

HALF-HEARTED POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: SOCIAL MEDIA AND FULFILMENT OF ISLAMIC YOUNG VOTERS' INFORMATION NEED

KOESWORO SETIAWAN, MUHAMMAD FAHRIZA PERMANA
UNIVERSITAS DJUANDA, BOGOR

koesworo.setiawan@unida.ac.id

Abstract

Young people in Indonesia comprise a large population but are synonymous with low political participation. This study aims to determine social media's influence on Islamic young people's political participation. Respondents were selected from as many as 88 people through the Slovin formula from a population of 712 students. The independent variable is the content of messages in the @totalpolitikcom Instagram account with clear, convincing, concise, comprehensive, and concrete indicators. The dependent variable is the political attitude of students with cognitive, affective, and conative indicators. The pre-test results showed all instruments were valid and reliable. Measurement of the coefficient of determination showed a positive effect of variable x on variable y on level 78.4%. The questionnaire results showed that the "clear" indicator (x1) had the highest score, then "convincing" (x2) and the "conative" (y3) had the lowest. The study concluded that social media had a significant effect on political attitudes. However, the lowest scores of x2 and y3 indicate that social media messages failed to address respondents' primary concerns, resulting in half-hearted political participation.

Keywords: political participation, general election, political attitude, Islamic young voters



A. Introduction

In 2024, the Indonesian General Elections Commission (KPU) has determined 204,807,222 permanent voters ¹. Of these, 66,822,389 (33.60%) are voters from the millennial generation and 46,800,161 (22.85%) from Generation Z ². The millennial generation refers to the population born between 1980 and 1994. Generation Z, meanwhile, refers to the 1995–2000s birth range. The two groups have a population of around 113.6 million or 55.4% of the total voters. Some young voters also exercise their right to vote for the first time.

The large population of young voters is an attractive electoral force for competing candidates. As many as 24.9% of young voters are known to be swing or undecided voters ³. The attractiveness of young voters is even stronger because the percentage of electability of the three pairs of presidential and

¹ KPURI, "DPT Pemilu 2024 Dalam Negeri Dan Luar Negeri, 204,8 Juta Pemilih," kpu.go.id, 2023, <https://www.kpu.go.id/berita/baca/11702/dpt-pemilu-2024-nasional-2048-juta-pemilih>.

² Republika, "56 Persen Pemilih Pemilu 2024 Dari Kelompok Gen z Dan Milenial," news.republika.co.id, 2023, <https://news.republika.co.id/berita/rx72ap330/56-persen-pemilih-pemilu-2024-dari-kelompok-gen-z-dan-milenial%0A>.

³ Dian Erika Nugraheny and Icha Rastika, "Survei Litbang Kompas: 'Undecided Voters' Paling Banyak Di Kategori Usia Lebih Dari 60 Tahun," kompas.com, 2023, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2023/09/18/17013701/survei-litbang-kompas-undecided-voters-paling-banyak-di-kategori-usia-lebih%0A>.



vice presidential candidates for the 2024 elections does not exceed 50%. Candidate pairs that can influence voting decisions in the young voters group are vital assets to outperform their rivals.

The 2024 elections will be held simultaneously to elect members of the DPR, DPRD, DPD, and president and vice president with the conditions set out in Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections. This regulation stipulates that voters are Indonesian citizens who are 17 years old or older, married, or have been married. Students are one of the elements of society who play a role in exercising their voting rights in the 2024 elections when viewed from the general age of students at 18 years and older. So, in the 2024 election contestation, students will participate in exercising their voting rights to choose the leaders they believe in.

Young voters are widely associated with low knowledge and understanding of politics, including the political attitudes, views, and behaviors they need to take.⁴ Several factors influence low political engagement and participation, including political parties that do not represent the aspirations of voters⁵, problem

⁴ Tom Lodge, "Voter Abstention in the South African General Election of 1999," *Representation* 39, no. 2 (2003): 105–18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344890308523380>.

⁵ Anastasia Ryabchuk, "Voter Abstention in South African 2014 Elections: Beyond the Apathy Argument," *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 92, no. 1 (2016): 37–59.



with literacy, lack of interest, low awareness as a citizen ⁶, and attitudes towards the political system ⁷. Experts interpret attitudes differently, but in general, they are relatively comprehensive and enduring evaluations of an object,⁸ person, or concept in positive or negative dimensions⁹. Attitudes refer to good-bad evaluations of almost anything, including people, social groups, physical objects, behaviors, and even abstract concepts ¹⁰. Evaluations are psychological tendencies expressed as favor or disfavor ¹¹, based on information accessed in a specific time and situation ¹². Information and news accessed from various media, including social media, shape users' political perceptions and preferences ¹³.

⁶ Daniel Stockemer and Andre Blais, "Voters and Abstainers in National and European Elections," *European Review* 27, no. 2 (2019): 300–315, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1062798718000728>.

⁷ Lorenzo Bosi Martín Portos and Lorenzo Zamponi, "Life beyond the Ballot Box: The Political Participation and Non-Participation of Electoral Abstainers," *European Societies* 22, no. 2 (2020): 231–65, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2019.1610785>.

⁸ Alice H Eagly and Shelly Chaiken, "The Advantages of an Inclusive Definition of Attitude," *Social Cognition* 25, no. 5 (2007): 582–602.

⁹ Leandre R Fabrigar and Duane T Wegener, *Attitude Structure*, ed. R. F Baumeister and E. J. Finkel (Oxford University Press, 2010).

¹⁰ Fabrigar and Wegener.

¹¹ Eagly and Chaiken, "The Advantages of an Inclusive Definition of Attitude."

¹² Norbert Schwarz, "Attitude Construction: Evaluation in Context," *Social Cognition* 25, no. 5 (2007): 638–56.

¹³ Jan Kleinnijenhuis, Anita M J van Hoof, and Wouter van Atteveldt, "The Combined Effects of Mass Media and Social Media on Political Perceptions and Preferences," *Journal of Communication* 69, no. 6 (2019): 650–73, <https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqz038>.



Social media provides convenience and becomes a place to interactively establish relationships between users, build and manage close social relationships, and share values, needs, feelings, and content (text, photos, and videos) (user-generated content/UGC) ^{14 15 16 17}. The dimensions of user attitudes during interactions with social media intermediaries are formed from three aspects, namely understanding, thinking, perception, and knowledge (cognitive), emotions and feelings (affective), and actions (conative) ^{18 19}. Cognitive aspects are related to a person's understanding, thoughts, perceptions, and knowledge formed during interaction with the media through shared UGC and as a benefit of sharing ideas with other users. Affective aspects include the emotional dimensions and feelings of a person

¹⁴ Caleb T Carr and Rebecca A Hayes, "Social Media: Defining, Developing, and Divining," *Atlantic Journal of Communication* 23, no. 1 (2015): 46–65.

¹⁵ Philip N Howard and Malcolm R Parks, "Social Media and Political Change: Capacity, Constraint, and Consequence," *Journal of Communication* (Oxford University Press, 2012).

¹⁶ Johanna Woodcock Ross, "Specialist Communication Skills for Social Workers: Focusing on Service Users' Needs" (Macmillan, 2016), <https://kar.kent.ac.uk/id/eprint/63203>.

¹⁷ Mohammad Salehan, Dan Jong Kim, and Changsu Kim, "Use of Online Social Networking Services from a Theoretical Perspective of the Motivation-Participation-Performance Framework," *Journal of the Association for Information Systems* 18, no. 2 (2017): 1.

¹⁸ Cheng-Chieh Hsiao, "Understanding Content Sharing on the Internet: Test of a Cognitive-Affective-Conative Model," *Online Information Review* 44, no. 7 (2020): 1289–1306.

¹⁹ Young Hoon Kim, Dan J Kim, and Kathy Wachter, "A Study of Mobile User Engagement (MoEN): Engagement Motivations, Perceived Value, Satisfaction, and Continued Engagement Intention," *Decision Support Systems* 56 (2013): 361–70, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2013.07.002>.



expressed in response to situations they experience during interaction through the media. Feelings and emotions can consist of sadness, joy, anger, anxiety, sympathy, empathy, etc. The appearance and style of writing can evoke emotions affecting attitude formation and change ²⁰. The conative aspect is oriented towards observable behavior resulting from attitudes. This dimension includes actions or reactions that users show as a direct reaction. The connectedness of certain social media account users can be interpreted as a form of conative aspect. Likewise, the initiative to upload, respond to, and share content. Or other behaviors as indirect responses after users interact on social media.

How users understand the shared message well can be examined based on the “5c’s” principle: clear, convincing, concise, comprehensive, and concrete. The message conveyed contains clarity of direction and purpose that the message maker intends, not raising confusion (clear). Convincing means that the message can fulfill the user's emotional and psychological aspects. The message must be able to answer the needs and provide a solution to the respondent's basic concerns, hopes, or problems. Concise is a message that is packaged with simple diction and structure. The message is delivered with brief,

²⁰ F Ryffel et al., “How Emotional Media Reports Influence Attitude Formation and Change” (International Communication Association, 2013), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/15213269.2014.933850>.



concise sentences, the right choice of words, is easy to understand and is not multi-interpreted. Comprehensive emphasizes an understanding of the broad, complete, in-depth topics and gives as much meaning as possible to the information being discussed. Finally, concrete is a message based on the context of space, time, and related events relevant to the needs and wants of the audience.

Social media plays a vital role in shaping public opinion and perception ^{21 22 23}. Social media plays a key role for young people to improve their ability and skills to interpret and analyze the content of digital media messages about current information²⁴.

Social media provides a convenient and accessible channel for young people. Social media features make it easy for users to participate in new political groups online, write and share blogs about political issues, and share political videos on their social

²¹ Nick Anstead and Ben O'Loughlin, "Social Media Analysis and Public Opinion: The 2010 UK General Election," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 20, no. 2 (2015): 204–20.

²² Ji Won Kim, "They Liked and Shared: Effects of Social Media Virality Metrics on Perceptions of Message Influence and Behavioral Intentions," *Computers in Human Behavior* 84 (2018): 153–61.

²³ Brian E Weeks, Alberto Ardèvol-Abreu, and Homero de Zúñiga, "Online Influence? Social Media Use, Opinion Leadership, and Political Persuasion," *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 29, no. 2 (2017): 214–39.

²⁴ Howard Rheingold, *Using Participatory Media and Public Voice to Encourage Civic Engagement* (MacArthur Foundation Digital Media and Learning Initiative, 2008).



media platforms ²⁵. Social media is also a means for them to consume political information, facilitate open discussions, and view issues from different perspectives on political issues ²⁶. One of the media that actively shares content and becomes a space for public interaction is the Instagram account @totalpolitikcom. Active since 2016, @totalpolitikcom has posted 3,277 contents, including photos, posters, and videos specifically on political issues, with 153,000 followers.

In previous research, political participation is more associated with media literacy skills from a moral ²⁷, social-anthropological-spiritual perspective ²⁸ ²⁹ and the extent to which social media content affects voter behavior and politics at the system level ³⁰. This study aims to test the hypothesis: the

²⁵ Editor Editor and Syifa Siti Aulia, "Citizenship and Democracy: How Young Citizen Behave Democratically in Digital Age," 2020, <https://scite.ai/reports/10.2991/assehr.k.200320.074>.

²⁶ ÖZGE Öz Döm and YILMAZ Bingöl, "Motivations of Turkish Youth for Political Participation," ed. Hacer ARSLAN KALAY and Yüksel Akay ÜNVAN (Cetinje: IVPE, 2021), 178–96.

²⁷ M S Hassan, "Media Literacy and Young People's Integrity in Political Participation: A Structural Equation Modelling Approach," *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication* 38, no. 4 (2022): 355–73, <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2022-3804-20>.

²⁸ David E Campbell, "Social Networks and Political Participation," *Annual Review of Political Science* 16, no. 1 (2013): 33–48, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-033011-201728>.

²⁹ A Grotlüschen, "Beyond Literacy and Language Provision: Socio-Political Participation of Migrants and Large Language Minorities in Five Countries from PIAAC R1/R2," *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education* 27, no. 1 (2021): 42–62, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477971419898491>.

³⁰ Robin Effing, Jos Van Hillegersberg, and Theo Huibers, "Social Media and Political Participation: Are Facebook, Twitter and YouTube



content of media messages affects the political attitudes of Islamic students by measuring the indicators: cognitive, affective, and conative. In addition, this study also analyses the “micro” indicators of media message content and attitude dimension dynamics by answering two research questions: 1) does the content of @totalpolitikcom Instagram messages answer the needs and solutions to respondents' basic problems in fulfilling their information needs? and 2) to what extent do @totalpolitikcom Instagram messages influence students' political participation?

B. Method

This research used a quantitative approach with a survey method. The young group is set at 16–25 years old. The research population was 712 people, meeting the criteria of being students of the Faculty of Social, Political, and Computer Science (Fisipkom) of Djuanda University. Fisipkom students are assumed to access political information more often than students from other study programs. The sample was set at 88 Islamic young people (student) from the calculation results

Democratizing Our Political Systems?,” in *Electronic Participation: Third IFIP WG 8.5 International Conference, EPart 2011, Delft, The Netherlands, August 29--September 1, 2011. Proceedings 3*, 2011, 25–35.



based on the Slovin formula with an error rate of 5% ³¹. We pre-tested the questionnaire to ensure that the respondents' answers, interpretations, and understanding aligned with the research objectives ³². The questionnaire was in a Google form distributed to respondents through the WhatsApp application. The independent variable (x) is the message content of the @totalpolitikcom account, with *clear*, *convincing*, *concise*, *comprehensive*, and *concrete* indicators. The dependent variable (y) is students' political attitudes towards message content, with *cognitive*, *affective*, and *conative* indicators.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Result

Respondent characteristics include gender, age, study program, and length of study. Respondents were selected based on three criteria: active status students of Fisipkom Djuanda University Bogor, owning and actively using an Instagram account. Djuanda University with the tagline "campus of monotheism" (kampus bertauid), sociologically, the majority of students are Muslim. The research sample was all Muslim. The following selection is through respondents with the question: do

³¹ Hamed Taherdoost, "Sampling Methods in Research Methodology; How to Choose a Sampling Technique for Research," *How to Choose a Sampling Technique for Research* (April 10, 2016), 2016.

³² Iqnet, "Questionnaire Pretest Procedures," 2017, https://www.ignnet.gov/sites/default/files/files/14_Questionnaire_Pretest_Procedures.pdf%0A.



you follow Instagram @totalpolitikcom (hereinafter referred to as Instagram).

Table 1. Respondent characteristics			
Category	Characteristics	Quantity	Percentage
Gender	male	46	52,3%
	female	42	47,7%
Age	17-19	2	2,3%
	20-2	29	33%
	22-23	56	62,5%
	24-25	2	2,2%
Majoring	communication	73	83%
	public-adm	14	15,9%
	computer	1	1,1%
duration of study	1 year	2	2,3%
	2 years	5	5,7%
	3 years	22	25%
	4 years	56	63,6%
	others	3	3,4%

Source: questionnaire data

Researchers pre-tested 20 respondents with an error rate of 5% and 0.444. The basis for decision-making is if the AVE score is more significant than r^{table} , the instrument is declared valid, and if the AVE score is smaller than r^{table} , the instrument item is declared invalid. Reliability measurement requires an instrument declared valid at the previous test stage. The Cronbach alpha (α) value is greater than the coefficient of 0.60; the instrument is declared reliable. The α value is smaller than the coefficient 0,60; the instrument is declared unreliable. The results of instrument measurement are presented in Table 2 and 3.

Table 2. Validity Test Result

Variable	Validity Measurement				
	AVE score	r-table	standard error	p-value	result
message	0,771	0,444	0,05	0,001	valid
political attitude	0,783			0,001	valid

Source: SPSS data analysis

Table 3. Reliability Test Result					
Variable	Reliability Measurement				
	α	coefficient	N-item	mean	result
message	0,962			3.627	reliable
political attitude	0,936	0,60	22	3.714	reliable

Source: SPSS data analysis

With Pearson's product moment correlation technique, the test results showed that the research instrument achieved an AVE score of 0.771 (message) and 0.783 (political attitude) exceeding the r^{table} score of 0.444.

Table 4. Measurement Correlation Result							
Predictor		t-Table	t	ρ -Value	Level of Significance	R	r^2
Constant	B						
2.652	0.413	1.662	17.852	0,001	$\alpha = 0.05$	0,885	0,784

Source: correlation pearson test

The research instrument is also declared consistent and can be used as a measuring tool with α of 0.962 (message) and 0.936 (political attitude) greater than the coefficient value of



0.60. In other words, all instruments were declared valid and reliable.

According to Table 4, the Pearson correlation test results showed that the content of social media messages influences political attitudes, $r = 0.885$, $\rho < 0.001$, $r^2 = 0.784$. Political attitudes can be predicted by the regression formula $y = 2.652 + 0.413x$. Partial test results showed ρ_value is smaller than the significance level score (α), $0.001 < 0.050$, and the t-distribution value is greater than the t^{value} , $17.852 > 1.662$. The results test showed, we can accept an alternative hypothesis, coined “there is an influence of Instagram messages on students' political attitudes”.

The strength of the influence of message content on political attitudes is indicated by a score of 0.413. This means that a 1% increase in the message content score will increase the student political attitude score by 41.3%. The coefficient of determination (r^2) score is 0.784, indicating a strong and positive influence of the message (x) on political attitudes (y) of 78.4%, and the remaining 21,6% of the variability is influenced by other factors.

According to Table 5, the "clear" obtained the highest score of 4.10. On this indicator, respondents were asked for their responses about the extent to which Instagram sends messages that are easy to understand, uncomplicated, and unbiased. The



lowest score was recorded in the “convincing”, which was 3.86. Respondents were asked for their responses about whether the message was related to their own needs, impressive, interests, and rationale.

On the political attitude, the “affective” recorded the highest score of 4.04. Respondents were asked to express their feelings about whether the information shared by Instagram was important to them and whether it met their emotional and psychological needs regarding the 2024 elections. The “conative” scored the lowest, asking whether the messages on Instagram changed political behavior, mobilized political support, and shaped respondents' perspectives on the 2024 election.

Table 5. Message Item Recapitulation Score

Variable	Indicator	Score	Categor y	Average
message	clear (x1)	4,10	good	3,92 (good)
	convincing (x2)	3,86	good	
	concise (x3)	3,99	good	
	comprehensive (x4)	3,99	good	
	concrete (x5)	3,92	good	
political attitude	cognitive (y1)	3,83	good	3,89 (good)
	affective (y2)	4,04	good	
	conative (y3)	3,82	good	

Source: questionnaire analysis result

2. Discussion



Linear regression measurements show the influence of messages on students' political attitudes, with a significant percentage, namely 78.4%. The high level of influence aligns with the "good" and "very good" categories on all 14 indicators. In variable x, the "good" and "very good" categories mean that all indicators fulfill the principles of effective communication: clear, convincing, concise, comprehensive, and concrete.

Of the five indicators, the clarity aspect is the most dominant compared to the other four. Respondents can capture well the intent, direction, and purpose of the message maker. However, the aspect of fulfilling needs and the extent to which information provides a solution to the concerns, hopes, or problems faced by respondents (convincing) is the smallest score (3.86). The lack of convincing in solving problems and meeting information needs makes Instagram content insufficient to drive respondents' behavior (political participation). It is evident that the "conative" indicator (y) achieved the lowest score, 3.82. The low score of "conative" is also interpreted as the strengthening of negative assessments or the tendency of respondents' positions to feel disfavor.

This research reinforces Zhu et. al.³³ on political participation among young people in Hong Kong. According to

³³ Alex Yue Feng Zhu, Alex Lih Shing Chan, and Kee Lee Chou, "Creative Social Media Use and Political Participation in Young People: The



their study, in addition to being a medium of interaction and a source of information, young people also express their political participation by producing creative content on social media. This research also aligns with Zhou & Pinkleton study³⁴, which found a link between attention to political information, political expression on online media, and political efficacy. The two studies above have the same footing as this research that social media is not only an arena of expression and a means of sharing messages and knowledge but also builds awareness about the importance of attitudes and collective action among young people towards the political environment. However, both studies did not measure political attitudes from three indicators: cognitive, affective, and conative. Thus, this study can enrich the perspective of scientific studies on political participation among young people.

Determining the sample of students in one study program gives this study a sharpness analysis but not enough to capture the phenomenon from a broader perspective. To strengthen the analysis's generalizability, future studies could reach more diverse characteristics of young people. To boost

Moderation and Mediation Role of Online Political Expression,” *Journal of Adolescence* 77 (2019): 108–17.

³⁴ Yushu Zhou and Bruce E Pinkleton, “Modeling the Effects of Political Information Source Use and Online Expression on Young Adults’ Political Efficacy,” *Mass Communication and Society* 15, no. 6 (2012): 813–30, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15205436.2011.622064>.



political awareness, education, and participation, research on young people's political attitudes needs to be developed in the future, both on the grounds of their large population and in consideration of their role as determinants of the future of democracy.

D. Conclusion

This research answers the hypothesis, which is that all indicators of social media messages have a positive effect on students' political attitudes. Students can clearly capture the meaning of social media messages. Respondents' interaction on social media provides good benefits with increased understanding, development of thinking, and knowledge of respondents. However, the content of social media messages does not fully provide solutions to the concerns, hopes, or problems they face.

Respondents assessed the content of messages from a negative perspective or feeling uncomfortable (disfavor) as a form of evaluation in the key concept of political attitudes. The gap between expectation and reality makes respondents not confident enough to maximize their political participation. In other words, Islamic students feel half-hearted in carrying out political participation.

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