

Swipe to Vote: A Quantitative Study on Social Media and the Political Behavior of Generation Z in the 2024 West Sumatra Gubernatorial Election

Geser untuk Memilih: Studi Kuantitatif tentang Media Sosial dan Perilaku Politik Generasi Z pada Pemilihan Gubernur Sumatera Barat Tahun 2024

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Abstract

The 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election offers a critical site for understanding the political behavior of Generation Z, a cohort raised in the digital era, for whom social media is both the primary source of political information and a space for spontaneous, often viral political expression. This study examines the relationship between the intensity of political content consumption on social media and the political behavior of Generation Z in West Sumatra across cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions. Using an online survey of respondents aged 17–27 with proportionate stratified random sampling, the study applies correlation and simple linear regression analysis. The findings reveal a strong, significant association between social media use and Generation Z's political behavior (significance value 0.000; calculated $t = 16.380$, exceeding the critical value), and a positive regression coefficient (1.925) indicates that higher consumption is positively correlated with political behavior. Cognitively, most respondents showed adequate political knowledge but remained neutral toward information credibility, reflecting digital caution and high fact-checking awareness. Affectively, they expressed strong interest in political issues and rational support for public policies while keeping a critical distance from political actors and institutions. The association with political action is dualistic: it accompanies high electoral participation but does not fully stimulate digital activism. Social media thus plays an important role in shaping political awareness yet has not become a driver of non-electoral participation, indicating a need for further research on how political identity relates to political behavior.

Keywords

Political Behavior; Social Media; Generation Z; Gubernatorial Election.

Abstrak

Pemilihan Gubernur Sumatera Barat 2024 menjadi momentum penting untuk memahami perilaku politik Generasi Z, kohort yang tumbuh dalam era digital dan menjadikan media sosial sebagai sumber utama informasi politik sekaligus ruang ekspresi politik yang spontan dan kerap viral. Penelitian ini mengkaji hubungan antara intensitas konsumsi konten politik di media sosial dan perilaku politik Generasi Z di Sumatera Barat pada dimensi kognitif, afektif, dan konatif. Melalui survei daring terhadap responden berusia 17–27 tahun dengan proportionate stratified random sampling, penelitian ini menerapkan analisis korelasi dan regresi linear sederhana. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan hubungan yang kuat dan signifikan antara penggunaan media sosial dan perilaku politik Generasi Z (nilai Sig. 0,000; t -hitung = 16,380, melampaui t -tabel), dan koefisien regresi positif (1,925) menunjukkan bahwa intensitas konsumsi konten politik berkorelasi positif dengan perilaku politik. Secara kognitif, mayoritas responden memiliki pengetahuan politik yang memadai, tetapi bersikap netral terhadap kredibilitas informasi, yang mencerminkan kewaspadaan digital dan kesadaran fact-checking yang tinggi. Secara afektif, mereka menunjukkan ketertarikan kuat terhadap isu politik dan dukungan rasional terhadap kebijakan publik, sekaligus menjaga jarak kritis terhadap aktor dan institusi politik. Hubungannya dengan tindakan politik bersifat dualistik: berkaitan dengan partisipasi elektoral yang tinggi, tetapi tidak sepenuhnya mendorong aktivisme digital. Dengan demikian, media sosial berperan penting dalam membentuk kesadaran politik, tetapi belum menjadi pendorong partisipasi politik nonelektoral, sehingga diperlukan penelitian lanjutan mengenai keterkaitan antara identitas politik dan perilaku politik.



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Kata Kunci*Perilaku Politik; Media Sosial; Generasi Z; Pemilihan Gubernur.***1. Introduction**

The 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election is a crucial opportunity to understand the dynamics of political behavior among the younger generation, particularly Generation Z, individuals born between 1997 and 2012 and now entering voting age. This group is known as digital natives who rely on social media as their primary means of obtaining information and shaping public opinion, including on political issues (Prensky, 2001; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2010).

Studies show that social media is not only an alternative source of political information but also a new medium of political participation that allows Generation Z to express political attitudes openly (Loader et al., 2014). On platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube, this generation consumes political content in the form of news, digital campaigns, candidate debates, and opinions from political figures and influencers. They also actively interact by commenting, sharing posts, creating their own content, and following the accounts of politicians and government agencies (Mascheroni & Vincent, 2016).

In the context of Indonesia's demographic composition, generational distribution plays a crucial role in shaping electoral dynamics. Based on data from the Badan Pusat Statistik [Statistics Indonesia] (2023), Generation Z constitutes approximately 27.94% of the total population, making it one of the largest demographic groups, followed by Millennials (Generation Y) at around 25.87%, Generation X at 21.88%, and Baby Boomers at approximately 11.56%. This structure indicates that younger generations, particularly Generation Z and Millennials, dominate the electorate and hold significant political influence in electoral processes, including local elections such as the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election.

Generation Z is often described as the most digitally connected generation, with a very high level of engagement in social media. According to the Digital 2024: Indonesia report (Kemp, 2024), internet penetration in Indonesia has reached more than 77% of the population, with the highest usage intensity found among individuals aged 16–24 years. This group spends an average of more than 3 hours per day on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. In the political context, this high level of exposure is often manifested in various forms of digital participation, including sharing political content, engaging with campaign materials, participating in online discussions, and contributing to the virality of political issues. This phenomenon is often referred to as connective action, in which political engagement is personalized, digitally mediated, and driven by networked communication (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012).

In the Indonesian context, studies have shown that Generation Z tends to participate in low-cost political engagement through social media, such as liking, commenting, and sharing political content, which amplifies political narratives in the digital public sphere (Lim, 2017; Nugroho & Rachmawati, 2020). Although this form of participation does not always translate into offline political activism, it plays a significant role in shaping political discourse and influencing public opinion during electoral contests. Understanding the intensity and patterns of Generation Z's social media engagement is therefore essential for analyzing their political behavior in contemporary digital democracy.

Social media platforms have become an integral part of everyday life, especially among the younger generation, who are highly familiar with digital technology. In a

political context, social media is used not only as a means of communication but also as a strategic tool to convey campaign messages and shape public opinion. According to Violin et al. (2024, as cited in [Angela & Nisaa, 2025](#)), social media serves as the primary medium through which first-time voters, especially students, obtain political information and participate in the electoral process. For these young people, social media is the primary source of political information and therefore plays a significant role in their political behavior ([Angela & Nisaa, 2025](#)).

The media play a significant role in increasing public political participation. Mass media, electronic media, print media, and social media have become alternative sources of information for the public. Khotimah (2019, as cited in [Hasanuddin et al., 2021](#)) stated that the speed of information circulation has enriched and diversified the information available to society, especially regarding politics and policy. Public political preferences are greatly influenced by the news each individual chooses to consume, and voters also assess the extent to which the media act as a balance in presenting news to the public ([Hasanuddin et al., 2021](#)).

Digital representational space is understood in this study as a platform-based arena of political interaction that mediates the formation of Generation Z's cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions. Exposure to political content shapes the cognitive dimension by enhancing political knowledge and perceptions of candidates and policy issues. At the same time, viscosity, emotional narratives, and the logic of virality influence the affective dimension by generating interest, sympathy, or skepticism toward political actors. Practices such as sharing, commenting, and engaging in online discourse constitute the conative dimension, illustrating how digital spaces frame political action, both as electoral participation and as symbolic political expression. Digital space is therefore not neutral; it operates as a structure that frames and constrains how political behavior is produced and represented.

This phenomenon is also evident in the local context of West Sumatra. According to a focus group discussion held by Universitas Negeri Padang in November 2024, young voters in this province were significantly influenced by political content on social media in forming preferences for regional-head candidate pairs ([UNP News, 2024](#)). Several pieces of viral content, such as locally tinged campaign videos on TikTok and widely circulated political memes, suggest that the digital space plays a significant role in shaping Generation Z's political perceptions in West Sumatra.

Unlike Millennials, who experienced the transition from analog to digital spaces, Generation Z has grown up as digital natives, interacting from the outset within ecosystems shaped by algorithms, viscosity, and rapid information flows. Whereas Millennials tend to use social media as a discursive arena for constructing political opinions, Generation Z more frequently engages through visual, short-form content that is fast-paced, emotionally driven, and highly viral. These generational differences have significant implications for how political behavior is formed and expressed within digital democracy.

The political behavior of Generation Z in West Sumatra in the 2024 gubernatorial election shows dynamics worthy of careful observation. According to data from the [Komisi Pemilihan Umum Provinsi Sumatera Barat \[West Sumatra General Elections Commission\] \(2024\)](#), young voters aged 17–30, the majority of them Generation Z, comprise more than 40% of the final voters list. This generation is a strategic segment for candidates, who design campaign strategies using digital approaches such as TikTok Live, Instagram Stories, and locally themed viral content. This indicates that Generation Z is not only a campaign target but also an active participant in spreading, discussing, and shaping political opinion online.

However, the level of formal political participation among young voters in West Sumatra, particularly Generation Z, still tends to fluctuate. Previous studies indicate that although this generation is highly active in digital spaces, such activity does not always translate into consistent electoral participation. Fitriyah et al. (2021) found that many young voters in West Sumatra hold a critical and sometimes skeptical attitude toward the effectiveness of electoral politics, which may lead to apathy or abstention.

At the same time, Generation Z exhibits a growing tendency toward digital political engagement, particularly through social media. This engagement is reflected in activities such as consuming political content, following political actors, and interacting with political issues online. However, it is often characterized by low-cost, low-risk participation that tends to remain at the level of expression rather than evolving into more substantive political action.

This condition indicates a gap between high digital exposure and relatively unstable forms of political participation. It is therefore important to examine whether and to what extent the consumption of political content on social media can influence the political behavior of Generation Z, particularly in bridging the divide between digital engagement and actual participation.

This digital engagement raises an important question: does consuming political content through social media actually influence actual political behavior, such as voter awareness, understanding of political issues, or active participation in the 2024 gubernatorial election? Previous research in Indonesia has been limited in examining the relationship between the consumption of political content on social media and the political behavior of the younger generation in a local and measurable manner.

This study is therefore relevant in addressing these questions through a quantitative approach focused on the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election. The results are expected to provide a clearer picture of digital political-information consumption patterns and their contribution to Generation Z's political behavior at the local level. Research on Generation Z's political behavior and social media has grown rapidly over the past decade, alongside the increasing role of digital media in the political process. Several international studies have highlighted that social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and X have become not only entertainment channels but also arenas for political contestation and opinion formation (Easton, 1965; Boulianne, 2015). In Indonesia, various studies have examined the relationship between social media and political participation, such as that of Nugroho and Rachmawati (2020), which shows that the intensity of social media use influences the political attitudes of young people in the 2019 election. However, most studies still focus on indicators of formal political participation, such as voting, and have not comprehensively examined political behavior as a construct encompassing knowledge, attitudes, and actions (Ekman & Amnå, 2012). At the local level, similar studies are very limited. The West Sumatra gubernatorial election has not been widely explored in studies of digital political behavior, yet West Sumatra's political dynamics are distinctive, marked by a religious and ethnocentric political culture as well as a shift among its younger generation, who are beginning to show openness to national discourse.

The novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive treatment of political behavior: beyond measuring formal political participation, it also incorporates Generation Z's political knowledge and attitudes, providing a more complete understanding of this generation's political behavior. It further focuses on the consumption of political content on social media, rather than social media use in general, allowing media use for entertainment to be distinguished from media use as a source of political information, and thereby combining the classical political-

behavior approach (psychological and sociological) with the digital context of algorithms and information selectivity.

The problem addressed in this study concerns how the consumption of political content on social media relates to the political behavior of Generation Z in the context of the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election. Generation Z is among the most active demographic groups on social media; on the other hand, its political participation is considered not yet fully stable or well informed. In this context, political behavior is interpreted not only as the act of voting but also as how this generation understands political issues (knowledge), responds emotionally (attitude), and participates digitally and offline (action).

This approach is theoretically grounded in political behavior, particularly the psychological and political-communication approaches, which explain political behavior as the result of interaction between internal factors (such as values, emotions, and knowledge) and external factors (such as the media and the social environment) (Nimmo, 1978/2000). Within this framework, the consumption of political content on social media is treated as an external stimulus that can influence individuals' internal dimensions, which then shape particular political behavior.

The development of digital democracy and cyber-democracy indicates that contemporary democratic practice no longer takes place solely within conventional public spheres but is increasingly mediated by digital infrastructures and platform algorithms. While digital democracy expands access to information and political participation, it simultaneously presents challenges such as discursive fragmentation, echo chambers, and a tendency toward symbolic and performative participation. In this context, social media is not merely a tool of political communication but has become an integral component of democratic structures that shape public opinion, political affect, and citizens' political actions.

2. Methods

This study employs a quantitative approach aimed at testing the relationship between the consumption of political content on social media and the political behavior of Generation Z. The research design uses an online survey method with a structured questionnaire as the primary data-collection instrument. The population consists of all individuals categorized as Generation Z in West Sumatra Province who meet the criteria for eligible voters in the 2024 gubernatorial election. The inclusion criteria for respondents are: (1) aged 17 to 27 years, or already married at the time of the election; (2) domiciled in West Sumatra; (3) actively using social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, X, or YouTube; and (4) registered on the final voters list. The sampling technique is proportionate stratified random sampling. The population is stratified by administrative region (regencies/cities) in West Sumatra to ensure proportional representation from each area. Sample size was determined using the Slovin formula (Sugiyono, 2013) with a 5% margin of error, yielding a representative number of respondents distributed proportionally across strata. Within each stratum, respondents were selected randomly through online distribution of questionnaires, ensuring that each member of the population had an equal probability of selection.

The instrument uses a Likert scale (1–5) to measure respondents' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. The variables consist of: (1) the independent variable (X), consumption of political content on social media, measured through indicators such as frequency of access, level of interest, and trust in political content; and (2) the dependent variable (Y), political behavior, which comprises cognitive (political knowledge), affective (political attitudes), and conative (political action) dimensions. These three dimensions follow the tripartite (cognitive–affective–conative) model of attitudes (Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960), as applied within

Fishbein and Ajzen's attitude–behavior framework, in which information (cognitive) and the evaluations it produces (affective) shape attitudes that translate into behavioral intention and, ultimately, action (conative) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Before the main analysis, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability. Validity was assessed using Pearson product-moment correlation, while reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha to ensure internal consistency. Data analysis proceeded in several stages. First, descriptive statistical analysis was used to describe respondents' characteristics and general patterns of social media use and political behavior. Second, classical assumption tests—normality, linearity, and heteroscedasticity—were conducted to ensure the data met the requirements for regression analysis. Third, correlation analysis examined the strength and direction of the relationship between variables. Finally, simple linear regression analysis tested the hypothesis and determined the extent to which the consumption of political content on social media is associated with the political behavior of Generation Z. The analysis was performed using statistical software (SPSS), and hypothesis testing was conducted at a significance level of 0.05.

3. Results and Discussion

The analysis indicates an association between social media use and Generation Z's political behavior in the 2024 gubernatorial election: the more frequently respondents use social media, the more their political behavior appears to be affected. Table 1 reports the simple linear regression results.

Table 1. Hypothesis Testing Using Simple Linear

Model	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	7.923	2.965	—	2.673	0.008
Political content consumption (X)	1.925	0.118	0.700	16.380	0.000

Source: Primary survey data, processed (2025). Dependent variable: political behavior (Y).

$$Y = 7.923 + 1.925X + e$$

The equation indicates the following: the constant of 7.923 means that when social media use is held constant, political behavior takes a baseline value of 7.923; the regression coefficient of 1.925 (positive) means that a one-unit increase in social media use is associated with a 1.925-unit increase in political behavior. Hypothesis testing confirmed the relationship, with a significance value of 0.000 (below the 0.05 threshold) and a calculated t value (16.380) exceeding the critical t value (1.650).

Social media use appears to play a significant role in shaping respondents' political-information consumption patterns, although its association with political action and decisions is not always direct. The data show that most respondents use social media intensively each day, with relatively long usage duration. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have emerged as the primary channels through which they obtain political information, serving as strategic media in contemporary political communication. However, the resulting consumption patterns tend to be passive: respondents' dominant activities are viewing, scrolling, and liking political content, without more active engagement such as commenting, debating, or sharing. This suggests that, despite being exposed to abundant political information, most respondents do not participate deliberatively in digital political conversation, and that social media functions more as a space for observation than for in-depth political discussion.

Although the regression analysis indicates a statistically significant association between social media consumption and political behavior, it is important to

distinguish between factors that directly contribute to behavioral change and those that merely indicate associative relationships. The association is not uniformly distributed across all dimensions of political behavior. The cognitive and affective dimensions—political knowledge, issue awareness, and interest in politics—show a stronger association with the intensity of political content consumption, suggesting that repeated exposure to political information is more effective in shaping perceptions and attitudes than in driving concrete political action.

In contrast, the conative dimension—particularly non-electoral participation—shows a more limited influence. This indicates that the relationship between social media consumption and political action is indirect and mediated by other factors, such as political trust, political efficacy, and the availability of participatory opportunities. The findings are therefore better interpreted as a strong and statistically significant association with partial influence than as a fully causal relationship.

An additional variable, trust, was examined. Respondents demonstrated a cautious and critical attitude toward the political information they encountered. Although social media is a primary source of information, most respondents did not immediately trust the content they consumed. They maintained a neutral stance on its credibility (74.70% neutral) and truthfulness (78.60% neutral), indicating that a critical distance is being maintained. This was reinforced by the finding that respondents tended to verify information (fact-checking) before accepting or sharing it, with 89% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they verify the truth of information. This practice suggests that respondents' digital literacy is at a reasonably good level, particularly in managing the risk of misinformation in a political context. Overall, social media serves as a primary source of political orientation but does not automatically determine political decisions; its influence is more visible in shaping information preferences, increasing exposure to political issues, and creating political awareness than in directly influencing political choices. These findings also underscore the importance of digital-literacy skills in navigating the fast-paced, abundant, and often unverified political dynamics of social media.

Respondents' political knowledge was moderate: more than half (50.90%) reported being knowledgeable or very knowledgeable about the candidates in the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election. They were generally familiar with the competing candidates and political actors, but their understanding of substantive political issues, electoral mechanisms, and policy implications remained limited. This superficial knowledge indicates that exposure to political information has not yet fully transformed into in-depth understanding. Nevertheless, most respondents felt able to distinguish credible from non-credible information, indicating a form of digital-literacy capital that acts as a basic filter for the flow of political information on social media.

In terms of political attitudes, respondents demonstrated a relatively high level of interest in contemporary political issues (66.90% interested or very interested) and strong support for policies that benefit society (80.40% supportive or very supportive), and they considered political participation a crucial aspect of democratic life. However, this interest was not fully matched by trust in the election organizers—the Komisi Pemilihan Umum [General Elections Commission], the Badan Pengawas Pemilu [Election Supervisory Agency], and the Dewan Kehormatan Penyelenggara Pemilu [Election Organizer Ethics Council]—or in the gubernatorial candidates, which tended to be neutral (around 61%–65%). This neutral attitude reflects a psychological and emotional distance between respondents and political actors, likely influenced by exposure to negative information, unsatisfying political experiences, or skepticism about the effectiveness of political institutions. The neutral attitude and psychological distance identified

here do not refer to stable personality traits but to affective orientations toward specific political objects; they are therefore positioned within the affective dimension of political behavior rather than as aspects of individual personality.

Within the affective dimension, beyond demonstrating interest in political issues, respondents exhibited a diverse spectrum of emotions, ranging from enthusiasm toward specific policy issues to skepticism regarding the integrity of political actors. Some respondents reported feeling that they have a role in the democratic process while simultaneously doubting the effectiveness of their participation indicating affective ambivalence in Generation Z's digital political interaction.

In the conative dimension, respondents' participation patterns show an interesting trend. Participation in formal, electoral activity was relatively high: 69% reported voting in the 2024 gubernatorial election, and online they shared political content, followed candidates' accounts, and engaged in online discussions. However, engagement in non-electoral political activities was lower; respondents were often inactive in online political discussion (34.50% not often), digital campaigns (44.50% not often), and organizational involvement (33.80% not often), and involvement in direct campaigning or public-issue advocacy remained limited. This pattern confirms that respondents prefer to be passive observers rather than active participants in everyday political activity; their political awareness does not yet fully encourage deliberative or advocacy-oriented engagement.

Overall, social media serves as a primary platform for disseminating political information and shows a moderate association with respondents' political attitudes and orientations. While it appears effective in building political interest and awareness to a certain extent, this association is not strong enough to move respondents toward active political action. Their engagement thus remains predominantly focused on information consumption and observation rather than deeper political participation. These findings also highlight the need to strengthen political literacy and to create more inclusive spaces for participation in order to enhance public political engagement more substantively.

4. Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between the intensity of political content consumption on social media (independent variable, X) and the political behavior of Generation Z in West Sumatra (dependent variable, Y) in the 2024 gubernatorial election, using a quantitative survey approach. Simple linear regression analysis confirms that a strong and significant association between social media use and Generation Z's political behavior, evidenced by a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05) and a calculated t value (16.380) exceeding the critical t value (1.650). A positive regression coefficient of 1.925 indicates that increased social media consumption is positively correlated with Generation Z's political behavior.

Social media appears effective as a stimulus for increasing Generation Z's political knowledge; more than half of respondents reported an adequate understanding of the candidates in the 2024 West Sumatra gubernatorial election. However, a crucial aspect lies in their critical digital literacy. Although Generation Z relies heavily on social media as a primary source of information, respondents demonstrated a cautious and skeptical attitude toward the credibility and truthfulness of the political information they encountered. This neutral stance is not apathy but a reflection of mature information-filtering ability, reinforced by a very high level of fact-checking awareness. Generation Z appears to have developed a digital defense mechanism: respondents receive information from social media but process and validate it internally before treating it as a basis for knowledge or belief.

In the affective dimension, Generation Z exhibits a positive and somewhat idealistic political attitude, evidenced by a high level of interest in political developments and near-unanimous support for policies that benefit society. However, this positive attitude does not automatically translate into trust in actors or institutions; respondents' trust in the election organizers and in the gubernatorial candidates was dominated by neutral attitudes. This predominance of neutral attitudes indicates a psychological distance or rational doubt between Generation Z and formal political figures and systems, reinforcing the analysis that Generation Z's affective engagement is driven more by issue-based rationality and public interest than by figure loyalty or personal preference.

Although social media shows a significant association overall, its association with the conative dimension (action) is polarized. On the one hand, it is associated with relatively high formal political participation, indicating that Generation Z understands and values electoral participation. On the other hand, social media does not appear to extend to non-electoral participation or digital activism; respondents tended to be passive in online political discussion, digital campaigns, and organizational involvement. Overall, Generation Z uses social media primarily as a space for information consumption that shapes electoral awareness, making them attentive and critical voters, but relatively few act as digital activists or narrative-spreaders; social media has thus not become a primary mechanism for transforming non-electoral political action among Generation Z in West Sumatra.

These findings carry practical implications. Election authorities could use the platforms most used by Generation Z—Instagram and TikTok—to communicate electoral procedures and violation-reporting mechanisms, rather than relying solely on conventional media, and could focus less on building trust than on strengthening practical information-verification skills, given this generation's high awareness of fact-checking. For candidates, issue- and policy-based communication is likely to be more effective than figure-centered promotion, consistent with the finding that this generation supports substantive policies while remaining skeptical of political figures; interactive content that encourages a shift from passive engagement (such as liking) toward commenting and sharing may help counter the predominantly passive pattern of digital consumption.

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings. First, the use of an online survey may introduce representational bias, as it primarily reaches respondents who have internet access and are active on social media, and may not fully represent the entire Generation Z population in West Sumatra. Second, the cross-sectional design means that the relationships identified are associative rather than causal. Third, the study does not differentiate between the characteristics of various social media platforms or the types of political content consumed, which may have varying effects on political behavior, nor does it examine in depth psychological and contextual factors such as political efficacy, trust in institutions, and the social environment. The findings should therefore be read as a general overview of the relationship between social media consumption and political behavior, requiring further investigation through more comprehensive approaches.

Further research could examine the relationship between political identity and political behavior in digital spaces. Because social media also functions as a space for identity representation, further studies are needed to investigate how political identity—whether grounded in ideology, candidate affiliation, or social identity—is constructed, negotiated, and expressed through digital interaction, and how such identity constructions shape the consistency and forms of political behavior, both electoral and non-electoral. Mixed-methods approaches or in-depth qualitative studies, including interviews and focus group discussions, could further illuminate the reasons behind the predominantly neutral stance toward the credibility of

information, institutions, and candidates, and could incorporate digital-network variables such as algorithms, echo chambers, and filter bubbles to assess their influence on Generation Z's knowledge and polarization.

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