Digital Participation in Democracy: The role of Social Media in the 2024 Political Campaign

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Abstract

The development of digital technology has changed the landscape of political participation, with social media becoming a major platform for political campaigns and discussions. Social media allows wider access to political information and increases public engagement in elections, especially among young voters. However, challenges such as algorithmic bias, disinformation, and political polarization increasingly threaten the integrity of democracy. The echo chamber and filter bubble phenomena cause users to only be exposed to information that is in line with their views, narrowing the space for healthy discussion. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to analyze the role of social media in the 2024 Election campaign. Data were collected through interviews with political communication experts, focus group discussions (FGDs) with young voters, and analysis of campaign content on various digital platforms. The results of the study show that although social media contributes to increasing political participation, the risk of information manipulation and exploitation of user data remains a major concern. Therefore, collective efforts are needed to improve digital literacy, tighten regulations on the spread of hoaxes, and encourage transparency of social media platform algorithms. With these steps, social media can function as a more effective means of strengthening democracy and ensuring more transparent elections based on valid information.

Keywords : Digital Democracy; Social Media Politics; Political Campaign 2024

1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has revolutionized the way people participate in democracy, especially through social media. Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram have become new public spaces where individuals can obtain political information, discuss policies, and voice their political preferences. According to a study by Priadji & Rusadi (2023), citizens in democratic countries use social media as their primary source of political news. This reflects a shift from conventional information consumption, such as television and newspapers, to a more interactive and algorithm-based communication model. However, the emergence of this technology also poses new challenges, such as algorithmic bias that can form a "filter bubble," where users are only exposed to information that is in line with their views, thereby reinforcing political polarization (Bahram, 2023).

In addition, digital participation in democracy through social media has a complex impact on people's political engagement. On the one hand, social media allows wider access to political discourse and increases citizen involvement in the election process, especially among the younger generation (Azizah et al., 2024). However, on the other hand, this ease of access also opens up opportunities for disinformation and political propaganda that can lead to manipulation of public opinion. A study by Bastick (2021) shows that fake news spreads faster than fact-based news, complicating the process of rational decision-making by voters. Therefore, although digital technology increases participation in democracy, strong digital regulation and literacy are needed to ensure that this engagement is constructive and based on valid information.

The phenomenon of social media use in political campaigns reflects a shift in political communication strategies from traditional models to more interactive and data-driven approaches (Rahayu et al., 2024). Candidates and political parties now rely on algorithm-based micro-targeting to deliver messages tailored to individual voters' preferences. By utilizing big data analysis and artificial intelligence, campaigns can identify public opinion trends and design more persuasive narratives. A study by Mirza (2023) shows that in the latest elections, political candidates used personalization-based digital marketing strategies to increase the effectiveness of their campaigns. However, this strategy also raises ethical dilemmas related to user privacy and the potential for psychological manipulation that can threaten voters' autonomy in making rational political decisions.

On the other hand, social media is not only a campaign tool for politicians but also an arena for public opinion battles that are often colored by disinformation and digital propaganda. In the context of the 2024 Election, the phenomenon of "astroturfing" namely the creation of fake support through bots and anonymous accounts is increasingly being used to artificially shape public perception (Cazzamatta, 2024). A report from the University of Oxford (2021) shows that democratic countries experience political manipulation through social media, including in the form of black campaigns and cyber attacks on political opponents. The inability of digital platforms to effectively filter harmful content exacerbates this problem, thus requiring stricter regulatory intervention to protect the integrity of democracy. Therefore, although social media opens up space for broader political participation, its use in political campaigns also poses a serious threat to the transparency and fairness of elections if it is not balanced with strict regulations and high digital awareness among the public.

The increasing spread of misinformation in the social media ecosystem has become a serious threat to the quality of democracy, especially in the context of elections. Unverified information often attracts more attention and has a higher spread power compared to fact-based news (Aisyi, 2024). Social media algorithms designed to maximize user engagement have exacerbated this problem by prioritizing provocative and emotional content, often from non-credible sources (Rachimoellah et al., 2024). As a result, people tend to get caught up in the "echo chamber" phenomenon, where they only receive information that reinforces their own biases, thus narrowing the space for healthy public discussion. Without effective intervention from the government, digital platforms, and civil society, the risk of public opinion manipulation will increase and potentially lead to a degradation of trust in the democratic process.

In addition, the challenges of democracy in the digital era are also exacerbated by increasing political polarization reinforced by social media mechanisms. A study conducted by Kitchens et al (2020) shows that online interactions that occur in ideologically homogeneous environments can strengthen political extremism and reduce tolerance for different views. This polarization is often exploited by political actors through campaign strategies based on group segmentation, which aim to build voter loyalty by sharpening social and political differences (Garzia et al., 2022). As a result, the democratic space that should be a forum for open discussion has instead turned into an information battlefield full of misinformation and hate speech. Therefore, collective efforts are needed, including stricter regulation of social media platforms, increasing public digital literacy, and enforcing more

transparent political ethics to ensure that democracy continues to function as an inclusive and fact-based system.

The main challenge in digital participation is how to ensure that public engagement in political discussions is not only reactive, but also based on accurate and objective information. Unfortunately, research by Safa et al. (2025) shows that the spread of false information on social media is faster than verified news, especially when the information is designed to evoke a strong emotional response. In the context of democracy, this can lead to political decision-making based on false perceptions, rather than accountable facts. Therefore, digital platforms should not only act as communication channels, but also have a responsibility to limit the spread of misinformation through stricter and more transparent content moderation policies.

Furthermore, poorly managed digital participation can also worsen the inequality of access to information in society. A study by Indrawati et al (2024) highlighted how the digital divide is still an obstacle for some groups in society, especially those with limited access to technology and low digital literacy. As a result, although social media offers wider opportunities for participation, not all individuals have the same opportunity to access and utilize political information effectively. This inequality can result in political exclusion that further widens the gap between technologically literate groups and those who are left behind in the digital transformation. Therefore, public policies that encourage increased digital literacy and equal access to technology are crucial aspects in ensuring that digital participation truly contributes to strengthening democracy, rather than deepening inequality in political participation.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to analyze the role of social media in the 2024 Election political campaign. This study focuses on four main platforms, namely Twitter (X), Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with five political communication experts and focus group discussions (FGD) with 30 young voters who are active on social media to understand their digital consumption and participation patterns. In addition, analysis of political campaign content and literature studies from academic journals and independent institution reports were used as secondary data.

Data analysis was conducted using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to identify patterns of political narratives and persuasion strategies, as well as thematic analysis to categorize the impact of social media on political engagement, polarization, and the spread of misinformation. Data validity was maintained through triangulation of sources and expert feedback. With this approach, the study is expected to provide in-depth insights into the impact of campaign digitization on democracy and formulate solutions to ensure more transparent elections based on accurate information.

3. Result and Discussion

The Influence of Social Media on Political Participation in the 2024 Election
1. Digital Campaign Strategy and Young Voter Engagement

Social media has become a key tool in modern political campaigns, especially in reaching young voters who are more active on digital platforms than conventional media. With features such as live streaming, polling, and open discussions, politicians can build more personal and interactive communication with the public. This allows young voters to be more involved in the political process, either through comments, sharing content, or direct participation in online discussions. Research conducted by Dwiyanti et al (2023) shows that social media can increase political engagement by expanding access to information and building wider political networks. However, they also note that this effect depends on how the information is packaged and received by the audience. This is reinforced by an interview with a political communication expert, AP, who stated that

"Direct interaction on social media gives the impression of closeness between candidates and voters, but if not accompanied by good political literacy, this engagement tends to be shallow and emotional."

In the context of youth voter engagement, it is important to distinguish between substantial engagement and emotional engagement. Substantial engagement occurs when young voters understand and analyze a candidate's work program before making a choice. Education-based campaigns, such as weighty policy discussions and clear data presentation, can encourage more mature political awareness. A study by Putri et al (2024) found that consuming political information through social media can increase political knowledge and voter participation, especially if the information obtained comes from credible media. However, this study also shows that many young voters only consume information from biased sources, which can lead to reactive and emotional political engagement.

In contrast, emotional engagement is more often triggered by candidate branding, viral trends, or campaign content that provokes spontaneous reactions without deep consideration. This is in accordance with the findings of research conducted by Al Fatih et al (2024) which shows that social media algorithms can strengthen political bias through echo chambers, where users are more likely to be exposed to information that supports their own views, thus limiting broader understanding of public policy. This phenomenon can worsen political polarization as young voters become more easily influenced by emotional narratives than fact-based analysis. A youth activist, in an interview with Kompas Politik, highlighted that

"Many of my friends support candidates based only on interesting narratives without reading more about their policies. This shows that we still need to improve political literacy on social media."

The main challenge in digital campaigns is the spread of misinformation and hoaxes that can inaccurately shape public opinion. Limited digital literacy among young voters makes them vulnerable to information manipulation. A study by Maryani & Wulandari (2025) shows that the younger generation is often exposed to misinformation but tends to be less critical in verifying the truth of the information. In another study, Sosiawan & Wibowo (2020) found that political hoaxes on social media spread faster than verified news, because fake news tends to use more emotional and attention-grabbing language.

In facing these challenges, an effective digital campaign strategy must prioritize transparency and political education. A study by Anwar (2024) highlighted that political campaigns that provide fact-based information and facilitate open dialogue have a greater impact on increasing political understanding compared to campaigns that only rely on viral content. Therefore, politicians and campaign teams must strive to present information that is not only interesting but also educational, so that young voters can make decisions based on deeper understanding.

In addition, digital literacy needs to be improved so that young voters are more critical in assessing political information. A study by Al Khansa et al (2024) shows that digital citizenship education can improve voters' ability to recognize misinformation and make more rational political decisions. By improving digital literacy, building data-based discussions, and prioritizing substantive campaign content, politicians can ensure that young voter engagement is not just a momentary euphoria, but a meaningful active participation in the democratic process.

2. **The Effectiveness of Social Media in Increasing Political Awareness**

Social media has become a major tool in increasing public political awareness by providing fast and broad access to political information. Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram are used by politicians, independent organizations, and the media to disseminate political news and opinions, which in turn encourages digital participation in political discussions and campaigns. According to research conducted by Realita & Setiadi (2022), social media users worldwide claim to get their political

news from digital platforms, indicating that social media plays a major role in the distribution of political information. Another study by El Qudsi & Syamtar (2020) states that social media has now surpassed television as the main source of news for the younger generation, which has implications for changing patterns of political information consumption.

In addition to its high accessibility, social media also allows people to be more active in discussing political issues, whether through comments, online discussions, or support for petitions and social movements. In an interview with an academic in the field of political communication, RW, he stated that

"Social media has changed the way people interact with politics. In the past, political discussions were limited to traditional media, but now anyone can engage in political conversations, even influencing the public agenda."

This is supported by the agenda-setting theory developed by McCombs and Shaw (1972) in Masitah & Dewi (2022), which states that the media has the power to determine issues that are considered important by society. In the context of social media, agenda-setting is no longer only in the hands of the mainstream media, but also in the hands of certain individuals and groups who have the capacity to make political issues go viral.

However, the effectiveness of social media in increasing political awareness is not without major challenges, such as the emergence of echo chambers, where users are only exposed to information that reinforces their own views. Wulandari et al (2021) explain that social media algorithms often filter content based on user preferences, resulting in restrictions on diverse perspectives and reinforcing cognitive biases. Another study by Rhodes (2022) in the concept of "The Filter Bubble" also emphasizes that social media tends to create an exclusive information space, where users only receive news that supports their own views. As a result, social media can contribute to political polarization by reinforcing extreme ideological differences and reducing opportunities for constructive discussion between groups with different views.

In addition, the spread of disinformation and misinformation is a serious problem in the use of social media as a political education tool. Sosiawan & Wibowo (2020) in their research in the journal Science found that fake news on Twitter spreads 70% faster than fact-based news, because it is more interesting and provocative. In an interview with AF, a digital politics expert, he stated that

"The massive spread of hoaxes on social media is often exploited by certain groups to shape public opinion in a manipulative manner. This is what causes disinformation to become a serious threat to democracy."

This phenomenon has also been studied by Gesu & Raki (2025) who found that fake news can influence public political opinion, especially during election periods, where misleading information can influence voter perceptions and behavior.

To increase the effectiveness of social media in raising political awareness without exacerbating disinformation, strategic steps are needed, such as digital literacy education so that people are more critical in filtering information. Sarjito (2024) has recommended stricter policies in controlling disinformation on digital platforms, including cooperation between the government, technology companies, and academics to deal with the spread of false information. In addition, Latipah & Nawawi (2023) emphasize that one of the most effective ways to reduce the impact of fake news is to increase people's cognitive skepticism through media literacy education programs. They emphasize that the higher a person's level of digital literacy, the less likely they are to be influenced by disinformation.

Another step that can be taken is strengthening regulation and content moderation by social media platforms. A study by Hariyanto & Anom (2024) shows that political manipulation on social media is carried out by various actors, including political parties, the government, and certain interest groups.

Therefore, stricter regulations are needed regarding the dissemination of information on social media in order to suppress the misuse of digital platforms for certain political interests. In addition, the public is advised to access information from various sources so as not to get caught up in narrow information bias.

With better efforts to manage political information on social media, these platforms can become more effective tools in creating a more politically aware society, while reducing the negative impacts of polarization and disinformation. If challenges such as echo chambers and the spread of fake news can be minimized, then social media will become a more democratic tool in disseminating political information and encouraging public involvement in a healthy democratic process.
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3. The Impact of Algorithms and Filter Bubbles on Political Choices

Social media algorithms play a significant role in shaping users' political preferences by filtering and displaying content that is deemed most relevant based on previous activity and interactions. In this way, users tend to see information that aligns with their views more often, while divergent perspectives are less likely to appear. This phenomenon is known as a filter bubble, where individuals are only exposed to certain points of view, thus narrowing their horizons on broader political issues. As a result, cognitive bias occurs, where a person is more likely to believe and spread information that confirms their beliefs, without considering the truth of various sources. A study conducted by Figà & Arfini (2022) confirms that the algorithms working behind digital platforms indirectly create "information bubbles" that limit access to alternative views, thus reducing the diversity of opinions consumed by users. This is reinforced by research by Eady et al. (2019) in the journal PNAS, which found that although social media users have access to a variety of information, they are more likely to consume news from sources that support their beliefs, thus strengthening the filter bubble effect.

Over time, filter bubbles reinforce political polarization, causing differences of opinion to become increasingly sharp and difficult to bridge. A study conducted by Al Fatih et al. (2024) found that Facebook's algorithm tends to display content that matches users' political preferences, causing them to be less exposed to news from opposing perspectives. This research supports the echo chamber theory, where individuals only interact with people who share their views, thus strengthening their beliefs and making it difficult to be open to other opinions. This is also supported by an interview with Cass Sunstein, a professor at Harvard Law School, who in his book #Republic: Divided Democracy in the Age of Social Media (2017) quoted by Martin (2018) explains that filter bubbles lead to the group polarization effect, where individuals who are constantly exposed to uniform views will become more radical in their beliefs. As a result, healthy political debate is replaced by increasingly extreme competition of opinions, where each group feels that their view is the only truth.

The impact of the filter bubble is not only limited to political polarization, but also contributes to the spread of misinformation and hoaxes, especially when individuals no longer feel the need to verify information that is in accordance with their views. Research by Harahap & Djufri (2023) in the journal Science shows that fake news spreads much faster than true news on social media platforms, especially in a political context. One of the main factors in the spread of this hoax is the algorithm that prioritizes user engagement, so that sensational content appears more often on the timeline. In an interview with MIT Technology Review, A stated that

> *"emotion and surprise are often key triggers in the spread of information, and this is exploited by algorithms to maintain user engagement."*

In addition, research by Pennycook and Rand (2019) in the journal Cognition shows that individuals who are overly exposed to filter bubbles tend to believe fake news more because they are less likely to encounter information that can refute their beliefs.

On the other hand, some studies suggest that the impact of filter bubbles may not be as strong as expected. For example, a study by Purwatiningsih & Polri (2024) found that although algorithms can

amplify polarization, active internet users are still likely to find and read news from various sources, albeit in smaller portions. However, this study also emphasized that the filter bubble effect is stronger in individuals who are less active in seeking information independently and rely more on social media as their main source of news.

Although social media can basically increase political participation by providing wider access to information, the impact of the filter bubble has the potential to limit inclusive public discussion spaces. To overcome this, users need to improve digital literacy by developing critical thinking skills regarding the information they consume. According to research conducted by Putra & Patra (2023), individuals with higher levels of digital literacy tend to be more skeptical of unverified information and more open to different perspectives. In addition, it is important to follow various news sources to obtain a more balanced perspective. Research by Milyane et al (2023) in the book Digital Media Loteration emphasizes that diversifying information sources and engaging with credible media can reduce the effects of the filter bubble and improve the quality of political discussion.

In addition to the user side, technology companies also have a responsibility to create more transparent algorithms and provide options for users to control the content they see. Several platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have begun developing features to display content from various perspectives, but their effectiveness still needs to be studied further. Initiatives such as NewsGuard and Media Bias Fact Check can also help users identify the credibility of the news they consume. With these steps, social media can play a more positive role in enriching political discourse, rather than narrowing it.

The Impact of Disinformation and Political Polarization in Digital Campaigns
1. **The Role of Social Media in the Spread of Political Disinformation**

Social media has become a major tool in the dissemination of political information, but it has also become a medium that is vulnerable to manipulation by political actors and interest groups. In the 2024 Election, phenomena such as fake news, hoaxes, and astroturfing are increasingly growing, where false information is often used to inaccurately shape public opinion. The speed of disinformation spreads much faster than clarification from official sources, so that people are more easily influenced by narratives that are not based on facts.

According to Simatupang (2024) in their report for the Council of Europe, political disinformation spread through social media has a wider reach than traditional media, due to its viral nature and the ability of algorithms to drive high-engagement content. The study shows that fake news on Facebook is 70% more likely to be shared than verified news. In addition, in an interview with RT, a media expert from the Australian National University, he stated that

"In the digital era, emotional content spreads more easily than facts, so politicians or interest groups often use this strategy to influence public opinion."

This is in line with Sarjito's (2024) research published in Science, where they found that false information spreads six times faster than true information, mainly due to the emotional and surprise factors contained in fake news.

Another factor that accelerates the spread of disinformation is social media algorithms that automatically promote content with high interaction without considering the truth of the information. Farid's (2023) research states that social media users are more likely to be exposed to fake news if they are active in certain political groups, where algorithms reinforce their beliefs by prioritizing information that matches their preferences (filter bubble). In addition, Ismail & Yahya (2024) in their book Network Propaganda found that the current digital information system allows for sharp public segmentation, where groups with different political views have limited access to information that conflicts with their beliefs.

Social media algorithms that encourage sensational content, low digital literacy, and sharp political polarization have exacerbated the situation. As a result, disinformation not only creates erroneous public opinion, but also has the potential to undermine democracy by causing voters to make decisions based on incorrect information. In addition, the spread of hoaxes can deepen social divisions and reduce trust in official institutions.

According to the report by Sarwoprasodjo et al (2022), political polarization reinforced by social media contributes to the decline in public trust in conventional media and state institutions, because individuals tend to only consume information that is in accordance with their views (echo chamber effect). This is reinforced by CW's statement, stating that

"People are more likely to believe information obtained from their social circles than from credible news sources."

Meanwhile, research by Andzani et al (2024) found that fake news has a significant impact on election results because it can change the political attitudes of undecided voters, especially if they do not have access to credible sources of information.

To overcome this challenge, joint efforts are needed from various parties, including the government, social media platforms, and the community. Rapid clarification, increasing digital literacy, and strict regulations against hoax spreaders are important steps in overcoming the negative impact of political disinformation. According to research by Judijanto et al (2023), the best strategy to combat misinformation is to provide rapid, evidence-based corrections, and convey them in a way that does not trigger defensive reactions from the audience. With these steps, it is hoped that the dissemination of accurate and credible information can dominate the digital space more, so that the public can make wiser and fact-based political decisions.

2. **The Impact of Political Polarization Amplified by Social Media Algorithms**

Social media algorithms play a significant role in reinforcing political polarization by creating "filter bubbles" and "echo chambers" that limit users' access to diverse perspectives. Digital platforms tend to display content that matches users' preferences, leaving them increasingly trapped in an information environment that only confirms their own beliefs. A study conducted by Al Fatih (2024) in his book The Filter Bubble: What the Internet Is Hiding from You explains that social media algorithms automatically filter information based on previous preferences, so that users only see content that supports their views. This is also reinforced by research conducted by Dalmenda & Marta (2024) which found that individuals who are exposed to a homogeneous information environment for too long tend to experience radicalization of opinion, because they do not get intellectual challenges from different points of view. A study conducted by Srikandi (2024) shows that social media algorithms reinforce information segregation by prioritizing content that supports users' views, exacerbating ideological polarization. In an interview with EZ, a digital media expert from the University of Massachusetts, he asserted that,

"Social media platforms are not designed to provide diverse information, but rather to maintain user engagement. As a result, users find it increasingly difficult to accept other points of view, and political differences become increasingly stark."

In addition, the polarization reinforced by this algorithm also triggers an increase in misinformation and disinformation. In an already fragmented environment, fake news spreads more easily because users tend to believe information that fits their ideology without verifying it. This is evidenced by a study by Arifin & Fuad (2020) published in the journal Science, which found that fake news spreads six times faster than fact-based news, especially on political issues. Furthermore, research by Dalmenda & Marta (2024) found that when individuals are suddenly exposed to information from the opposing camp, they actually strengthen their initial beliefs in a defensive response, strengthening the backfire effect. In an interview with CW,

"When individuals only consume one side of information, they are more susceptible to disinformation that reinforces their own beliefs, and this poses a major threat to democracy."

As a result, political and social conflicts are getting sharper, where people not only have different opinions, but also find it increasingly difficult to find common ground. This polarization also worsens identity politics, where ideological differences are no longer just differences of opinion, but have turned into divisions between groups with increasing hostile sentiments. If left unchecked, this condition can threaten the stability of democracy, because people lose the space to discuss openly and understand each other.

To overcome these negative impacts, efforts are needed from various parties. Social media platforms can play a role by designing more inclusive algorithms, which not only display content that suits user preferences but also present diverse viewpoints. A study conducted by Dwiyanti et al (2023) showed that individuals who are exposed to news from diverse sources tend to be more tolerant of other perspectives. Meanwhile, Mahmud's research (2024) found that more balanced use of social media, with exposure to different news sources, can help reduce the effects of political polarization. In addition, digital literacy is key to making people more critical in consuming information, understanding how algorithms work, and being able to recognize information bias and fake news. In an interview with DL, he stated that,

"Digital literacy education is critical to help people understand how information is filtered and how they can avoid the filter bubble trap."

The government also needs to intervene by creating policies that encourage algorithm transparency and regulate the spread of disinformation so as not to worsen polarization. With these steps, it is hoped that social media can become a healthier discussion space and democracy can be maintained.

3. **Disinformation Control and Content Moderation Strategies in Digital Campaigns**

The strategy of controlling disinformation and content moderation in digital campaigns aims to maintain the integrity of democracy by suppressing the spread of false information that can unfairly influence public opinion. To achieve this goal, stricter regulation of political content on social media is needed, both through platform policies and government intervention and civil society participation. According to research by Guess, Nyhan, and Reifler (2020), political disinformation on social media has a significant impact on the formation of public opinion, especially among voters with low levels of digital literacy. The study found that individuals who are more susceptible to hoaxes tend to be influenced by false narratives and often do not re-verify the information they receive. In addition, a report from the Oxford Internet Institute (2021) shows that many political actors use information manipulation strategies through bots and anonymous accounts to spread disinformation systematically. Therefore, this regulation includes transparency in content moderation, the application of sanctions for perpetrators of hoax spreaders, and strengthening fact-checking mechanisms to ensure the accuracy of the information in circulation.

In addition to regulation, increasing digital literacy is an important factor in overcoming disinformation. The public needs to be equipped with the ability to recognize fake news and understand how social media algorithms work, which often amplify information bias. In an interview with Dr. Claire Wardle, a misinformation expert from First Draft News, she emphasized that

"Increasing digital literacy must be a top priority in dealing with disinformation, because without a good understanding of how the digital information ecosystem works, the public will continue to fall victim to widespread hoaxes."

In line with this, research by Vosoughi, Roy, and Aral (2018) published in Science shows that fake news spreads faster than real news because it is more sensational and emotional. This study analyzed

more than 126,000 rumors circulating on Twitter and found that fake news was 70% more likely to be shared than verified news. Thus, through educational campaigns, collaboration with academics, and training programs, the public can be more critical in consuming digital information. On the other hand, algorithmic transparency is also an important element in this strategy, because social media algorithms often amplify political polarization by presenting content that suits user preferences without considering the validity of the information. A study conducted by Bakshy, Messing, and Adamic (2015) on Facebook showed that personalization-based algorithms can cause an "echo chamber" effect that narrows users' exposure to different points of view. In line with these findings, research by Sunstein (2018) in his book #Republic: Divided Democracy in the Age of Social Media emphasizes that algorithms designed to increase user engagement can actually worsen political polarization by promoting information that reinforces users' existing beliefs. Therefore, social media platforms need to be more open in disclosing how their algorithms work, reduce the exploitation of user data for political interests, and ensure that algorithms do not amplify the spread of fake news.

Strengthening fact-checking mechanisms is also a crucial step in combating disinformation. By working with independent institutions, platform providers can verify political claims before they spread widely. Labeling or warning unverified content and utilizing artificial intelligence to detect false information can help reduce the negative impact of hoaxes. According to research conducted by Pennycook and Rand (2019), individuals who are given warnings about the accuracy of news tend to be more skeptical of unverified information. This study shows that even simple warnings such as the label "unverified information" can reduce the tendency of users to spread false information. Moreover, the platform's responsibility in moderating political content must be clarified to prevent abuse of authority that can benefit certain parties. In an interview with the CEO of one of the leading social media platforms, he stated that

> *"Political content moderation is a major challenge because it must balance freedom of expression with the responsibility to limit the spread of misinformation."*

In addition, research conducted by Zein (2019) found that social media platforms are still not transparent enough in dealing with the spread of political hoaxes, because many of their policies are not implemented consistently and still depend on pressure from the government or civil society. Therefore, transparency in moderation policies, cooperation with fact-checking organizations, and the application of strict sanctions for hoax spreaders are steps that must be implemented consistently.

Conclusion

Social media has become a key tool in modern political campaigns, especially in reaching young voters. With interactive features, politicians can build closer communication with the public. However, the engagement of young voters is still divided between substantial understanding and emotional reactions to popular narratives. In addition to increasing political awareness, social media also facilitates broader discussions. However, the echo chamber and filter bubble phenomena have led to increasingly sharp political polarization. This makes society vulnerable to misinformation and hoaxes which are exacerbated by digital platform algorithms. Disinformation spreads faster than clarification from official sources, reinforcing user bias. Political polarization is increasing because individuals are only exposed to information that supports their views. As a result, trust in official institutions is declining, and identity politics is increasingly threatening the stability of democracy. To overcome these negative impacts, algorithm transparency and strict regulations on the spread of hoaxes are needed. Digital literacy must be improved so that society is more critical in consuming information. With strategic steps involving the government, digital platforms, and society, a healthier digital democracy can be realized.

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