

# Political Education Through The Use Of Social Media For Millennial Generation To Increase Political Participation

Eka Suaib<sup>1</sup>, Najib Husain<sup>2</sup>, La Bilu<sup>3</sup>, Saidin<sup>4</sup>, Asriani<sup>5</sup>, Hasriani Amin<sup>6</sup>, La Ode Wahyu Saputra<sup>7</sup>, Elvira Ramadhani<sup>8</sup>, Muhaimin Al Aziz<sup>9</sup>

Political Science, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University Halu Oleo<sup>1,2,3,5,7,8,9</sup>

Government Science, Faculty of Social and Political Science, University Halu Oleo<sup>4</sup>

Communication Science, Faculty of Social and Political Science, University Halu Oleo<sup>6</sup>

{ekasuaib1966@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>, [muh.najib.husain@gmail.com](mailto:muh.najib.husain@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>, [saidin@uho.ac.id](mailto:saidin@uho.ac.id)<sup>4</sup>, [Asrianifisip77@uho.ac.id](mailto:Asrianifisip77@uho.ac.id)<sup>5</sup>, [hasrianyaminuho@gmail.com](mailto:hasrianyaminuho@gmail.com)<sup>6</sup>, [Wahyutowea@gmail.com](mailto:Wahyutowea@gmail.com)<sup>7</sup>, [elvinaramadhani68@gmail.com](mailto:elvinaramadhani68@gmail.com)<sup>8</sup>, [Aimanmalino2002@gmail.com](mailto:Aimanmalino2002@gmail.com)<sup>9</sup>}

**Abstract.** The use of social media, especially for millennial generation in political education, is increasingly strategic to disseminate information so that people have perceptions in order to participate in politics. This is natural along with the increasing number of internet use, including in political activities and elections. Unfortunately, the increase in this number has not been maximally utilized by millennial voters to conduct political education. This can be seen in the reality of content and news that is much popular, namely only entertainment, sports, infotainment. While political content is not much in demand by millennial generations. As a result, millennial generation interest and interest in being actively involved in politics is low. The low political participation of millennial generation is caused by a perception that considers politics to have negative, ugly, bad, boring connotations. Therefore, in the future requires political literacy appropriately and massively for millennial voters.

**Keywords:** Political education; social media; millennial generation; political participation

## 1 Introduction

Political education for the millennial generation is very important because it can foster national and state awareness. Ideally, a political education is a conscious effort so that citizens can play a role in the political process including upholding political ethics sublimely [1]. Through political education, the millennial generation will not be blind to politics, political literacy so it is not easy to be provoked by fake news (hoaxes). One method of political education is by utilizing social media. It is undeniable that the use of social media is increasingly massive. This can be seen from data released by the Indonesian Internet Providers Association (APJII) In 2016 internet users were 132 million. That number increased from internet users in 2014 which was 62 million. Of these, the most accessed type of content is social media, which is 97.5% with the most networks, namely Facebook and Twitter

The use of social media has also been rife in political activities both for the formation of volunteers, campaigns, delivery of political ideas, political messages, and political branding

[2]. Some political parties and political figures maximize social media as a political communication tool with the aim of political branding which ultimately builds the party's image. Wide reach and efficiency are taken into consideration so that social media is the reason for its increased use. Through social media, it can package content that is expected to be able to provide a positive image for political parties and politicians [3].

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Therefore, a large population resulting in votes from the millennial generation will greatly determine the outcome of the election. In addition, the characteristics of the millennial generation that are fluent with social media result in obtaining data from the internet which has implications for political insights, perspectives, and behavior [5].

So far, many assumptions are pessimistic about the political participation of the millennial generation. Towner et.al [6] For example, expressing the millennial generation's interest in politics shows The decline even called it a critical phenomenon. The same doubt was confirmed from Mayangdarastri & Husna (2020) [7] which found that 70% of millennials are apathetic to political activities. Millennials are more likely to be interested in news about fashion, artist profiles, food menus, sporting events so assume reading political news is not important. Because it is the digital era that provides extensive opportunities for the millennial generation to be able to provide political education.

## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Political education**

The concept of education is strongly related to politics. The educational process does not materialize if it is not guided by politics. Therefore, politics will affect the education that occurs. In relation to government and politics, to educate is to rule, and to govern is to educate [1]. In political education consists of activities with the aim of internalizing political values so that they become a reference in behavior.

Political education seeks to encourage people to participate so that they take responsibility for creating public order [8][9]. The creation of public order is intended to be realized if it agrees on values, norms, and symbols so that it becomes a common reference [10]. If there are differences on a problem, then all agree that the reference is used as these shared values. In order for this to be internalized, all elements ranging from political parties, election organizers, mass media, high deserts, and the government simultaneously carry out political education.

In order for political education to achieve the expected output, it requires a method that suits the audience. Political education for millennials needs to be designed with more varied methods, not only in the form of speeches and lectures by only making passive audiences, but active ones. Through such variations in political education to the millennial generation, it can excite them political participation in the political system [11].

### **2.2 Social media**

Social media is a term used to refer to new forms of media that involve interactive participation. Social media is a bridge of social communication, online where people can tell each other, participate, share each other, and create content including blogs, social networks, wikis, forums and virtual worlds. Individuals now have the ability to seek information from multiple sources and to dialogue through others through forum messages that convey information in the form of posts [12].

Some definitions of social media, as proposed by Kaplan and Haenlein [13], are as a group of Internet-based applications built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and enabling the creation and exchange of user-generated content. The term web 2.0 refers to referring to a set of technologies and ideologies for creative content creation. Meanwhile, F.Li et.al [14] defines social media as a platform for profiling, making explicit relationships and traversing. Social media is a media in the network with users can easily participate, share and create content blogs, social networks, wikis, forums and virtual worlds.

Kaplan and Haenlein [13] divide social media typologies into (1) collaborative projects such as Wikipedia; (2) Blogs; (3) Content communities such as youtube; (4) social networking such as Youtube; (5) Virtual Social Worlds such as Second Life; (6) Virtual Game Worlds such as Warcraft. If traditional media uses print media and broadcast media, then social media uses the internet. Thus, social media as a means of communication has a role in bringing people (users) to participate actively by contributing and feedback openly, both to share information and respond online in a fast time.

### **2.3 Political Participation**

In a democracy, political participation is one important aspect because it determines the passion of citizens to be involved in the political system. Political participation is the activity of ordinary citizens in influencing the process of making and implementing public policy and includes determining political and governmental leaders [15]. Citizen involvement certainly intends and seeks to influence or also support government actions.

Activities in political participation include activities such as voting in general elections, attending rallies, holding relationships (*contacting*), lobbying with government officials or parliamentarians, being a member of a party, or one of the social movements with direct action and so on. From the above opinion, it can be interpreted that political participation is not just an activity in general elections but also outside general elections. The antagonist of participation is apathy, that is, citizens who do not care about the political system.

### **2.4 Milenial Generation**

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The millennial generation was born in the era of booming internet where it is widely used. Some millennials are still students, some are starting to start their careers, and some have had relatively stable careers. In the context of politics, the millennial generation can be called first-time voters who are voting for the first time in the general election. In Indonesia, the requirement to become a voter is to be 17 years old or have been married.

### **3 Method**

The approach in research is qualitative in order to provide the latest so that it is useful in the development of science. The benefit of the qualitative approach is that it obtains deeper phenomena from language descriptions, words, and other specifications. The focus chosen is political education by utilizing social media for the millennial generation. Reference sources in this study are through writings and articles published in reputable international and national journals, written documents, and research results. The flow is to take data from reading sources, read, record, and write it into a whole article.

### **4 Findings and Discussion**

#### **4.1 Politics, political education, and social media**

Politics by utilizing social media is a new phenomenon in the contestation of power from both political parties and politicians. This can be seen in campaign activities, forming teams, spreading political ideas. The successful use of social media in winning political contests was preceded by Barack Obama's victory in the 2008 presidential election in the United States. In Indonesia, the use of the internet began when a pro-democracy movement played a central role in overthrowing Suharto from an authoritarian regime [17]. Furthermore, social media became the main key so that Jokowi-Ahok won the contestation in the gubernatorial election in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta in 2012. At that time, Jakarta's digital citizens used social media to channel public aspirations to support the emergence of pro-people and pro-public leaders [18]. In the 2014 presidential election, ahead of the presidential election, presidential candidates used volunteer accounts supporting Joko Widodo named @selamatkan Indonesia and @prabowo which were volunteer accounts supporting Prabowo Subianto.

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Social media is also used for political education which is used by election organizers, namely the General Elections Commission (KPU) and the General Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu). General election organizers have official accounts, namely websites, istagrams, twitter, youtube, and facebook. The use of all social media above is to disseminate all stages and results of the general election. Along with that, election organizers conducted live broadcasts of debates between candidates. Various debate events were then also disseminated on various social media accounts from political parties, candidate sympathizers, candidate success teams.

A political party is an institution whose function is to conduct political education. Various activities within a certain period of time are carried out by party functionaries so that cadres and members can live and understand the values in a political system. The role of party sympathizers is very large in providing political education to the public so as to influence their behavior [9]. It's just that it should be noted, each political party has a different political education program, but has the final similarity, namely improving the quality of human resources according to the organizational platform.

The government also has social media accounts to disseminate messages to the public. Through President Joko Widodo's twitter account as one of the spearheads of the presidential decision to get support from generations. By targeting the millennial generation, the use of this twitter account will be able to effectively get closer to the people, socialize activities, absorb aspirations and information, and communicate directly with the community. Provincial and district governments through the National Unity Agency routinely conduct political education. Unfortunately, this institution has not been able to innovate political education by utilizing social media. The method is still very conventional, namely through lectures and seminars.

Thus, the use of social media in politics and political education is very strategic in order to expand the activism of the millennial generation. The capacity of information available on the internet allows millennials to become more aware of government and political issues; Social media activity allows for new forms of political education. If so far political education has only been one-way and carried out in public spaces, now the public space has shifted to the virtual world to internalize noble values in the millennial generation which is more interactive [19].

It is hoped that through social media, the millennial generation will grow awareness of the importance of political education so that it becomes part of everyday life. In the Indonesian context, the educational process politics is so that the millennial generation can internalize the value of Pancasila in their daily lives [20]. This is done so that the millennial generation has a strong foundation so that their character is in accordance with the identity and noble values that have been instilled by the founders of the nation.

Through the unique character of social media and the large population of millennials, it allows space for activism in political education. With the internet, it can be a lens to enlarge the narrative of struggle created by the millennial generation. These narratives can be fought to strengthen their position and become the collective force needed to realize a better political education.

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#### **4.2 Political Education Through Social Media Expands Millennial Participation**

So far, political contestation and power struggles have only been controlled by certain groups and many people are not represented. That's why the new space in the form of the internet can provide space for the millennial generation to be involved in the democratic process. Articles written by Zisi prove that Obama was able to win the presidential contest in the United States due to the relationship between technology and democracy [22]. The real problem faced is how to manage the energy of citizens, including the millennial generation so that they can participate in politics.

The above thinking is because during the reform era in Indonesia in the 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, 2019 elections, the participation rate fluctuated. In the first three implementations of the direct presidential generation, namely in 2004 the percentage of public participation was 78.2% then decreased to 72.5% in the 2009 election. In the 2014 presidential election, the political participation rate decreased to 69.5%. In the 2019 presidential election, public political participation was 79.6% (kpu.co.id). With this number, it can be interpreted that political participation has not been maximized, is still changing and there are still millennials who do not exercise their voting rights (voter turnout).

Contemporary studies conducted by Castells [23] suggest that continuous demonstrations in several parts of the world have succeeded in overthrowing dictatorial regimes. Castells said that initially starting from the internet social network, beyond the reach of governments and corporations that have monopolized communication channels throughout history have been used to maintain their power. Castells identifies various movements pioneered by the millennial generation such as occupy wall street, which is a spontaneous and networked movement in cyberspace and urban space that is very influential.

Of course, the above facts refute many assumptions that put millennials indifferent and do not care about politics. Of course, this assumption needs to be tested because with Indonesia enjoying a demographic bonus, the potential of the millennial generation is expected to increase political participation.

Alamri (et.al) [19] concluded that there are two main forms of millennial generation's participation. First, participate in voting in the general generation; Second, the existence of millennials who have a high interest in politics needs accommodation from political parties to accommodate it

Millennials also have an interest in being actively involved in political activities. Alamri (et.al) [19] found that there is a desire for some millennials to run as legislative members and candidates for regional heads. The data shows that millennials have potential that can be capitalized by political parties.

So far, one of the modalities of the millennial generation is critical power so as not to make apathy to politics. By utilizing social media so that the millennial generation can express opinions in order to be able to change policies / decisions that have been taken by the government. Through this social media, millennials can also exchange political information or interesting content about politics, figures, and actual political events that are viral and have become the attention of many people. Social media can easily and flexibly discuss politics and public issues through connections anywhere and anytime. If you have advantages, millennials also want to donate to activities carried out by political parties. Information about the activities of political parties is obtained from official accounts of political parties or invitations from close relatives who become functionaries/activists.

Taking into account the description above, it substantially means that the millennial generation actually has the potential to be actively involved in participating in the political system. Of course, the involvement varies greatly depending on socioeconomic background. Each can take on a role according to the capacity and personal access of the millennial generation. In that connection, the millennial generation uses social media a lot to maintain democracy does not contain a lot of negative content or fake news (hoax).

The willingness for millennials to participate in politics is influenced by the intentions of citizens towards the government. Participation models, namely in the form of trust in the government, result in high involvement. It is also common for low trust to result in non-institutionalized involvement, even protests and boycotts [24]. There can also be low political awareness but trust in government is high and results in passive participation. Apathetic political participation arises if low political awareness is followed by low trust in the political system.

The relationship between the millennial generation and social media has led to more active interaction in politics. Citizens are more passionate because of social media which allows channels of participation more easily and quickly. Thus, the use of social media is important so that millennials can participate who not only dream of change, but become important actors in the changing situation with their own initiatives [1]. Thus, the millennial generation can grow into agents of change. From this, it can build the assumption that if the millennial generation

does not care about the life of the nation, then democracy becomes stagnant. Conversely, if the millennial generation participates, democracy can be more developed.

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## 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

### 5.1 Conclusion

1. Political education has been carried out by utilizing various social media. Political education is carried out by political parties, election organizers, and the government. Social media platforms used by the social media generation are whatsapp, facebook, twitter.

2. Political education through social media has facilitated so that millennial voters participate in politics. The forms of participation are giving money in elections, exchanging information about politics, wanting to register as a legislative candidate, making donations.

### 5.2 Recommendation

There needs to be a more massive intensity of political education programs that pay more attention to the millennial generation so as to foster national and state awareness. In order to raise awareness of more active participation again for the millennial generation, it is necessary to build a community-based approach that is not visible but in the form of networking.

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