USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Muhammad Budiana

Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, Universitas Pasundan, Bandung, Indonesia

Email: m_budiana70@unpas.ac.id

Keywords	Abstract
Social Media, Political Communication, Information and Communication Technology.	**Abstract.** The rising sophistication of information and communication technologies poses a communication problem for political parties and political actors. Social media provides not just rapid information but also exact categorization. In politics, communication strategy is one of the keys to success in garnering votes. This study tries to determine the social media-based political communication approach. This is a qualitative study employing a descriptive analysis methodology. Interview- and literature-based data collection. The results indicate that the use of social media is not constrained by social, economic, or political status; social media and mainstream mass media have different characteristics when it comes to disseminating messages to audiences; and social media is a supporter of political communication in democratic countries where developing traditional and social media for political communication may be the best way to maintain audience engagement and communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is something that every person on Earth will always have access to in their day-to-day lives. Everyone, from kids to grownups to regular citizens to elected officials, needs to be able to voice their opinions and concerns about the world they live in (Effendi & Surjaman, 1986; Aminullah & Al , 2020).

Humans may now talk about their difficulties, form social constructions of those problems, and risk implementing remedies to those problems because of the power of communication (Nurhadi & Irwansyah, 2018). Over the course of human history, communication has changed alongside and in response to societal developments. Both the means through which people exchange information and the types of media used to do so have developed over time. Humans have invented a wide variety of media and techniques for conveying information, from the earliest periods until the present (Dan, 1989). Only verbal, in-person, and written forms of communication are available to humans. Also, the only ways to get a message to a large number of people are the old fashioned ways, such smoke signals and carrier pigeons carrying letters (Caropeboka, 2017).

The evolution of information and communication technologies has resulted in a proliferation of communication channels and mediums, which were otherwise severely constrained in the past (ICT). The evolution of information and communication technologies has resulted in the emergence of novel modes of expression (Astria, 2019). Therefore, people today rely less on just verbal and written exchanges and more on online and mobile forms of social media communication. The usage of social media for regular conversation has become commonplace. Indeed, the public, politicians, and political parties have all used it to convey political messages (Stieglitz, Brockmann, & Dang-Xuan, 2012).

Political communication on social media (especially Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, etc.) is facilitated by the interconnectedness of visual, textual, and verbal images (Effing et al, 2011). Political communication is a way of conveying politically characterized messages that aim to influence the public. The presence of social media is certainly used as a medium of communication by the government, political parties, activists and professionals (Arianto, 2015). Social media is an important part for political parties to provide information to the public about their political activities. Social media is used by political parties for political purposes, because this media has the power to influence various audiences (Alfiyani, 2018). Due to the increasing number of social media users in Indonesia, their use is also expanding, especially political interests. In the process of political communication in Indonesia, new media are the media of the future because they are cheap, fast, easy and fast to directly interact with communicators (Tosepu, 2018).

The public can be swayed by what others say on social media. With the advent of social media, it is easier to rally people to your cause and get your word across quickly. Therefore, from the standpoint of political communication, social media has opened a new chapter in the democratic realm. Therefore, social media's function as a medium of communication is to encourage its users to engage in two-way communication by contributing and providing open feedback, serving as a platform for both the rapid dissemination of information and its rapid rebuttal. According to (Budiyono, 2017).

Social media as an alternative media supported by the power of communication technology, actually has many benefits in order to increase understanding of the democratization of communication towards a just and prosperous information society (Susanto, 2017). For political parties, using social media can build political communication with political groups or organizations and their supporters. According to Matthew A. Baum and Tim Groelling, social media users have the potential to become new opinion leaders who will gain their own followers (Hastuti, 2011). Therefore, political parties need social media so that their cadres who sit as members of the legislature can provide information to the public honestly and transparently.

However, a good and appropriate understanding and approach is obviously required so that the use of social media as political communication can be precisely on target as anticipated. Thus, it is important to have knowledge in a number of areas, such as cross-cultural communication, communication psychology, media effects, and so on. Because it is possible, the use of social media that is "happily" or careless will actually become a "boomerang", which can harm the social media users themselves in terms of political communication. As is the case, the loss of public sympathy and a decrease in the self-image of social media users themselves (Waluyo, 2019).

This means that although the use of social media can garner support from the audience, they can also openly get attacked by other audiences who don't like them. In Indonesia, there are not many political communication studies that involve the use of social media. However, with the naked eye, we can see that the use of social media, especially by politicians, both national and regional, is now becoming increasingly widespread. Both by prospective regional head or executive candidates, as well as legislative candidates (Suardi, 2016).

The authors of this study contend that social media facilitates dialogue between voters, candidates, and political parties. In addition to the mainstream media, political discourse can also take place on social networking sites, where users can have more candid and open exchanges with their elected officials (Sarihati et al, 2022). Social media has made it much simpler for ordinary citizens to reach out to their elected representatives and voice their opinions on political issues and agendas.

People in the community can gain from using social media for political communication, despite the fact that it is often misused. It's a drawback for them as media consumers, though. As a result, this research will provide a critical discussion of how politicians might best utilize social media. There will first be a definition of social media and political communication. In addition, it will talk about how politicians are increasingly using social media as an alternative to more traditional kinds of media coverage. In light of this, the study will offer dialogues, discussions, and conclusions about the use of social media in political communication.

2.   METHOD

The author employs a descriptive analysis approach, grounded on qualitative research, to carefully quantify aspects of a selected social phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2011). On this work, the author employs a descriptive analysis approach, grounded in qualitative research, to precisely quantify a number of social phenomena. The writer employs a descriptive methodology for this study. A study of this nature provides a comprehensive account of its subject. The author used a descriptive methodology for this study. Researchers in this field provide an in-depth account of how social media is being employed by politicians.

The primary method of this study is a web-based database search for records and information pertinent to the existence of social media and political communication networks. Because of the importance they place on using social media for political reasons, the term "social media" in this context

refers to all internet-based communication networks that have been carefully chosen and are not restricted to a certain geographical area. The heart of the process consists of perusing a wide range of carefully curated, massive library holdings and digital resources pertinent to the topic at hand. There are three main phases to the method of data analysis employed: the extraction of useful information, the display of the data, and the interpretation of the results (Miles & Huberman, 2009).

3.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Social media

Chris Brogan (2010) defines social media as a new set of communication and collaboration tools that enables many types of interactions that were previously unavailable to ordinary people. According to Dailey (2009), social media content is developed with publishable, scalable technology. The most significant impact of this technology is a change in the ways in which people learn, consume media, and discover new material. There are currently hundreds of active social media networks (Badri, 2011). In its current function, social media has amassed considerable influence over people's habits and other aspects of their life. To put it simply, this is why social media is awesome. The following are examples of social media's many uses:

a) The spread of information and education through social media is a step toward greater equality. Changing people from passive recipients to active participants in the communication process.
b) The term "social media" refers to many forms of media that aim to facilitate communication and collaboration amongst people in an online environment.
c) The one-way transmission of broadcast media from a single media institution to numerous viewers has been replaced by two-way conversation amongst numerous viewers thanks to the rise of social media.

In addition, there is another opinion according to Puntoadi (2011), namely that social media users function as follows:

a) With social media, you can build your personal brand without resorting to any tricks or fake popularity; instead, your audience will determine your success. The various social media platforms have become a means by which users can share information, engage in discourse, and even garner online recognition and admiration.
b) The ability to connect with customers on a more personal level is made possible through social media. The content shared on social media platforms is more tailored to the individual. Marketers of all stripes can learn more about their customers' social media habits, interact with them on a more personal level, and cultivate genuine passion for their products and services by utilizing this channel.

Social media has some special characteristics. According to Hadi Purnama (2011), among the special characteristics of social media are:

a) Reach that can include small-scale audiences and global audiences.
b) More accessible to the public at a more affordable cost.
c) Social media is relatively easier to use because it does not require special skills and training.
d) Social Media can provoke a faster audience response.

According to Kotler and Keller that there are three main types of platforms for social media, namely:

a) Forums and online communities They come in all shapes and sizes where many are created by customers. Some of this is sponsored by the company through posts, instant messaging, and also chats that discuss special interests that the company can relate to.
b) Blogs There are lots of very diverse blog users here and Blogspot itself is a provider of free website accounts where we can post, share and so on.

2. Political Communication

Political communication is one of the branches of communication that is quite popular. Unconsciously, nowadays many people have entered or are involved in political communication.

Unconsciously, the process of extracting information is also included in political communication. Not only popular, political communication is also considered important and interesting along with the development of mass media. Issues that are present as information or messages in political communication have now attracted the attention of the general public.

Several experts put forward the notion of political communication in accordance with their respective observations and opinions, Negrine (1996) defines political communication as a result that has a political nature, if it is emphasized on results. Meanwhile, if political communication is defined by emphasizing the function in the political system, it is communication that occurs in a political system and occurs between the system and its environment. Meanwhile, according to Almond and Powell, political communication is a political function that together has other functions, namely aggregation, articulation, recruitment and socialization that are present in a political system. Political communication is present as a prerequisite or prerequisite to fulfill other political functions.

Nasution (1990) explains that when viewed from its usefulness, political communication can be interpreted as a liaison of political thoughts that live in society, both groups, intra, associations, institutions and sectors of life in government politics. Nasution (1990) also argues that political communication is an approach in political development. Through political communication, the figures involved in laying the basis for analyzing the problems that arise and develop the overall process for political change of a nation. Political communication consists of various elements, including:

a) Political Communicator. Political communicators are people who are able to offer information about matters with political significance. For instance, the president, ministers, members of the DPR, lawmakers, and social pressure groups that can affect government operations.

b) Message on Politics Political messages are statements conveyed both formally and informally, verbally and nonverbally, covertly or openly, consciously and unconsciously, with political content. For instance, political speeches, political declarations, publications, brochures, and newspaper articles, etc.

c) Political Media or Channels Political channels or media are the instruments or means that communicators employ to communicate political messages. For instance, print media, electronic media, online media, sociability, group communication by parties and community groups, etc.

d) Political Objective or Objective. Targets are members of the community who are expected to support parties or candidates by voting in the General Election. They include businesspeople, civil servants, laborers, youth, women, and students.

e) Effect or influence of Political Communication. The expected effect of political communication is the development of an understanding of the government system and political parties, as well as an increase in community participation in politics, which will influence voting in the General Election.

Communication has two approaches which include, among others:

a) Process orientation. Everything in the world, according to this perspective, is the consequence of a process. Spengler (full name Oswald Spengler) was a German historian and political philosopher. Splenger argues in two volumes of his main work, Der Untergang des Abendlandes, that the key to history is the laws of society and civilization that arise and fall in repeated cycles, and Toynbee (real name Arnold Joseph Toynbee, the famous British historian through his book titled A Study of History, which contains a historical investigation of the origin, development, and demise of great civilizations) suggests that social reality is a cycle that has repeated itself. This methodology enables one to comprehend political socialization and public policy.

b) Agenda setting methodology. Maxwell C. McCombs, professor of newspaper research and director of the communications research center at Syracuse University, USA, and Donald L. Shaw, professor of journalism at the University of North Carolina, developed this method. The agenda-setting approach assumes that the news, articles, or writings that will be transmitted are filtered by the mass media. This selection is made by those known as gatekeepers, specifically

journalists, editors-in-chief, and image editors. This gatekeeper chooses which news should be loaded and which should be concealed.

3. The Role of Media in Political Communication

The role that social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube play in shaping political discourse and, in turn, election campaigns (Stietglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2012). Political organizations should not ignore the significance of social media in political communication, especially during election campaigns. It is also argued that politicians might use social media to get community support during campaigns and learn about public opinion on legislation and political viewpoints. Researchers have shown that politicians in almost every country use social media to connect with voters, have one-on-one conversations, and steer public discourse. It is increasingly crucial for politicians to have a presence on social media due to the platform's ability to facilitate two-way communication with the public and pique the interest of first-time voters and younger voters (Stieglitz & DangXuan, 2012).

Politicians have been using the internet to campaign long before social media was even a thing. The internet has the potential to undermine authoritarian attempts to use their authority for the advantage of particular groups, such as those that take the form of top-down mass democracies. It is predicted that politicians and their followers will be able to have a two-way informational conversation through the Internet. The Internet has the potential to serve as the largest meeting place for the formation of interest groups and the most effective medium for the dissemination of ideas.

To return to the topic of social media's use as a communication tool, in today's democratic era, its function has expanded beyond that of a simple means of keeping in touch with friends and family to include more formal channels of political discourse. Meanwhile, locals are discussing politics and interacting with non-governmental organizations and government officials on social media. Most elected officials employ it for both campaigning and communication purposes, keeping in touch with the press and their potential voter base (Howard et al, 2016). As a result, it should come as no surprise that, alongside regular conversations, today's social media channels are rife with political discourse.

Think about how far-reaching and impactful social media can be in spreading news and other essential information, and ponder the commercial sector's effectiveness in reaching a broader client base through targeted advertising. In order to reach out to people and fundraise for political campaigns, politicians today frequently use social media platforms. For political discourse, social media play several crucial functions, including those listed below.

a) The use of social media in political campaigns has increased both their efficacy and efficiency. Using social media, political campaigns can more precisely and efficiently reach out to potential voters. There is empirical evidence that social media can be used to supplement traditional campaign methods in political campaigns. The 2008 U.S. presidential election was a defining moment in the effective use of social media. Barack Obama relied heavily on various forms of online communication to spread his message during the 2012 election. Obama used fifteen different social media sites in addition to his website during his 2008 presidential campaign (Effing et al., 2011), and his use of these sites helped him win the presidency.

b) Politicians are More Accessible to Voters Thanks to Social Media As opposed to the intermediary role played by the mainstream media, social media platforms place the public squarely in the hands of politicians and their constituents. This interaction can occur wherever, anytime, and for any purpose. El Bronco, a politician in Mexico, has used Twitter and other platforms to stay in touch with his constituents. He made use of social media in his gubernatorial campaign and continues to do so long after the election in order to have daily talks about public life with the people of the state of Nuevo Leon.

c) Broader political discourse is facilitated by social media. Politicians' ability to reach a wider audience of different nationalities and languages thanks to the widespread use of social media in international politics. Candidates and political parties in the 2014 European Parliamentary Elections, for instance, extensively utilized social media to reach voters in all 28 EU member

states. To reach voters in the diverse political system of the European Union, candidates and parties have taken advantage of the unique technological opportunity provided by social media.

Because it is founded on the concept of Web 2.0, it is possible to draw the conclusion that social media has become an alternative communication medium in addition to traditional media. This conclusion may be reached as a result of the explanation given above. In addition, social media is characterized by a number of distinctive qualities that set it apart from traditional media. Additionally playing a significant part in political discourse, social media platforms have been a significant factor in recent advancements made in the manner in which political discourse is carried out.

4. CONCLUSION

In the future, political communication in Indonesia will be more interesting. As the number of floating masses, especially among the younger generation, is increasing. This means that politicians need to improve their skills to influence the people. People are getting smarter, leaders who only use imagery will be left behind. Authentic leaders and close to the people will be increasingly loved. The most recent advancement in Web 2.0, known as social media, has contributed to a rise in both the efficacy and efficiency of the public communication system. If, over the course of the past few decades, the role of mediation and the dissemination of information was only played by traditional media like print media, television, and radio, then social media has the ability to replace it. The use of social media in today's world is not restricted to casual conversation; rather, it has expanded to include communication on political issues. Because of the interactive and adaptable character of social media, its usage in political communication has grown tremendously in recent years, particularly among members of the general public, politicians, and political parties. The primary mode of transportation for political campaigns and communication is currently the social media platforms. However, politicians need to exercise caution when using social media as a means of political communication because the use of this medium of communication comes with a number of benefits as well as drawbacks, particularly for the audience. In order to keep up engagement and communication with the audience, combining traditional and social forms of media for communication may prove to be the most effective solution.

REFERENCES

1. Effendi, O. U., & Surjaman, T. (1986). *Dinamika komunikasi*. Remadja Karya.
2. Aminullah, M., & Ali, M. (2020). Konsep Pengembangan Diri Dalam Menghadapi Perkembangan Teknologi Komunikasi Era 4.0. *KOMUNIKE: Jurnal Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam*, *12*(1), 1-23.
3. Nurhadi, W., & Irwansyah, I. (2018). Crownfunding sebagai konstruksi sosial teknologi dan media baru. *Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Kajian Media*, *2*(2), 1-12.
4. Dan, N. (1989). Komunikasi Politik: Komunikator, Pesan dan Media (Edisi Terjemahan oleh Tjun Surjaman). *Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya*.
5. Caropeboka, R. M. (2017). *Konsep dan aplikasi ilmu komunikasi*. Penerbit Andi.
6. Stieglitz, S., Brockmann, T., & Xuan, L. D. (2012). Usage of social media for political communication.
7. Astria, N. (2019). Essay Kajian Kronologis Dan Dampak Penggunaan Dan Perkembangan Teknologi Informasi. *Jurnal Inovasi*, *13*(1), 1-10.
8. Effing, R., Hillegersberg, J. V., & Huibers, T. (2011, August). Social media and political participation: are Facebook, Twitter and YouTube democratizing our political systems?. In *International conference on electronic participation* (pp. 25-35). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.
9. Arianto, B. (2014). Fenomena Relawan Politik dalam Kontestasi Presidensial 2014. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik*, *18*(2), 130-146.
10. Alfiyani, N. (2018). Media sosial sebagai strategi komunikasi politik. *Potret Pemikiran*, *22*(1).
11. Tosepu, Y. A. (2018). *Media Baru dalam Komunikasi Politik (Komunikasi Politik I Dunia Virtual)*. Jakad Media Publishing.

12. Budiyono, M. (2016). Media Sosial Dan Komunikasi Politik: Media Sosial Sebagai Komunikasi Politik Menjelang Pilkada Dki Jakarta 2017. *Jurnal Komunikasi*, *11*(1), 47-62.
13. Susanto, E. H. (2017). Media sosial sebagai pendukung jaringan komunikasi politik. *Jurnal Aspikom*, *3*(3), 379-398.
14. Hastuti, S. (2011). *New Media: Teori dan Aplikasi.* Surakarta: Lindu Pustaka.
15. Waluyo, D. (2019). PEMAHAMAN DAN PRAKTIK KOMUNIKASI POLITIK PADA ERA DIGITAL. *Diakom: Jurnal Media Dan Komunikasi*, *2*(2), 160-167.
16. Suardi, S. (2016). Antara Media Sosial Dalam Komunikasi Politik. *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah*, *27*(2), 82-86.
17. Sarihati, T., Si, M., Luthfie, H. M., Kurniadi, B., & Si, M. (2022). *Komunikasi Politik, Media Massa dan Opini Publik*. PT. RajaGrafindo Persada-Rajawali Pers.
18. Sugiyono, P. (2011). Metodologi penelitian kuantitatif kualitatif dan R&D. *Alpabeta, Bandung*.
19. Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (2009). Qualitative Data Analysis, atau Analisis Data Kualitatif, terjemahan Tjetjep Rohendi, Jakarta.
20. Brogan, C. (2010). *Social media 101: Tactics and tips to develop your business online*. John Wiley & Sons.
21. Dailey, P. R. (2009). Social media: Finding its way into your business strategy and culture. *Burlington: Linkage*.
22. Badri, M. (2011). Komunikasi Pemasaran UMKM di Era Media Sosial. *Corporate and Marketing Communication*, 127-147.
23. Puntoadi, D. (2011). *Menciptakan Penjualan via Social Media*. Elex Media Komputindo.
24. Purnama, H. (2011). Media Sosial Di Era Pemasaran 3.0. *Corporate and Marketing Communication. Jakarta*.
25. Negrine, R. M. (1996). *The communication of politics*. Sage.
26. Almond, G. A., & Powell, G. B. (1969). The Political System. In *Comparative Government* (pp. 10-14). Palgrave, London.
27. Nasution, Z. (1990). Komunikasi Politik. *Suatu Pengantar, Ghalia Indonesia, Jakarta*.
28. Stieglitz, S., & Dang-Xuan, L. (2013). Social media and political communication: a social media analytics framework. *Social network analysis and mining*, *3*(4), 1277-1291.
29. Howard, P. N., Savage, S., Saviaga, C. F., Toxtli, C., & Monroy-Hernández, A. (2016). Social media, civic engagement, and the slacktivism hypothesis: Lessons from Mexico's "El Bronco". *Journal of International Affairs*, *70*(1), 55-73.