Digital activism and youth participation. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 20(3), 314–328. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2016.1213449>
- Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (7th ed.). Boston: Pearson.
- Nugroho, Y. (2012). Politik digital dan generasi muda di Indonesia. *Jurnal Ilmu Politik*, 8(2), 120–134.
- Oey-Gardiner, M., & Gardiner, J. (2013). Bonus demografi dan masa depan Indonesia. *Jurnal Demografi Indonesia*, 7(1), 21–34.
- Owen, D. (2017). Obama's 2008 campaign and social media mobilization. *Political Communication Quarterly*, 34(3), 245–260.
- Plano, J. (1985). Psychological factors in voting behavior. *Political Psychology*, 6(4), 589–605.
- Rakhman, A. (2019). Kampanye media sosial Partai Move Forward di Thailand. *Jurnal Media dan Politik Asia Tenggara*, 5(1), 78–91.
- Robinson, J. A. (1937). The psychology of voting. *American Political Science Review*, 31(1), 1–20.
- Surbakti, A. (2007). *Psikologi politik: Dinamika perilaku pemilih*. Bandung: Refika Aditama.
- Van der Meer, T., Hakhverdian, A., & Aaldering, L. (2016). Media effects on political attitudes: A longitudinal analysis. *European Journal of Communication*, 31(2), 157–173.
- We Are Social. (2023). *Digital report Indonesia 2023*. <https://wearesocial.com/digital-2023-indonesia>
- Yusuf, A. M. (2014). *Metode penelitian: Kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan penelitian gabungan*. Jakarta: Prenadamedia Group.