



The Influence of Social Media X as a Source of Presidential Candidate Information on the Voting Decisions of Communication Science Students at Universitas Indonesia in the 2024 Election

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Abstract. Indonesia's 2024 General Election was marked by the significant role of social media, particularly the X platform (formerly Twitter), as a source of political information for young voters. This study aims to quantitatively analyze the influence of using social media X as a source of information on the voting decisions of Communication Science students from the class of 2022 at Universitas Indonesia during the 2024 Election. Using a quantitative approach and simple linear regression, the study involved 65 students as a sample chosen through a purposive sampling technique from a total population of 182 students. Data were collected via a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS version 27.0. The results show a positive and significant influence between the use of social media X and students' voting decisions ($t\text{-count } 5.652 > t\text{-table } 1.660$; $p < 0.05$). However, the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.198 indicates that the social media X variable only contributes 19.8% to voting decisions, while the remaining 80.2% is influenced by other factors outside the research model. The conclusion of this study is that social media X is a significant, though not dominant, factor in shaping students' political decisions, which aligns with the Theory of Uses and Gratifications.

Keywords: Social Media X, Voting Decisions, Political Communication, 2024 Election, Uses and Gratifications.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a vital instrument for initiating and maintaining interpersonal relationships, as humans are fundamentally social beings. In a political context, communication serves as an inseparable bridge between the government (suprastructure) and society (infrastructure). The goal is to achieve mutual understanding and ensure that decisions are oriented toward the public's interests.

Today, social media has taken on an increasingly significant role in political communication. Platforms like X (formerly Twitter) have become a crucial means for political figures to connect directly with the public. X facilitates the instant spread of information globally, allowing personal messages to achieve a rapid global reach. Mass communication practices are also evident on X, where major accounts can broadcast messages to millions of followers.

This phenomenon aligns with Blumler and Kavanagh's identification of the third era of political communication, where print and broadcast media are no longer the primary channels for information^[1]. They observed that political information can now be distributed through the internet and two-way

the X platform, the role of information filtering has shifted from the traditional concept of gatekeeping to gatewatching^[2], where journalists and the general public can act as observers who select and process information.

According to data from DataReportal, the penetration of the X platform in Indonesia reached 25.2 million users as of January 2025, which is equivalent to 8.8% of the total population^[3]. This study focuses on Communication Science students from the class of 2022 at Universitas Indonesia because this group actively uses X as a primary medium for disseminating information and building networks. Based on this background, the research aims to investigate the extent to which the use of social media X as a source of presidential candidate information influences their voting decisions in the 2024 Election.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research is based on the Theory of Uses and Gratification, which was developed by researchers such as Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch [4]. The theory focuses on the concept of "uses and satisfaction" in media consumption. It posits that audiences are active participants who intentionally choose media based on their personal needs and goals. The majority of studies that apply this theory place the motive for media use as an independent variable. The concepts of Gratification Sought and Gratification Obtained are also relevant, measuring how much satisfaction is sought and obtained after consuming media.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a positivistic paradigm as its philosophical foundation, which supports the implementation of quantitative research methods. This approach was chosen because it involves a systematic data collection process to test established hypotheses. The research type is descriptive quantitative with a correlational approach, which aims to identify the existence of a relationship between variables and measure the strength and significance of that relationship.

The unit of analysis in this study is Communication Science students from the class of 2022 at Universitas Indonesia. The research population is 182 students, and the research sample consists of 65 students selected through a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire, and the data were analyzed using the SPSS version 27.0 program. The research instrument was tested for validity and reliability, and the results showed that all questionnaire items were valid and reliable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on data analysis, the characteristics of the respondents are dominated by females (57%), aged 21-22 (90%), who access X daily (38%) or several times a week (47%). The main source of political information for respondents is social media (61%). The simple linear regression analysis shows that there is a positive and significant influence between the use of social media X (variable X) as a source of presidential candidate information on the students' voting decisions (variable Y). This is supported by a t-count value of 5.652, which is greater than the t-table of 1.660, and a significance level of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$). The resulting regression equation is $Y = 18.990 + 0.363X$, which means that every one-unit increase in the use of social media X will increase the students' voting decisions by 0.363 units.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.198 indicates that 19.8% of the variation in students' voting decisions can be explained by the use of social media X. This number suggests that the remaining 80.2% is influenced by other factors outside the research model, such as discussions with family/friends, the influence of conventional mass media, political literacy, or organizational involvement. This finding is consistent with the assumptions of the Theory of Uses and Gratifications, which emphasizes that audiences actively use media to fulfill their informational needs.

FIGURE 1. Coefficient of determination (R²)

Model Summary^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.446 ^a	.198	.192	2.582

a. Predictors: (Constant), PENGGUNAAN MEDIA SOSIAL X
b. Dependent Variable: KEPUTUSAN PILIHAN MAHASISWA

The results of the research instrument validity test, as summarized in **TABLE 1**, indicate the validity level of our questionnaire items. This test involved calculating the correlation coefficient between the score of each question indicator and the total score of the entire instrument. Consistently, all questionnaire items showed calculated r values that exceeded the table r value (0.196). These findings confirm that each indicator used in the questionnaire has sufficient validity to measure the construct under study. Thus, this indicates that all items in the questionnaire are valid and capable of accurately measuring the intended construct.

TABLE 1. Validity Test Results

INDICATOR	R CALCULATE	R TABLE	DESCRIPTION
X1	0,287	0,196	VALID
X2	0,217	0,196	VALID
X3	0,207	0,196	VALID
X4	0,197	0,196	VALID
X5	0,248	0,196	VALID
X6	0,207	0,196	VALID
X7	0,267	0,196	VALID
X8	0,306	0,196	VALID
X9	0,209	0,196	VALID
X10	0,213	0,196	VALID
X11	0,230	0,196	VALID
X12	0,254	0,196	VALID
X13	0,244	0,196	VALID
X14	0,239	0,196	VALID
X15	0,239	0,196	VALID

INDICATOR	R CALCULATE	R TABLE	DESCRIPTION
Y1	0,387	0,196	VALID
Y2	0,462	0,196	VALID
Y3	0,244	0,196	VALID
Y4	0,201	0,196	VALID
Y5	0,254	0,196	VALID
Y6	0,235	0,196	VALID
Y7	0,235	0,196	VALID
Y8	0,209	0,196	VALID

CONCLUSIONS

This study confirms a positive and significant influence between the use of social media X as a source of information about presidential candidates and the voting decisions of Communication Science students from the class of 2022 at Universitas Indonesia in the 2024 Election. However, the contribution of social media X is only 19.8%, which means that other factors play a much larger role in shaping students' voting decisions. This finding supports the relevance of the Theory of Uses and Gratifications and emphasizes that social media X, while important, is not the sole determinant in the multifactorial process of political decision-making.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Based on the research findings, it is recommended to conduct further exploration of other variables that may influence students' voting decisions, such as digital literacy levels, peer group influence, political discussions within the family, and trust in conventional media. Additionally, it is suggested that future research adopt a mixed-methods approach to gain a more in-depth understanding of this phenomenon.

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