

The influence of instagram social media on youth political participation in the 2024 regional election in Karimun Regency

Dayang Nurjannah^{1*}, Fhena Annisa²

¹ Communication Science Study Program, Faculty of Economics, Social Sciences, and Humanities, Yogyakarta 'Aisyiyah University, Indonesia

² Communication Science Study Program, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Tanjungpura University, Indonesia

Email: dayangnurjannah06@gmail.com*; fhena@fisip.untan.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of Instagram social media on youth political participation in the 2024 Regional Election (Pilkada) in Karimun Regency. The background of this research is based on the low level of political participation in Karimun Regency, where nearly half of the Permanent Voter List (DPT) did not exercise their voting rights. The research employed a quantitative explanatory method with data collected through an online questionnaire. The sample consisted of 397 youth respondents selected using purposive sampling, with criteria of being active Instagram users and registered in the 2024 Pilkada DPT. Data analysis was carried out using validity, reliability, and normality tests, as well as simple linear regression with the assistance of SPSS. The results show that Instagram has a significant influence on youth political participation, as evidenced by a regression coefficient value of 0.730 and a significance value of 0.000 (<0.05). The R^2 value of 0.496 indicates that 49.6% of the variation in youth political participation is explained by Instagram usage, while the remaining 50.4% is influenced by external factors such as formal political education, social environment, and organizational experience. These findings reinforce the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which posits that individuals actively use media to fulfill specific needs, including obtaining political information and engaging in democratic processes. The study concludes that Instagram plays an important role in enhancing youth political participation, both through seeking political information, discussions, digital campaigns, and exercising voting rights. The practical implication is that political parties and election organizers need to optimize creative and relevant digital campaign strategies to engage the younger generation.

Keywords : Social Media; Instagram; Political Participation; Youth; Karimun Pilkada.

1. Introduction

Social media has now become one of the main channels for disseminating information as well as a space for public participation. Datareportal (2024) records that there are 139 million social media users in Indonesia, representing around 49.9% of the total population, with 100 million of them using Instagram (36.2%). This platform ranks fourth among the most popular social media after YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook. Instagram functions not only as a medium of entertainment and social interaction but has also developed into a space for political communication. Its two-way communication feature enables users to actively search for, deliver, and respond to political information (Pratama & Yahya, 2023).

The younger generation represents the most dominant group in internet usage. The APJII survey (2024) shows that internet users aged 12–27 years account for 34.40%. This level of youth engagement highlights the role of social media as a platform for political expression among young people. When political content is presented in an engaging, informative, and relevant way, the potential for their involvement in democratic processes, including general and regional elections, increases significantly (Karim et al., 2020). Politicians strive to attract and persuade the younger generation through various approaches, one of which is by building their image on social media (Kusumadinata & Suryatna, 2024). Social media has become inseparable from the younger generation, making it an effective medium for politicians to construct and promote their public image.

The phenomenon of low political participation in Karimun Regency further underscores the urgency of this study. In the 2024 Regional Election, around 90,640 voters, or 47% of the total Permanent Voter List (DPT) of 194,290, did not exercise their voting rights (KPU Karimun, 2024). Meanwhile, young voters made up 25% or 48,397 of the total DPT, reflecting a significant potential that has not yet been

optimized. This low level of participation is attributed to a lack of political education, low trust in candidates, and the underutilization of social media as a means of political socialization.

Several candidate pairs in the Karimun Regional Election have utilized Instagram as a medium for digital campaigning. The content they share not only presents work programs but also adopts a more casual communication style and dynamic visuals to attract young voters. A preliminary survey of 37 respondents revealed that 86.5% of youth admitted that social media campaign strategies influenced their political decisions, reinforcing Instagram's role as a source of political information.

Previous studies also demonstrate the influence of social media on political participation. Susilowati (2019) found that Instagram effectively shapes youth perceptions of politics and contributes significantly to their engagement. Similarly, Naifah (2024) and Fitriani (2024) confirmed that social media is linked to political participation among first-time voters, although political knowledge does not always encourage active involvement. The distinction of this study lies in its focus on Instagram as the independent variable and the actual political participation of youth in the 2024 Karimun Regional Election, rather than merely their perceptions or intentions.

Social media is an online communication tool that enables interaction on any topic with anyone, without limitations of time and distance. Boyd explains that social media is a digital platform that facilitates individuals or groups to gather, share information, establish communication, and collaborate with one another. Social media derives its strength from user-generated content (UGC), meaning that the content is no longer produced by editors, as in traditional mass media, but rather created directly by its users (Ratnamulyani & Maksudi, 2018). Similarly, Mandibergh describes social media as a medium that provides a space for users to collaborate and produce content in the form of user-generated content (Ratnamulyani & Maksudi, 2018).

Theoretically, this research employs the Uses and Gratifications Theory by Katz & Blumler, which emphasizes that audiences actively select media to meet their needs, whether for entertainment, information, personal identity, or social interaction. In this context, Instagram serves as a medium for young people to seek political information, support candidates, engage in discussions, and express political attitudes. Huntington and Nelson explain that political participation is the activity of citizens designed to influence government decision-making (Susilowati, 2019). In line with this view, political participation can be understood as the engagement of citizens aimed at shaping government policies and decisions. This definition reflects the very essence of democracy, in which the people are not merely passive recipients of decisions but also play an active role in the decision-making process. Participation represents the involvement of society in exercising their rights to voice opinions and contribute to decisions that are closely related to public interests (Ratnamulyani & Maksudi, 2018).

2. Method

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design, aiming to examine the influence of Instagram social media on youth political participation in the 2024 Regional Election in Karimun Regency. According to Siyoto and Sodik, explanatory research is a type of study that seeks to test causal relationships between two or more variables or phenomena (Ardy & Natalia, 2022). This approach was chosen because it is relevant for analyzing cause-and-effect relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The research subjects consist of young voters registered in the Final Voters List (DPT) of the Karimun Regency Regional Election. Youth were selected as the focus of this study because this age group is known to be highly active on social media, particularly Instagram, and possesses significant potential to increase political participation. The research was conducted in Karimun Regency, Riau Islands Province, which in the 2024 Regional Election recorded a relatively low level of participation, with 47% of registered voters abstaining from casting their votes.

The population of this research consists of 48,397 young voters, representing approximately 25% of the total DPT. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error, as follows:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

Based on this calculation, the total sample used in this study is 397 respondents. The sampling technique applied was purposive sampling, with the following criteria: respondents aged 18–28 years, residing in Karimun Regency, active Instagram users, and exposed to or following campaign content

from electoral candidates. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Form, which was shared on WhatsApp and Instagram direct messages. The research instrument was developed based on the indicators of the Uses and Gratifications Theory and Huntington and Nelson's concept of political participation.

Prior to analysis, instrument testing was conducted through validity testing using the Pearson Product Moment correlation and reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha, where the instrument was considered reliable if the alpha value exceeded 0.60. Data analysis was performed with the assistance of SPSS software, beginning with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test, followed by simple linear regression to examine the influence of the independent variable (Instagram usage) on the dependent variable (youth political participation).

3. Results and Discussion

This study involved 397 youths from Karimun Regency who were registered in the Permanent Voter List (DPT) for the 2024 Regional Election. The sample was determined using purposive sampling with the criteria of being 18–28 years old, residing in Karimun Regency, and actively using Instagram. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, which was shared on Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, as well as through respondents' networks in Karimun Regency. This strategy ensured that the collected data were relevant and representative of the research objectives.

3.1. Instrument Validity and Reliability

Table 1. Validity Test of Variables X and Y (Instagram Social Media and Political Participation)

Variable	Item	r-calculate	r-table	P (Sig.)	Explanation
Instagram Social Media (X)	X1	0,711	0,312	0,000	Valid
	X2	0,610	0,312	0,000	Valid
	X3	0,770	0,312	0,000	Valid
	X4	0,718	0,312	0,000	Valid
	X5	0,711	0,312	0,000	Valid
	X6	0,641	0,312	0,000	Valid
	X7	0,726	0,312	0,000	Valid
	X8	0,697	0,312	0,000	Valid
	X9	0,756	0,312	0,000	Valid
Political Participation (Y)	Y1	0,384	0,312	0,014	Valid
	Y2	0,752	0,312	0,000	Valid
	Y3	0,423	0,312	0,000	Valid
	Y4	0,803	0,312	0,000	Valid
	Y5	0,889	0,312	0,000	Valid
	Y6	0,802	0,312	0,000	Valid
	Y7	0,781	0,312	0,000	Valid
	Y8	0,420	0,312	0,000	Valid
	Y9	0,606	0,312	0,000	Valid
	Y10	0,757	0,312	0,000	Valid
	Y11	0,667	0,312	0,000	Valid

Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

Based on the construct validity test of all measurement items in variable X (Instagram Social Media) and variable Y (Youth Political Participation), the results indicated that all items had significance values below 0.05 and correlation coefficients (r-calculated) exceeding the critical value of 0.312. The strongest correlation was observed in item Y5 ($r = 0.889$), whereas the weakest correlation appeared in item Y1 ($r = 0.384$). Therefore, all measurement items were confirmed as valid and deemed appropriate for further statistical analysis in this study.

Table 2. Reliability Test of Variables X and Y (Instagram Social Media and Political Participation)

Variable	Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Requirements	Explanation
Instagram Social Media (X)	9	0,870	0,60	Reliable
Political Participation (Y)	11	0,874	0,60	Reliable

Source: SPSS Data Processing (2025)

Based on the reliability test results for the instrument of variable X (Instagram Social Media), a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.870 was obtained with a total of 9 items. Meanwhile, for variable Y (Youth Political Participation), the Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.874 with a total of 11 items. Both values exceed the threshold of 0.60, indicating that the instruments for each variable demonstrate a very high level of reliability. It can be concluded that all statement items in the instruments of variable X and variable Y are reliable and suitable for use in this study.

3.2. Assumption Testing

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test				Unstandardized Residual
N				397
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean			.0000000
	Std. Deviation			4.83672390
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute			.063
	Positive			.063
	Negative			-.035
Test Statistic				.063
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)				.001 ^c
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig.			.082 ^d
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound		.075
		Upper Bound		.089

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
d. Based on 10000 sampled tables with starting seed 2000000.

Figure 1. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test

Based on the SPSS output, the Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) value was 0.082, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the residual data are normally distributed. Since the normality assumption is fulfilled, the data are suitable for use in subsequent regression analysis.

3.3. Regression Analysis

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	5.952	1.102		.000
	Media Sosial	.730	.037	.704	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Partisipasi Politik

Figure 2. Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Based on the results of the simple linear regression analysis shown in the coefficients table, the regression coefficient value of the Social Media variable was 0.730 with a significance value of 0.000 (less than 0.05). This indicates that the Social Media variable has a significant influence on Political Participation. The constant (intercept) value of 5.952 suggests that even in the absence of social media activity ($X = 0$), the Political Participation score remains at 5.952. Furthermore, the standardized Beta coefficient of 0.704 and the t-value of 19.725, which is significant at the 5% level, reinforce that the influence of Social Media on Political Participation is both strong and significant.

The results of the simple linear regression analysis, as presented in the coefficients table, indicate that the social media variable has a significant influence on youth political participation. This is evidenced by a regression coefficient value of 0.730 and a significance value of 0.000, which is far below the critical threshold of 0.05. Such a low significance level implies that the probability of error in concluding the existence of an effect of social media on political participation is very small. Consequently, the hypothesis stating that “There is an influence of Instagram social media on youth political participation in the 2024 Regional Election in Karimun Regency” is accepted, confirming that social media indeed affects political participation.

This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Andriyendi et al. (2023), which demonstrated that social media significantly influences youth political participation, particularly among first-time voters in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency. Their regression analysis revealed that approximately 30.6% of the variation in youth political participation could be explained by social media use. Young people utilize social media as a platform to access political information, engage in digital campaigns, and express their political opinions, particularly in the period leading up to and during the regional elections.

The regression coefficient (B) of 0.730 indicates that each one-unit increase in the intensity of social media use will enhance political participation by 0.730 units. This suggests a positive and linear relationship between the two variables: the more active young people are on social media, the greater their tendency to engage in political activities such as seeking information about candidates, engaging in discussions, voicing political opinions, and exercising their voting rights. This aligns with the study by Achmad & Dwimawanti (2025), which found that much of the variation in young people’s political participation can be explained by the intensity of social media use, particularly as a medium to obtain political information, engage in discussions, and articulate opinions digitally.

The constant (intercept) value of 5.952 signifies that even in the absence of any social media activity, political participation remains at this baseline level. This implies that youth political participation is not solely determined by the intensity of social media use but is also influenced by other external factors. These may include formal political education obtained through educational institutions, which fosters early political awareness and democratic values. Furthermore, the family environment plays a crucial role in shaping political attitudes, particularly when it encourages discussions and engagement in political processes at both local and national levels. In addition, personal experiences related to social issues and inequality can also enhance political consciousness, encouraging active participation without relying exclusively on social media.

This finding corresponds to the R Square (R^2) value of 0.496, which indicates that 49.6% of the variation in youth political participation is explained by the social media variable, while the remaining 50.4% is influenced by other external factors. Similarly, Rahmat, Ofianto, and Fajri Mulyani (2024) revealed that 57.3% of the variation in university students’ political participation could be explained by their intensity of social media use, while the remaining 42.7% is likely influenced by other factors such as formal political education, social environment, or offline campaigns.

In this study, the influence of Instagram social media on youth political participation in the Karimun Regency Regional Election is shown to be 49.6%. This clarifies that nearly half of the youth in Karimun Regency utilize social media not only as a source of entertainment but also as a platform for accessing information, engaging in political interaction, and using Instagram as one of the channels in shaping their voting decisions.

One representation of Instagram’s role as a medium for political communication can be seen in the post by the account @iskandarsyahhofficial, entitled *Borong Aspirasi Pemuda (B.A.P)*, a five-minute and two-second video. B.A.P was an activity organized by the electoral candidate to encourage youth

to play an active role and to voice their aspirations in anticipation of the 2024 Karimun Regional Election.



Figure 3. Instagram Account @iskandarsyahhofficial

The *Borong Aspirasi Pemuda (B.A.P)* video content uploaded through the @iskandarsyahhofficial account not only conveys normative political messages but is also packaged with dynamic visuals, a casual communication style, and the use of relevant historical quotations. Such presentation makes the video particularly appealing to young audiences, as it aligns with the characteristics of the younger generation who prefer political information that is concise, inspiring, and delivered creatively. The combination of persuasive messaging, simple language, and fresh visual elements ensures that the content is easily received while simultaneously motivating young audiences to feel engaged. This finding corresponds with the results of this study, which demonstrate that Instagram has a significant influence on youth political participation in the 2024 Karimun Regional Election. In other words, the attractiveness of content that resonates with the values and aspirations of young people becomes one of the key factors driving increased political participation among the younger generation.

In addition, the @muhdfirmansyahh account also presents video content with a simple yet effective delivery style, offering visuals and relaxed communication that reflect the characteristics of young people on social media.



Figure 4. Instagram Account @muhdfirmansyahh

The Instagram video content with a duration of 4 minutes and 9 seconds illustrates how social media is utilized as a medium of political communication that resonates with young people. The content

features dynamic visuals and communication delivered in a casual, humorous, and lighthearted style, making it appealing to audiences while ensuring that political messages are presented in a more accessible and easily understood manner. This entertaining approach aligns with the characteristics of younger generations on social media, who tend to prefer concise, creative, and entertaining yet meaningful political messages. In this way, the content serves not only as entertainment but also as a persuasive and effective means of conveying political communication. These findings are consistent with the results of this study, which confirm that Instagram has a significant influence on youth political participation in the 2024 Karimun Regional Election.

The results also reinforce the Uses and Gratifications theory developed by Blumler and Katz, which emphasizes that individuals actively use media to fulfill various needs, including information, self-expression, social interaction, and entertainment. Social media such as Instagram functions not only as a channel of political information but also as a space where young people actively shape their political attitudes and behaviors. In terms of diversion, this study reveals that youth in Karimun Regency often use Instagram primarily for leisure and entertainment; however, even when their initial intent is not to seek political information, they are still exposed to engaging political content such as memes, short videos, or creatively packaged campaign messages.

Regarding personal relationships, the findings indicate that youth are more likely to engage with political content when it is shared by friends, relatives, or familiar figures. Interactions such as liking, sharing, or commenting on political posts represent forms of engagement that integrate political discourse into their social relationships. In terms of personal identity, young people also use Instagram to express their political stance, for example by sharing supportive content for local candidates, posting opinions through stories, or following political accounts. This reflects the role of Instagram in enabling young people to openly convey their political orientation. In terms of surveillance, the findings further demonstrate that young people in Karimun Regency use Instagram to seek information about the regional election, such as candidate profiles, campaign schedules, local issues, and the latest developments.

Additionally, the study supports Huntington and Nelson's theory of political participation, which identifies six dimensions: voting, campaign activities, lobbying, organizational activities, contacting, and protest or violent actions. While social media serves as a major channel for digital participation, external factors also play a substantial role in shaping youth political engagement. This study found that 50.4% of youth political participation in Karimun Regency is influenced by factors outside social media. These external factors include formal political education, which provides foundational knowledge about democracy and voting rights; family and social environments, where political values are often cultivated through discussions, habits, and role models; and psychological or personal characteristics, such as interest in social and political issues, trust in the political system, and perceptions of voting efficacy.

In other words, while Instagram significantly contributes to youth political participation, overall engagement is the result of a complex interplay between personal, social, and media-related factors. These findings confirm that political participation is shaped not only by access to political information but also by individual attitudes, values, and lived experiences. Therefore, it can be concluded that social media plays a significant role in shaping and encouraging youth political participation. This conclusion is consistent with the Uses and Gratifications Theory by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch, which posits that individuals actively select media and content based on their needs and desires to obtain personal satisfaction (Syafarina, 2022). In this context, young people use social media not only as a source of entertainment but also as a means to access political information, communicate, express opinions, and actively construct their political identity and engagement in a more conscious manner.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the simple linear regression analysis, it can be concluded that Instagram social media significantly influences youth political participation in the 2024 Regional Election in Karimun Regency. This is evidenced by a regression coefficient of 0.730 with a significance value of 0.000, showing that the higher the intensity of social media use, the greater the tendency of young people to engage in political activities such as seeking information, participating in discussions, expressing opinions, and exercising voting rights. The R Square value of 0.496 indicates that 49.6% of the variation in youth political participation can be explained by social media use, while the remaining

50.4% is shaped by external factors including political education, family influence, social environment, organizational experiences, and individual psychological aspects. These findings are in line with the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which emphasizes that individuals actively select media and content to satisfy specific needs. In this context, social media functions as a platform for young people to access political information, articulate opinions, construct political identity, and develop more conscious engagement in the democratic process.

5. Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express their deepest gratitude to the Communication Science Study Program, Universitas 'Aisyiyah Yogyakarta, for the continuous support, guidance, and valuable academic environment that have greatly contributed to the completion of this research. The encouragement and facilities provided by the program have played an important role in enriching our knowledge and fostering the development of this study.

References

- Achmad, F., & Dwimawanti, I. H. (2024). Pengaruh penggunaan media sosial terhadap partisipasi politik generasi Z dalam pemilu 2024 di Jawa Tengah. *Journal of Public Policy and Management Review*, 1(1), 975-990
- Andriyendi, D. O., Nurman, S., & Dewi, S. F. (2023). Media sosial dan pengaruhnya terhadap partisipasi politik pemilih pemula pada Pilkada. *Journal of Education, Cultural and Politics*, 3(1), 101-111.
- Ardy, G. D., & Natalia, E. C. (2022). Pengaruh Kampanye PR Gojek #PesanDariRumah terhadap Kesadaran Konsumen dalam Menaati Protokol Gojek J3K. *Jurnal Komunikasi Pembangunan*, 20(02), 192–206. <https://doi.org/10.46937/20202240791>
- Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia. (2024, 7 Februari). *APJII: Jumlah pengguna internet Indonesia tembus 221 juta orang*. <https://apjii.or.id/berita/d/apjii-jumlah-pengguna-internet-indonesia-tembus-221-juta-orang>
- JPNN.com. (2024, Oktober 5). *40 persen DPT pemilih pemula, sosialisasi harus lebih gencar*. <https://m.jpnn.com/news/40-persen-dpt-pemilih-pemula-sosialisasi-harus-lebih-gencar>
- Karim, A. M., Wibawa, A., & Arisanto, P. T. (2020). Partisipasi politik pemilih pemula di media sosial (studi deskriptif tingkat dan pola politik partisipatif gen-z kota yogyakarta melalui pemanfaatan aplikasi instagram tahun 2019). *Paradigma Polistaat: jurnal ilmu sosial dan ilmu politik*, 3(2), 116- 131. <https://doi.org/10.23969/paradigmapolistaat.v3i2.3093>
- Komisi Pemilihan Umum Kabupaten Karimun. (2024, 4 Desember). *Pengumuman hasil rekapitulasi penghitungan suara tingkat Kabupaten Karimun pemilihan tahun 2024*. <https://kab-karimun.kpu.go.id/blog/read/pengumuman-hasil-rekapitulasi-penghitungan-suara-tingkat-kabupaten-karimun-pemilihan-tahun-2024>
- Kusumadinata, A. A., & Suryatna, U. (2024). Prefalensi Pemilih Muda dalam Partisipasi Politik di Tahun 2024. *Karimah Tauhid*, 3(2), 1456–1465. <https://doi.org/10.30997/karimahtauhid.v3i2.11772>
- Naifah, N. R. (2024). Pengetahuan Politik dan Pemanfaatan Media Sosial dalam Peningkatan Partisipasi Politik Pemilih Pemula pada Pemilu 2024. *Kalbisocio Jurnal Bisnis dan Komunikasi*, 11(1), 34-46.
- Pratama, P., & Yahya, A. (2023). Dinamika partisipasi politik kaum muda dalam platform media sosial instagram danyoutube. *Sintesa*, 2(01), 15–24. <https://doi.org/10.30996/sintesa.v2i01.8465>
- Rahmat, A., Ofianto, O., & Mulyani, F. F. (2024). Pengaruh Penggunaan Media Sosial Terhadap Partisipasi Politik Mahasiswa PPKn UNP pada Pemilu Presiden 2024. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 8(2), 18964-18973.
- Ratnamulyani, I. A., & Maksudi, B. I. (2018). Peran media sosial dalam peningkatan partisipasi pemilih pemula dikalangan pelajar di Kabupaten bogor *Sosiohumaniora* 20(2). <https://doi.org/10.24198/sosiohumaniora.v20i2.13965>
- Slamet, R., & Wahyuningsih, S. (2022). Validitas dan reliabilitas terhadap Instrumen kepuasan ker. *Aliansi : Jurnal Manajemen Dan Bisnis*, 17(2). <https://doi.org/10.46975/aliansi.v17i2.428>

- Susilowati, G. A. (2019). *Pengaruh sosial media dalam membentuk persepsi pemuda terhadap partisipasi politik*.
- Syafrina, A. E. (2022). *Komunikasi Massa*. Sumedang: CV. Mega Press Nusantara.
- We Are Social & Meltwater. (2024, 21 Februari). *Digital 2024: Indonesia*. DataReportal.