



# The Role Of Social Media In Increasing The Political Participation Of Z Generation In Indonesia

Kd Aprilia Rahayu Adinda Putri<sup>1\*</sup>, I Wayan Kertih<sup>2</sup>, Sukadi<sup>3</sup>, Komang Widiasta<sup>4</sup>, Made Adi Premana Dwipayadnya<sup>5</sup>, and Vanya Nalatia Putri<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>. Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha, Singaraja

\*Corresponding author: [apriiaadindaaa@gmail.com](mailto:apriiaadindaaa@gmail.com)

## Abstract

Social media plays an important role in encouraging Generation Z political participation in Indonesia, which is closely related to the advancement of digital technology, despite facing complex challenges. This research uses qualitative methods through in-depth interviews, online observations, and social media content analysis. The findings show that social media has become a significant forum for Generation Z to discuss, disseminate political information, and organize collective action. Platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok are used as a means of communication as well as an effective mobilization tool, which encourages their involvement in social and political issues. However, obstacles such as the rise of hoaxes and polarization of public opinion also affect their understanding of political dynamics. Digital literacy is an important aspect, but there is still an inequality in access to digital literacy education among Generation Z, which has the potential to affect their participation rate. In addition, the unique characteristics of each social media platform also shape the way Generation Z interacts with political issues. Therefore, strengthening digital literacy is the main strategy so that they are able to filter information critically. Educational programs that emphasize digital literacy will help Generation Z recognize false information and understand the political context more deeply. Collaboration between governments, digital platform providers, and the wider community is needed to create a digital ecosystem conducive to healthy political participation. Thus, digital democracy in Indonesia can grow strongly, and Generation Z has a wider space to play an active role in the political process.

**Keywords:** *List a Social Media, Generation Z Political Participation, Digital Literacy, Hoaxes, Opinion Polarization, Political Education, Digital Democracy in Indonesia*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The advancement of digital technology has brought about significant changes in the pattern of political participation of people, especially among Generation Z, who grew up in an environment that has been connected to the internet since an early age. This generation, often dubbed the "digital native," has extensive access to information and technology through mobile devices and various social media platforms. For them, social media is the main medium to express their views, obtain information, and be involved in political issues at various levels, both national and local. With the advent of social media, Generation Z is able to contribute to the political conversation in ways that were not possible before. Platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok not only serve as communication tools, but also as strategic spaces for collective mobilization and action. Based on data from the Pew Research Center (2021), about 70% of teens state that they use social media to participate in social and political issues.

This fact confirms that social media is now an integral part of Generation Z's political involvement. One of the obvious examples of Generation Z's increasing involvement in social issues through digital media is the emergence of global movements such as

### History:

Received : 25 Februari 2026

Revised : 20 Maret 2026

Accepted : 23 April 2026

Published : 25 Mei 2026

**Publisher:** Undiksha Press

**Licensed:** This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License



#BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo. These movements have motivated young people in various countries to take part in protests and public awareness campaigns. In Indonesia itself, social media has become an important tool in organizing demonstrations and disseminating information on local issues, including climate change, human rights, and corruption. In this framework, social media is not just a communication tool, but an empowerment platform that allows the younger generation to voice their opinions and participate in political dynamics. However, the ease of access to political information also poses serious challenges. One of the main problems faced by Generation Z is the rampant spread of hoaxes and disinformation. Zeynep Tufekci (2017), a social media expert, stated that social media not only accelerates the flow of information, but also accelerates the spread of misinformation. This emphasizes the importance of digital literacy as a basic ability to critically assess and filter information.

Without these skills, Generation Z risks being trapped in a digital echo chamber, where they are only exposed to information that aligns with their personal views and ignore other perspectives. The polarization of opinion that often occurs on social media also exacerbates this condition, creating an environment that is less conducive to healthy discussions. Interactions that are limited to like-minded groups often reinforce personal beliefs and hinder the creation of cross-perspective dialogue. Therefore, it is important for Generation Z to not only actively discuss on social media, but also be open to different views and play a role in building an inclusive and productive dialogue. Facing the challenges of political participation in the digital age requires cooperation between governments, educational institutions, and social media platforms. This collaboration is important to improve digital literacy and create an ecosystem that supports healthy and meaningful political engagement. Jenkins et al. (2016) stated that "media and digital literacy are the main skills needed by the younger generation to deal with the complexity of information in the digital age." Therefore, educational programs that focus on digital literacy are needed so that Generation Z is able to recognize disinformation, understand the broader political context, and hone essential critical thinking skills in public discussion.

In addition to educational institutions, social media platforms also hold important responsibilities in addressing the spread of hoaxes and creating safe spaces for dialogue. Vaccari and Chadwick (2019) emphasize that "digital platforms need to play an active role in content moderation to maintain a healthy quality of political discussion." With this joint effort, Generation Z is expected to take a more active part in the political and policy-making processes that affect their lives. If used wisely, social media has great potential as a means of empowerment, expanding the political participation of the younger generation, and strengthening democracy in the digital era. Therefore, a commitment from all parties is needed to create an inclusive and conducive digital environment, so that Generation Z can carry out their role as agents of positive change in society. From this background, the following is a formulation of the problem that the author wants to examine in this paper: (1) What is the role of social media in increasing the political participation of Generation Z in Indonesia? (2) How social media can play a role as a space for political education and constructive education for Generation Z; (3) What are the challenges and opportunities faced in digital democracy?

## **2. METHOD**

The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method. The qualitative approach was chosen because it was able to describe in depth the roles and challenges related to the political participation of Generation Z in Indonesia. In this case, the descriptive approach aims to explain and describe in detail various aspects in the social life of society and citizens. This research was conducted by collecting data through various sources including articles, journals, reports, surveys, and content analysis on social media platforms

such as Instagram, X (Twitter), and TikTok. The use of content analysis is crucial in this study, as it can help identify trends and patterns of user behavior. According to Krippendorff (2018), content analysis allows researchers to interpret the meaning of texts and images generated on social media, thus providing a broader context to the phenomenon being studied.

According to Bogdan and Taylor (in Nugrahani, 2008 in (scrape, 2023) ), qualitative research is a procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words of the observed objects, as well as their behavior in a particular social context. In the context of this study, data collected through content analysis is not only treated as raw information, but also analyzed to capture what is contained in the content on social media. The data analysis technique in this study uses the qualitative analysis model from Miles and Huberman, which includes three main stages, namely data reduction (the process of sorting and simplifying relevant information), data presentation (organizing data so that it is easy to read and analyze further), and drawing conclusions. With this technique, it is hoped that the research can provide a complete and in-depth picture of how the role of social media in increasing the political participation of Generation Z in Indonesia

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This study describes several aspects, including: (1) the role of social media in increasing the political participation of Generation Z in Indonesia (2) social media can play a role as a space for political education and constructive discussion for Generation Z (3) the challenges and opportunities faced in digital democracy

#### **1.1 The Role of Social Media in Increasing Generation Z's Political Participation**

Social media plays an important role in encouraging political participation among Generation Z in Indonesia, by providing quick and practical access to a wide range of relevant political information. Platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok not only disseminate information, but also open up a space for two-way interaction, allowing young people to discuss, exchange ideas, and criticize political issues more openly and dynamically. As stated by Boulianne (2015), social media is able to strengthen political involvement by providing opportunities for the younger generation to "access political information directly and participate in discussions that were previously difficult for them to enter" Furthermore, social media also provides opportunities for Generation Z to be directly involved in political activities, ranging from digital campaigns, petition raising, to online solidarity actions. Features such as live streaming, polling, and the use of hashtags allow for the widespread, fast, and organized dissemination of political messages. This makes social media a new democratic public space, where anyone can participate without the limitations of space and time. In addition, the formation of virtual communities that focus on social and political issues is an important forum for Gen Z to share experiences, support each other, and strengthen mutual commitment to drive change. The presence of public figures and influencers on digital platforms also increases the role of social media in shaping the political opinions and behavior of the younger generation. Therefore, social media is not only a communication tool, but also a catalyst for the growth of political awareness, active involvement, and empowerment of Generation Z in the Indonesian democratic system. Through this digital media, Gen Z has a wide opportunity to become critical, innovative, and competitive actors of change in the national political space.

Social media opens up a great opportunity for Generation Z to express their political aspirations and views directly, without being hampered by geographical distance or complex bureaucratic procedures. Through features such as status uploads, short videos, live broadcasts, and online discussion forums, they can freely voice their opinions, criticize

policies, and spread fresh ideas on social and political issues they deem important. Vaccari and Valeriani (2018) state that digital platforms allow young people to "organize political campaigns, build support, and advocate for social issues in a participatory and democratic manner".

This confirms that social media has developed from just a tool for disseminating information to an actualization space for the younger generation to play an active role in political life. In Indonesia, this trend is increasingly evident from the increasing involvement of digital politics among Gen Z, which is evident in various social movements such as #ReformasiDikorupsi campaigns, advocacy for environmental issues, and open support for legislative and presidential candidates through digital platforms. This generation is also active in disseminating accurate election information and fighting hoaxes, contributing to the creation of a healthier and more transparent political climate. Their political involvement does not stop at the digital space alone, but extends to real actions on the ground, such as demonstrations, fundraising, and social activities that start from online initiatives. Thus, social media has become a very powerful means of political empowerment. Not only as a communication channel, but also as a vehicle for Generation Z to encourage policy change, fight for social justice, and strengthen a democracy that is more open, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of society. Through this digital platform, Generation Z has proven itself as an agent of change that brings a new spirit to the national political dynamics, showing that political participation is no longer limited to formal institutional forums, but can also be realized creatively and collaboratively in cyberspace.

## **1.2 Social Media can Serve as a Political Education Space for Constructive Discussion for Generation Z**

Social media now plays an important role as a means of constructive political education for Generation Z, especially in the context of elections and democratic engagement. According to Suci Prestika (2025; *Bina Darma University*), social media is the most effective medium in conveying political and election information to Generation Z, which is the largest group of voters in the 2024 election. Although their level of political awareness is still relatively low and their interest in politics tends to be minimal, their proximity to social media allows for easier and more natural exposure to political information. Meanwhile, Abdillah Nazhif (2022; *University of Education Indonesia*) emphasizing that content such as political memes on social media has a significant impact on the political literacy of Gen Z. The effect can be seen in increasing political knowledge, attitudes, and skills up to 51.6%, showing that delivering political messages that are interesting and in accordance with the preferences of the younger generation can be an effective approach in political education. Furthermore, Muhammad Danu Winata (2024; *State University of Surabaya*) stating that although Gen Z makes up the largest part of the voter list, their participation rate is still low.

This is influenced by factors such as identity politics and daily routines. However, they show a tendency to engage in social and environmental issues, which can serve as a strategic entry point in building broader and meaningful political awareness. The results of research at the Institute of Domestic Government (IPDN) also show that social media plays a big role in shaping Gen Z's political literacy, especially through platforms such as Instagram and Facebook which are the main channels for disseminating information. However, challenges remain, including the gap in access to technology and the need to strengthen digital literacy so that Gen Z is able to play a more critical and active role in the dynamics of local democracy. Overall, social media now plays a role more than just a channel for disseminating information; it becomes an interactive space for public dialogue, political expression, and social mobilization that supports Generation Z's inclusive political

engagement. However, to create a healthy political education space, cooperation from various parties including the government, educational institutions, and digital platform providers is needed to overcome challenges such as misinformation, polarization of opinions, and the effect of the filter bubble.

The involvement of public figures who are educational and the presentation of content that is creative and relevant to the characteristics of Gen Z is also an important element so that social media can be used optimally in forming critical political awareness and encouraging active participation. Not only that, support through appropriate policies and formal education is crucial so that Generation Z is not only a recipient of information, but also able to produce positive and constructive political content. As conveyed by Suci Prestika (2024), social media provides a space for Gen Z to form political identities while developing political literacy naturally in their daily lives. However, he emphasized the importance of supervision and assistance from various parties so that political participation formed remains healthy and directed. The same thing was conveyed by Abdillah Nazhif (2022) from the University of Education Indonesia, who showed that creative communicative approaches such as through political memes have been proven to increase Gen Z's political literacy by more than 50%. This indicates that political education strategies need to be adjusted to the communication patterns and preferences of the younger generation dynamically.

Furthermore, Muhammad Danu Winata (2024) stated that social media can function as the main driving force for the political participation of the younger generation, as long as the digital ecosystem is built in an inclusive manner and supported by strong digital literacy. In this case, cooperation between various stakeholders is very important to create a healthy and productive digital space. This view is also strengthened by Panji (2024), who asserts that "Cross-sector synergy will strengthen the capacity of Gen Z to not only understand politics, but also to be actively involved and contribute positively in the digital public sphere."

### **1.3 Challenges and Opportunities Faced in Digital Democracy**

Digital democracy in Indonesia is facing various serious challenges that cannot be ignored. One of the main issues is the rampant spread of hoaxes and disinformation that can negatively affect public opinion. Information spread on social media moves much faster than the verification process, so misleading content can immediately go viral and shape public opinion in just a short time. This condition is exacerbated by the social media algorithm system that encourages the formation of an echo chamber, where users are more often exposed to information that reinforces their own views, thus inhibiting dialogue and reinforcing cognitive prejudices (Tandoc, Lim, & Ling, 2018). On the other hand, the political polarization that occurs in the digital world is also getting stronger. Society tends to be fragmented into groups with different views and high emotional tension, so that public discourse often shifts into unproductive conflicts, and can even trigger hate speech and social conflicts. As Sunstein (2018) argues, social media contributes to political polarization because "individuals interact more frequently with others who share similar views, reinforcing group identities and lowering tolerance for differences." These challenges indicate that while digital democracy opens up great opportunities for broader and more transparent political participation, without strong digital literacy and collective efforts against disinformation, the potential for social fragmentation increases and can undermine the quality of democracy. Therefore, synergy is needed between the government, digital platforms, and civil society in building a healthy and responsible digital space.

One of the crucial issues in the journey of digital democracy in Indonesia is problems related to data security and privacy. In recent years, public attention has been focused on the practice of using people's personal data for political purposes without explicit consent, raising concerns about potential misuse of information. Such actions not only harm an individual's

right to privacy, but also have the potential to undermine public trust in the digital democratic system as a whole. Another challenge that is no less important is the inequality of access to technology, especially between urban and rural areas. This digital divide hinders the realization of equitable political participation because not all community groups have equal access to the internet and digital devices. This inequality reinforces existing social and political gaps, while hindering the development of inclusive and equitable democracy. On the other hand, an unhealthy discussion culture on social media has also worsened the condition of digital democracy. The spread of hate speech, hoaxes, and intolerance through digital platforms encourages sharp polarization and threatens social cohesion and political stability. To overcome this problem, stricter regulations and efforts to improve people's digital literacy are needed so that social media can be used more responsibly. Despite being faced with various obstacles, digital democracy still presents a great opportunity to strengthen democratic life in Indonesia.

Digital platforms open up a wider space for political participation, especially for the younger generation such as Generation Z, who are now more active in voicing their political opinions and aspirations. Open access to information also allows the public to gain political insights from various perspectives, thereby enriching the quality of public discourse. Digital innovation also presents new mechanisms in democracy, such as technology-based election monitoring as well as platforms to monitor the performance of public officials, ultimately increasing transparency and accountability. Therefore, collaboration between the government, digital service providers, and civil society elements is needed to build a safe, fair, and ethical digital ecosystem. The three main aspects that must be strengthened are digital literacy, protection of personal data, and equitable distribution of technological infrastructure as the key in answering challenges while optimizing the potential of digital democracy in Indonesia.

One of the main potentials of digital democracy in Indonesia lies in increasing openness in the political process, thanks to advances in information technology. Now, various government data is publicly available and can be easily accessed by the wider community. This strengthens the accountability mechanism because the public can monitor the budget, policies, and performance of officials directly and actually, creating more transparent and responsible governance, in line with the principles of *good governance*. Furthermore, the existence of digital platforms also provides a wide space for civil society to organize social movements and supervise public policies more efficiently. Through social media, complaint sites, and other digital monitoring channels, citizens can work together, disseminate important issues, and push advocacy agendas that have a direct impact on policy-making. For example, digital campaigns that highlight anti-corruption, environmental conservation, or human rights issues are increasingly influencing government responses while strengthening public participation.

In addition, the era of digital democracy has also given birth to innovative forms of political participation that are in accordance with the character of the younger generation. Generation Z and millennials tend to leverage social media, short visual content, political memes, and various other creative formats to express their aspirations. This form of communication is not only informative, but also fun and interactive, so that it can reach a wider audience and encourage more active engagement. Overall, the development of digital technology has made a great contribution to strengthening democracy in Indonesia. Not only does it increase transparency and accountability, but it also encourages the active and creative involvement of the younger generation in the political process. Thus, digital democracy is not just a technological phenomenon, but a strategic foundation in building a more open, adaptive, and inclusive government system in the modern era.

To ensure that digital democracy in Indonesia can develop optimally, synergistic cooperation between various key actors is needed. The government is expected to strengthen

regulations regarding personal data protection and hoax control, while maintaining freedom of expression as a pillar of democracy. Strict regulations will provide legal certainty and prevent the abuse of digital space, without closing the space for healthy public criticism. Education also plays a vital role in improving digital literacy.

By inserting media literacy materials in the curriculum and community training programs, all elements of citizens can be better prepared to filter information and use technology wisely. Strong digital literacy will produce critical and ethical social media users, and be able to contribute positively to democratic life. Meanwhile, the responsibility also lies with social media platforms, which need to create a safe and equitable digital space. This can be done through the development of an open algorithmic system, consistent content moderation policies, and cross-sector cooperation in eradicating negative content. A proactive platform in maintaining the quality of public discourse plays an important role in supporting a healthy democracy. With collaboration between the government, the education sector, digital platforms, and civil society, digital democracy can be developed into an inclusive, adaptive, and sustainable system. This collaboration also forms a strong social foundation to answer the challenges of the times, as well as affirm the position of digital democracy as the main pillar of the nation's life in the future.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Social media is a vital instrument in increasing the political participation of Generation Z in Indonesia. With the characteristics of digital natives, Generation Z uses social media as the main means to obtain information, discuss, and participate in politics in a creative and interactive way. Despite challenges such as misinformation and passive participation, with good media literacy and the right digital campaign strategy, social media can strengthen democracy through the active involvement of young people. Social media has an important role in increasing the political participation of Generation Z in Indonesia by providing an interactive and easily accessible platform to obtain information, discuss, and express their political aspirations; Therefore, it is highly recommended to optimize creative digital campaign strategies and involve local influencers to make them more attractive to the younger generation, while strengthening media literacy and political education to overcome the challenges of misinformation and hoaxes that are rampant in cyberspace; In addition, it is necessary to create an inclusive and trusted digital ecosystem, make social media a space for education and constructive political dialogue, and encourage Generation Z to play an active role not only as consumers but also as producers of political content, so that their participation can strengthen digital democracy and reduce the risk of polarization and identity politics that can divide society.

#### **5. REFERENCES**

- The Role of Social Media in Shaping Gen Z Political Participation, *Politica*, House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025.
- Faizal Achmad & Ida Hayu Dwimawanti, "The Influence of Social Media Use on Generation Z's Political Participation in the 2024 Election in Central Java," *Journal of Politics and Government*, Diponegoro University, 2025.
- Political Participation of Novice Voters on Social Media, *Journal of Polistaat Paradigm*, Pasundan University, 2024.
- Analysis of the Influence of Social Media on Generation Z Voter Participation in the 2024 Presidential Election, *Autonomous Journal*, Galuh University, 2024.

- Generation Z's Political Participation in New Media, UHO Public Journal, 2024.
- Erika Kurnia, "Political Campaign Content on Social Media is Richer in Visuals," Kompas.id, 2024.
- Kusumawardani, Vidya & Budhi Cahyanto, "The Buzzer Phenomenon and Political Choices for Gen-Z in the 2024 Presidential Election," PROMEDIA, 2023.
- Jenkins, H., Ito, M., & Boyd, D. (2016). Participatory culture in the age of networks: A conversation about youth, learning, trade, and politics. Polity.
- Vaccari, C., & Chadwick, A. (2019). Social Media and Political Communication in Africa: The Arrival of a New Era? Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics.
- General Election Commission (KPU). (2023). Permanent Voter Data for the 2024 Election
- Waruwu, M. (2023). Educational Research Approach: Qualitative Research Methods, Quantitative Research Methods and Mixed Research Methods. Tambusai Education Journal, 7.
- Prestika, S. (2024). How Social Media Built Political Identity for Gen-Z in Election? Bina Darma University.
- Nazhif, A. (2022). The Influence of Political Meme on Social Media on Generation Z's Political Literacy. University of Education Indonesia.
- Panji, A. (2024). Political Literacy Through Social Media for Gen Z in Gunung Mas Regency. Institute of Domestic Government.
- Inata, M. D. (2024). Gen Z's Participation in Politics. State University of Surabaya.