



The Effect Of Instagram Social Media Use On The Political Literacy Of Generation Z Of Fisip UMC Students In The 2024 Election

Mita Septiyani¹, Sastra Abijaya²

University of Muhammadiyah Cirebon, West Java, Indonesia. Email mitaseptiyani538@gmail.com

University of Muhammadiyah Cirebon, West Java, Indonesia. Email sastraabijaya@umc.ac.id

Corresponding Author. Email sastraabijaya@umc.ac.id

Abstract

Background. Instagram, in its development, is not only a means of entertainment but has also become a source an information in the political field. In the context of the 2024 election, Instagram is one of the strategic platforms Generation Z uses as a medium for political literacy.

Aims. This study aims to determine the influence of Instagram use on the political literacy of FISIP UMC Generation Z students during the 2024 Election. FISIP UMC students are part of Generation Z, an active group on Instagram. As part of Generation Z, they are actively exposed to social media in their daily lives. Therefore, it is interesting to examine whether Instagram use influences the political literacy of FISIP UMC Generation Z students during the 2024 election.

Methods. This study uses a quantitative research method with an associative approach, which is an approach that measures the extent to which independent variables affect dependent variables. The sampling technique used is *Stratified Random Sampling* with a total of 67 respondents from FISIP UMC students of the 2022 batch. The data collection technique uses a questionnaire via Google Forms with Likert-scale measurements. Then the data processing technique uses simple linear regression. The theoretical basis applied in this study is social media theory and political literacy theory.

Result. Based on the results of the study, it is known that there is an influence of Instagram social media use on the political literacy of Generation Z. A regression coefficient value of 0.634 was obtained, which was positive, so the effect of social media use has a positive effect on political literacy. and the value of the table > t-table ($11.383 > 1.6686$).

Conclusion. The results of the statistical test also showed that the determination coefficient (R Square) of 0.666 indicated that 66.6% of the variation in political literacy was influenced by the use of Instagram. The remaining 33.4% is influenced by other variables not studied in this study.

Keywords: Instagram Social Media, Generation Z, and Political Literacy.



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INTRODUCTION

The development of technology today brings quite significant changes in human life. One of the existing technological developments is social media. The use of social media in Indonesia has developed very rapidly. According to the launch of Data Reportal, Indonesia is estimated to have 139 million active social media users in January 2024. There are 126.8 million users aged 18+, which is 64.8% of the total population aged 18+. By January 2024, 75.0 percent of Indonesia's total internet users will use at least one social media platform.

Instagram is one of the most widely used social media platforms in Indonesia. Based on data from We Are Social and Hootsuite (2024), Indonesia has more than 99 million active Instagram users, most of whom are 18–24 years old. Instagram, in its development, is not only a means of entertainment but has also become an information medium in the political field. In the context of the 2024 election, Instagram is one of the strategic platforms political actors use to reach young voters. Political content, such as infographics, campaign videos, live discussions, and interactive features, is used to attract voters' attention and encourage political participation, especially among young voters.

According to KPU data, the majority of voters in the 2024 election are Generation Z, totaling 46,800,161, or 22.85% of the total DPT. According to (Aziz & Widodo, 2022) Gen Z is a term for the generation born between 1997 and 2012. Generation Z has easy access to information and proximity to the Instagram social media. They use these platforms not only to interact but also to access political information. As a group that will play an important role in the 2024 election, Generation Z has great potential to influence the results. Generation Z tends to be highly enthusiastic about the 2024 election.

This high enthusiasm encourages Generation Z to seek political information on Instagram. They tend to trust information from social media more than from conventional media. The information packaged on Instagram, in an attractive and easy-to-understand format, such as infographics and interactive content, aligns with the characteristics of information consumption for this generation. So, Instagram is used by Generation Z as one of their media for political literacy in the 2024 election.

Political literacy can be understood as citizens' knowledge and understanding to play an active role in paying attention to the political process and ongoing political issues. Political literacy is one effort to increase Generation Z's political knowledge ahead of the 2024 election. According to Rozi et al. (2024), political literacy among novice voters, especially Generation Z, is greatly affected by exposure to social media, which shapes their understanding and involvement in elections. According to research (Prakoso et al., 2024), a person's political

interests greatly affect their level of political literacy. A good level of political literacy will encourage individuals to actively participate in elections and democratic processes. The existence of this political literacy indirectly helps Generation Z in obtaining political information that can affect their political participation in the 2024 election

In this context, students of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP) at the University of Muhammadiyah Cirebon (UMC), class of 2022, are part of Generation Z and are actively exposed to Instagram in daily life. As many as 50% of the FISIP UMC students in the class of 2022 are Instagram users. With a background in social science and political science education, they should have sufficient political literacy skills to become critical and participatory voters. However, it cannot be ignored that political literacy among students is still a challenge. The level of understanding of the political system, the rights and obligations as a voter, and the Ability to verify political information still varies, especially in the era of the development of digital media full of disinformation. Instagram is the main social media platform they use to find political information about the 2024 election. The selection of students of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP) at the University of Muhammadiyah Cirebon (UMC) class of 2022 for this study is important because they are Generation Z novice voters who will exercise their voting rights in the 2024 Election. In higher education, students of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP) are expected to have greater political literacy than the general public. However, more research is needed to determine the extent to which Instagram influences their political literacy in the 2024 election.

The rapid development of digital technology has significantly transformed the way people access and process information, including political information. Social media platforms have become central channels for political communication, especially among young generations. In Indonesia, the number of active social media users continues to increase, with Generation Z emerging as one of the most dominant user groups. This phenomenon has positioned social media as a strategic medium for political education and literacy.

Among various platforms, Instagram has become one of the most popular social media applications used by young people. Its visual-based features, interactive content, and algorithmic personalization enable users to access political information in an attractive and easily digestible format. Political actors, institutions, and civil society organizations increasingly utilize Instagram to disseminate campaign messages, policy information, and political narratives, particularly during election periods.

In the context of the 2024 Indonesian General Election, Generation Z constituted a

significant proportion of eligible voters. As first-time and young voters, this generation plays a crucial role in determining electoral outcomes. Their political attitudes and behaviors are largely shaped by digital media exposure. Consequently, political literacy becomes an essential prerequisite for fostering informed participation and democratic engagement among young voters.

Political literacy refers to individuals' ability to understand political systems, public policies, civic rights and obligations, and democratic processes. Adequate political literacy enables citizens to critically evaluate political information, resist misinformation, and participate meaningfully in political life. However, despite their high digital engagement, many young voters still face challenges in verifying information and interpreting political content critically.

Students of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP) at the University of Muhammadiyah Cirebon (UMC) represent a strategic group in this context. As Generation Z students with academic exposure to social and political studies, they are expected to possess higher levels of political literacy. Nevertheless, variations in political understanding and media literacy remain evident, particularly in the era of digital misinformation.

Previous studies have demonstrated that social media contributes positively to political knowledge, awareness, and participation. However, most existing research focuses on general youth populations or multiple platforms, with limited attention to specific institutional contexts and electoral moments. Moreover, few studies have examined Instagram's role using comprehensive indicators of social media engagement.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effect of Instagram social media use on the political literacy of Generation Z students at FISIP UMC during the 2024 Election. By focusing on a specific academic community and electoral context, this research seeks to provide empirical evidence on how digital media influences political literacy among young voters and to contribute to the development of more effective political education strategies in the digital era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media

According to Latif (2022), social media consists of two words: "media," interpreted as a means of communication, and "social," interpreted as a social reality in which individuals take actions that contribute to society. Social media is the highest level of technology in the

development of digital technology. The reach of social media is so wide that its influence almost dominates all aspects of human life today.

According to Mayfield (in Yusran & Sapar, 2022), there are four main indicators of social media as follows:

Participation, Social media encourages active contributions for its users, not just passive content consumption.

- 1) Openness (*openness*), Most social media platforms are open to sharing information, unless there are certain restrictions.
- 2) Conversation, social media is dialogical, different from traditional media, which is monological.
- 3) Community (*community*), Social Media allows for the formation of a group where individuals with similar interests can interact with each other.
- 4) Connectivity (*connectedness*), *social media uses* links to disseminate information and connect people.

Political Literacy

Literacy in the political context can be interpreted as the community's ability to identify and understand their needs regarding political issues, especially those related to the electoral process and substance. Political literacy, according to Mudhok (in Irwani et al., 2024), is the ability of individuals to understand the political process and political issues, enabling them to actively participate as citizens. The level of political literacy has four elements: First, awareness of the importance of political activities and institutions, their authority, and their role. Second, the ability to form opinions and autonomy of positions in the political process in order to produce a political outcome. Third, knowledge of government policies, planning, and budgets for development and public services. Fourth, Participation in political activities. Of the four elements of the statement, the three main indicators or benchmarks of political literacy are:

1. Political knowledge. Political knowledge is an individual's or a group's understanding of the political system, government processes, public policies, and citizens' rights and obligations.
2. Political consciousness. Political consciousness refers to the extent to which individuals or groups understand, care about, and engage with the political system, various events, and issues that impact people's lives. This reflects a person's level of understanding of rights

and obligations as a citizen of the country and, at the same time, describes participation in political and social activities.

3. Political partispatiality. Political participation is an activity carried out by citizens, both individually and in groups, to influence the policy-making process of the government.

Social Media and Political Communication

Social media has transformed traditional patterns of political communication by enabling interactive, participatory, and decentralized information exchange. Unlike conventional media, social media allows users to actively create, distribute, and respond to political content. This participatory nature strengthens citizens' involvement in public discourse and political processes. Mayfield identifies five main characteristics of social media: participation, openness, conversation, community, and connectivity. Participation refers to users' active engagement in producing and sharing content. Openness reflects accessibility and transparency in information exchange. Conversation emphasizes dialogical interaction, while community facilitates the formation of interest-based networks. Connectivity enables rapid information dissemination through digital links. These characteristics make social media an effective medium for political learning and engagement. Through interactive features such as comments, stories, live streaming, and hashtags, users can access diverse political perspectives and engage in public debates.

Instagram as a Medium for Political Information

Instagram is a visual-oriented social media platform that integrates images, videos, infographics, and interactive tools. Its format enables political messages to be packaged in appealing and concise forms, making them more accessible to young audiences.

Several studies have found that Instagram functions not only as a social networking platform but also as a source of political information. Political actors utilize Instagram to promote campaigns, disseminate policy narratives, and mobilize supporters. Meanwhile, users rely on Instagram for updates on political events, candidate profiles, and public issues.

For Generation Z, Instagram represents a primary gateway to political information. Their preference for visual content and short-form messages aligns with Instagram's communication style. Consequently, exposure to political content on Instagram significantly influences their political attitudes and understanding.

Political Literacy

Political literacy refers to individuals' capacity to understand, evaluate, and participate in political processes. It encompasses not only factual knowledge but also critical awareness and civic engagement. Politically literate citizens are able to assess political information objectively and make informed decisions. Political literacy consists of three main dimensions: political knowledge, political awareness, and political participation. Political knowledge includes understanding political institutions, laws, and policies. Political awareness reflects individuals' sensitivity to political issues and civic responsibilities. Political participation involves engagement in electoral and non-electoral political activities. High levels of political literacy contribute to democratic stability and citizen empowerment. Conversely, low political literacy increases vulnerability to misinformation, political manipulation, and apathy.

Social Media and Political Literacy among Generation Z

Empirical studies indicate a positive relationship between social media use and political literacy among young people. Exposure to political content on digital platforms enhances political knowledge, stimulates interest in public affairs, and encourages participation.

Research focusing on Generation Z demonstrates that this cohort relies heavily on social media for political information. Digital platforms shape their political socialization processes and influence their civic orientations. However, the impact of social media varies depending on content quality, user engagement patterns, and individual critical thinking skills.

While many studies emphasize the positive effects of social media, others warn about potential risks such as misinformation, echo chambers, and political polarization. These contradictory findings indicate the need for more context-specific investigations.

Research Gap

Despite extensive research on social media and political literacy, several gaps remain. First, many studies employ single-variable models that do not incorporate broader socio-political factors. Second, limited attention has been given to the quality and credibility of political content on Instagram. Third, most research adopts cross-sectional designs, which restricts causal interpretation. Fourth, empirical evidence from specific academic institutions and local contexts remains scarce.

Furthermore, qualitative insights into how young voters interpret and internalize political information are still underexplored. The potential negative consequences of social media exposure are also insufficiently addressed.

This study addresses these gaps by focusing on Instagram use among FISIP UMC students during the 2024 Election, employing comprehensive indicators of social media engagement, and providing empirical evidence within a specific institutional context.

METHODS

The research method used in this study is quantitative. Quantitative research methods, according to Sugiyono (2019), are research methods based on the philosophy of positivism, used to research certain populations or samples, collect data using research instruments, and analyze quantitative or statistical data, with the aim of describing and testing hypotheses. The data collection technique used is *stratified random sampling*. *Stratified random sampling*, according to Sugiyono (2019), is a sampling technique that divides the population into strata (small groups) based on characteristics relevant to the research. After the population is divided, samples are randomized from each stratum.

The population in this study comprises 202 students from the FISIP, University of Muhammadiyah Cirebon, class of 2022. To determine the sample, the researcher used the Slovin formula with a sampling error rate of 10% (0.1) and a significance level of 10% (0.1). That way, the sample used in this study amounted to 67 students.

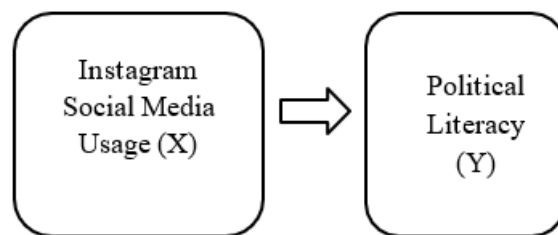


Figure 1 Frame of Mind

In this study, the free variable, or variable X, is Instagram use, and the bound variable is political literacy. In variable X social media use, the measured indicators are participation (participation), Openness (openness), Conversation (Conversation), community (Community), and connectivity (connectedness). Meanwhile, the variables Y of political literacy are measured by political knowledge, political awareness, and political participation.

DISCUSSION

Researchers have collected data by distributing questionnaires to 67 FISIP UMC students of the 2022 batch. The researcher processed the data using SPSS to conduct statistical tests.

Validity Test

The validity test assesses whether the questionnaire distributed to the respondent is valid.

Table 1 Variable X Validity Test

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation ion	Cronbac h's Alpha if Item Deleted
X1	36.45	26.857	.622	.872
X2	36.64	25.658	.672	.868
X3	36.45	27.100	.554	.877
X4	36.43	27.552	.602	.874
X5	37.09	24.477	.648	.872
X6	36.78	27.025	.548	.878
X7	36.69	24.703	.767	.860
X8	36.61	27.514	.553	.877
X9	36.42	26.914	.691	.868
X10	36.36	28.112	.537	.878

Source: SPSS Output

Based on the validity test table, the validity of variable X, Instagram Social Media Usage, was obtained for each item, the Corrected Item-Total Correlation value statement, or the calculated value of the > rtable with a table r value of 0.317. Thus, all statement items in the Instagram Social Media Usage variable (X) are declared valid because they meet the instrument validity test criteria.

Table 2 Variable Validity Test Y

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation ion	Cronbac h's Alpha if Item Deleted
Y1	28.18	15.361	.595	.803
Y2	28.13	15.542	.578	.805
Y3	28.25	16.162	.396	.829
Y4	28.15	15.705	.536	.810
Y5	28.31	15.218	.607	.801

Y6	28.16	15.745	.556	.808
Y7	28.13	15.724	.526	.811
Y8	28.55	13.312	.654	.795

Source: SPSS Output

Based on the table above, the validity test of the Political Literacy variable (Y) was obtained for each statement item of the Political Literacy variable (Y), the *Corrected Item-Total Correlation value*, or the *r-count value* > the table r value of 0.317. Thus, all statement items in the Political Literacy variable (Y) are declared valid because they meet the criteria for the instrument validity test.

Reliability Test

Reliability tests are used to measure the extent to which an indicator is consistent or the extent to which the item can be used to measure the same object by producing the same data. An item is said to be reliable if its Cronbach's Alpha value is > 0.60.

Table 3 Variable X Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.884	10

Source: SPSS Output

Based on Table 3, the Reliability Test of Variable X shows that the *value of Cronbach's Alpha* for the variable of Instagram Social Media Usage (X) is 0.884. This shows that *the value of Cronbach's Alpha* is > 0.60. Then the Social Media variable (X) can be considered reliable.

Table 4 Variable Reliability Test Y

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.828	8

Source: SPSS Output

Table 4 of the Y Variable Reliability Test shows that *the Cronbach Alpha* value of the Political Literacy (Y) variable is 0.828. This shows that *Cronbach's Alpha* is > 0.60. The

Political Literacy (Y) variable is reliable.

Descriptive Analysis of Variables

Based on the descriptive analysis table for the X variable on Instagram social media use, Instagram has an average score of 4.07, indicating that respondents' responses in this category are very good, as it falls within the 4.01– range based on the assessment criteria.

Table 5 Descriptive Analysis Variable X

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Squirt Squirt	Maxi mum	N.	Std. Deviation
X1	67	2	5	4.21	.769
X2	67	2	5	4.01	.879
X3	67	2	5	4.21	.808
X4	67	3	5	4.22	.692
X5	67	1	5	3.57	1.062

Source: SPSS Output

Table 6 Descriptive Analysis of Variable Y

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Squirt Squirt	Maxi mum	N.	Std. Deviation
Y1	67	2	5	4.09	.773
Y2	67	2	5	4.13	.757
Y3	67	2	5	4.01	.844
Y4	67	2	5	4.12	.769
Y5	67	2	5	3.96	.787
Y6	67	3	5	4.10	.741
Y7	67	2	5	4.13	.776
Y8	67	1	5	3.72	1.070
Valid N (listwise)	67	Average		4.03	

Source : SPSS Output

Based on the descriptive analysis table of the Y variable of political literacy has an average score of 4.03, it can be concluded that the respondents' response to literacy Politics is included in the very good category because it falls within the 4.01– range based on the research criteria.

T-test (hypothesis)

To determine whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected, the t-test is used. To see

if there is an influence of the variables on Instagram social media use (X) to the political literacy variable (Y).

Table 7 t-test (hypothesis)

Coefficient						
Models		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(With stant)	6.493	2.286		2.840	.006
	ME IS THE SOAP IA	.634	.056	.816	11.383	.000

a. Dependent Variable: POLITICAL LITERACY

Source : SPSS Output

Based on the t-test table (hypothesis), the tcal value is 11.383. In accordance with the decision-making criteria in the t-test, if the tcount > ttable (11.383 > 1.6686) and the significance value (Sig.) is 0.000 < 0.05, then the alternative hypothesis (H1) there is a significant influence of the use of Instagram social media on the political literacy of Generation Z of FISIP UMC students in the 2024 election is accepted and the null hypothesis (H0) that there is no effect of the use of Instagram social media on the political literacy of Generation Z of FISIP UMC students in the 2024 election is rejected. This means that Instagram's social media use significantly influences the political literacy of FISIP UMC Generation Z students during the 2024 election.

CONCLUSION

1. Based on the analysis of the variables of Instagram social media use, which has an average score of 4.07, it can be concluded that the respondents' response to social media is included in the category of very good because it is in the interval of 4.01 – 5.00 based on the assessment criteria.
2. The political literacy variable has an average score of 4.03. It can be concluded that the respondents' responses to political literacy fall within the very good category, as they are in the 4.01–5.00 range based on the assessment criteria.
3. Based on statistical tests, it can be concluded that the use of Instagram social media has a

positive and significant effect on political literacy. Regression test results show that a 1-unit increase in social media use increases political literacy by 0.634 units. This influence is positive, which means that the more active the use of social media, the higher the political literacy of Generation Z. The results of the t-test, with a calculated t-value of $11.383 > t \text{ table } 1.6686$ and the significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, so that the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, which means that the influence of social media use on political literacy is statistically significant. In addition, the results of the determination coefficient test showed an R-Square value of 0.666, indicating that 66.6% of the variation in political literacy can be explained by the social media variables, while the remaining 33.4% is influenced by other variables in this study.

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