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The Influence of Social Media on Civic Engagement among Indonesian Millennials

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Abstract

In the past two decades, social media has become a dominant arena influencing public opinion, political discourse, and civic engagement, especially among younger generations. In Indonesia, with over 200 million internet users, millennials are the most active in using social media for both entertainment and participation in civic life. This study explores how social media influences civic engagement among Indonesian millennials, emphasizing how online activities foster awareness, activism, and offline involvement. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research combines surveys of 250 millennials from major cities with qualitative interviews. Findings reveal that Instagram (82%), TikTok (76%), and Twitter (65%) are the most utilized platforms for civic expression. Popular online actions include hashtag campaigns (75%), petitions (68%), and crowdfunding (60%), though conversion into offline engagement remains moderate. Key obstacles are misinformation (72%), superficial participation (58%), and harassment (45%). However, frequent civic use of social media correlates positively with volunteering and protests. Overall, social media both democratizes access to civic participation and enhances political awareness, yet risks shallow engagement and polarization.

INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, social media has transformed from a simple communication platform into a powerful arena that shapes public opinion, social interaction, and civic participation (Swastiningsih et al., 2024; Ariestandy et al., 2024). With the rise of platforms such as Facebook, Twitter (now X), Instagram, and TikTok, individuals are no longer mere consumers of information but also active producers and distributors. Yates (2022) said that, this shift has fundamentally altered how people engage with social, cultural, and political issues in their daily lives. Indonesia, as one of the largest democracies in the world, provides a compelling context for examining the influence of social media (Nurhayati & Suryadi, 2017; Saud & Margono, 2021). With more than 200 million internet users and a rapidly growing digital economy, Indonesia is among the top countries in terms of social media penetration. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced among millennials those born between 1981 and 1996 who constitute a significant portion of the country's population and

represent the largest group of social media users (Br, 2025; Escandon-Barbosa et al., 2021; Martinson et al., 2022; Cantó & Rodó-Zárate, 2024).

According to Sari (2019), Millennials in Indonesia are often characterized by their digital nativity, tech-savviness, and strong reliance on social media for information and communication. For this generation, social media platforms are not merely entertainment tools but also spaces for expressing opinions, building networks, and participating in civic life. As such, social media has become a vital channel for millennials to learn about social issues, engage in discussions, and even mobilize for collective action (Safitri, 2025; Harriyani, 2024; Tasabehji, 2024; Utari et al., 2023; Belotti et al., 2022).

Civic engagement, which refers to individual and collective actions aimed at addressing public concerns and improving community life, has traditionally been fostered through offline activities such as volunteering, joining organizations, or participating in protests. However, with the advent of social media, these traditional forms of engagement have expanded into digital spaces (AlSayyad & Guvenç, 2015; Mugil & Kenzie, 2025). Online petitions, hashtag campaigns, digital fundraising, and viral advocacy movements are now common expressions of civic engagement among young people. The case of Indonesian millennials illustrates how social media reshapes civic participation (Ramadhan, 2025; Anoraga & Sakai, 2023; Utari et al., 2023). Various social movements such as #ReformasiDikorupsi, #SaveKPK, and environmental campaigns like #SaveAru have shown that millennials are capable of mobilizing massive online and offline support. These campaigns highlight how digital tools can amplify voices, spread awareness rapidly, and create pressure on policymakers in ways that were unimaginable a generation ago.

Meanwhile, the contribution of the social media to civic engagement does not go without complaints. Although it can boost the involvement, it can also give rise to shallow involvement, commonly known as slacktivism. The illusion of involvement can be offered by clicking like or sharing a post, although it does not always result in practice in reality. In addition, misinformation and polarization on social media websites can destroy positive discussions and confuse trust in civic institutions (Arifah et al., 2025; Arifah et al., 2025; Bhutto, 2024; Sagbakken, 2022). These issues are especially topical in the Indonesian setting. The presence of high internet penetration and social media activity among millennials is accompanied by the increasing anxieties over online hoaxes, execution of echo chambers, and manipulation of political processes within the framework of elections. These dynamics cast doubts on whether social media can be used as the instrument of actual civic participation or a place of symbolic involvement and political diversion (Saud et al., 2023; Matthes, 2022).

In spite of these issues, social media has continued to be a key force that motivates millennial civic participation in Indonesia. It offers a kind of arena through which youths are able to bypass the hierarchies and engage more directly in the social and political discourse. In comparison with the past generations, millennials have become able to express their issues not only in real-time but also publicly, which is accessible to a broader audience, unlike the traditional media options.

It is crucial to comprehend how social media has affected the civic engagement of Indonesian millennials (Utari et al., 2023; Wijaya and Amalia, 2024; Utari et al., 2023; Amin et al., 2024). This work provides an insight into the social and political perceptions of a digitally connected generation and their practice of citizenship in a world where technology mediates a large portion of social and political life. More to the point, it helps policymakers, educators, and the actors of civil society to develop strategies that would promote meaningful and sustainable interactions, both online and offline. The study seeks to examine the connection between social

media and civic engagement among Indonesian millennials, in terms of the ways in which these digital platforms influence political awareness and civic participation and collective action, as well as the level to which social media facilitates or disables further engagement in the political process hence eliciting the duality in its effects. Finally, the study is valuable to the overall debate about the impact of digital technology on the civic life in Indonesia. The study offers understanding of the changing trends of engagement in a society whose characteristics are increasingly digital by exploring the experiences of millennials. It claims that even though social media has an undeniable potential on its capacity to enhance civic participation, its long-term effects are determined by how individuals, institutions, and the society at large will manage the opportunities and the challenges it will offer.

METHODS

The current research will attempt to explore the role of social media in civic engagement of Indonesian millennials. The research design used was that of a mixed-methods one because it needed to provide a holistic picture of how social media influences political participation, social awareness and collective action among this group of people. The mixed-methods design was chosen due to its ability to express the statistical trends of social media use and civic participation as well as the opportunity to gain more insight into the reasons, obstacles, and perceptions underlying such trends. Quantitative data provide objective facts on trends whereas qualitative data complement results because they provide lived experiences and contextual insights. The research design was a concurrent triangulation design, which involved simultaneous collection of data and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data separately. This type of design helped to explore the research questions completely and provided increased strength of the findings due to the comparative analysis of disparate data types.

The millennials living in the urban centers of Indonesia were the participants of this study, and this group has been identified as the most active social media users with high involvement in online and offline civic activities. The sample was of people between the age of 25 to 40 years thus encompassing a wide range of backgrounds and socioeconomic backgrounds. Purposive sampling was to be used to sample participants with active use of the social media and a level of civicism, e.g. signing online petitions or taking part in social media campaigns. The sampling was made to extract a sample of people who can offer information about the impact of social media on their civic behaviour. The sample used in the survey was 250 respondents and this was an adequate representation of various urban areas in Indonesia. Besides this, qualitative data was gathered through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions of 20 participants who were sampled out of the survey pool and based on their levels of civic participation and willingness to participate in the follow-up interviews. These interviews provided more insight into the motivation, issues, and perception of the participants regarding social media as a civic engagement tool.

Two main methods of data collection were adopted, which included surveys and qualitative interviews. An organized questionnaire was created to quantify the rate and forms of social media usage, political consciousness, and civic engagement. The questionnaire was made to reflect a range of behaviours, such as political conversations on social media, taking part in online petitioning and crowdfunding efforts, as well as offline civic behaviour in forms of volunteering and protests. In the survey, both open and closed-ended questions were used, and the survey was conducted online to make it available and reach more people. The participants were requested to evaluate their use of different social media platforms (Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube) and tell how often they engage in particular types of civic activity, both online and offline. One of the questions in the survey was also

related to political awareness, feelings about social issues and perceptiveness of social media as a means of civic mobilization.

The analysis of quantitative information gained through the surveys was performed with the help of the statistical software (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were determined in order to investigate demographic profile of the respondents and response distribution. Regression models were used to evaluate the association between social media usage and different civic engagement such as political participation and activism. In the case of the qualitative data, thematic analysis technique was used to determine prevalent themes and patterns in the interviews and focus group discussions. NVivo software was used to analyze interview transcripts to create thematic categories that were developed based on the research questions and the empirical data. The themes that were identified included reasons behind using social media to get civically involved, obstacles to participation, and perceptions about whether or not online activism is effective.

Qualitative analysis was also based on the content analysis of online discussions and campaigns where participants were engaged, thus allowing researchers to understand how stories are created and spread in the digital communities. They were included in the qualitative analysis which involved thematic categories and content analysis outcomes, thus, allowing a sophisticated view of motivations, barriers, and perceived efficacy.

In the given study, it was followed by the accepted ethical standards to ensure the protection of the rights and privacy of participants. All the participants participating in the investigation gave an informed consent beforehand and they were assured that they could leave whenever they felt without any repercussions. The anonymity of survey responses and interview data ensured the protection of confidentiality. In addition, the participants were informed of their right to receive the study results at the end of the study. To address possible prejudices during the research process, the study has used a multimodal approach to data collection strategy, which allows to achieve triangulation and enhance validity of the findings. The paper also took into consideration the cultural context of the social media use in Indonesia so that analysis was based on the local norms and values.

Although the mixed-methods design will offer a complete picture of the research topic, there are a few limitations that can also be considered. To begin with, the sample was limited to millennials living in urban centres which might not be a clear reflection of what millennials face in rural or other demographic groups. Also, the use of self-reported information exposes the risk of biases, including the social desirability bias, according to which the respondents can exaggerate their civic engagement or political knowledge. Moreover, the impact of particular social media algorithms on the promotion of political content was not researched to its full extent, which is a part of the future research that is still unexplored.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings from the study on the influence of social media on civic engagement among Indonesian millennials. The results are categorized into several key themes: social media usage patterns, civic engagement activities facilitated by social media, political awareness and knowledge through social media, barriers to social media-based civic engagement, and the correlation between online engagement and offline civic action. The data presented in this section were derived from both the quantitative survey and qualitative interviews.

Social Media Usage Patterns among Indonesian Millennials

The study first explored how Indonesian millennials use social media in their daily lives. The data below shows the distribution of platform preferences, which reflects

the dominance of visual-based and interactive platforms among young users. TikTok and Instagram, for example, have emerged as the most popular platforms for civic-related discussions, while Twitter (X) remains central for real-time political conversations.

This finding suggests that civic engagement is closely tied to the medium of communication. Millennials appear to prefer platforms that are not only entertaining but also allow rapid information sharing and collective mobilization. The widespread use of TikTok in civic matters also signals a generational shift, where short videos become vehicles for raising awareness and influencing opinion.

Table 1. Preferred Social Media Platforms by Millennials in Makassar (N=250)

Platform	Percentage (%)	Primary Use
Instagram	82	Lifestyle, activism campaigns
TikTok	76	Short videos on social/political issues
Twitter (X)	65	Political debate, trending hashtags
Facebook	40	Community groups, information sharing
YouTube	55	Long-form educational/political content

The table illustrates a crucial shift in how Indonesian millennials perceive and utilize social media. While entertainment remains the dominant motivation for engagement, the same platforms have increasingly become arenas for discussing social, cultural, and civic issues. This duality suggests that leisure and activism are no longer distinct domains; instead, they coexist and often reinforce one another. The popularity of platforms such as Instagram and TikTok indicates that civic expression now depends on visual creativity and emotional appeal, blurring the boundary between entertainment content and advocacy. What was once a space for self-presentation has evolved into a participatory environment where entertainment functions as a gateway to social awareness.

This convergence of leisure and civic life reflects the broader transformation of digital culture, where the personal and political intersect through algorithm-driven visibility. Millennials’ ability to transform everyday media consumption into moments of reflection and commentary demonstrates a form of “casual activism,” in which civic engagement occurs organically within leisure practices. However, this also raises questions about depth and sustainability. When activism is embedded in entertainment logics likes, shares, and virality the potential for meaningful dialogue may be compromised by attention-driven behavior. Thus, while the integration of activism into entertainment broadens participation, it also risks reducing complex issues to consumable trends.

Civic Engagement Activities Facilitated by Social Media

The research examined how social media contributes to different forms of civic participation. The results reveal that online petitions, donation drives, and hashtag movements are highly popular, while direct offline mobilization from social media campaigns is less frequent.

This indicates that while digital activism is widespread, its translation into physical participation still varies. Nonetheless, the data shows a clear connection between online exposure and willingness to take part in civic initiatives.

Table 2. Forms of Civic Engagement via Social Media

Type of Activity	Participation (%)	Example
Signing online petitions	68	#SaveKPK, #TolakRUUKUHP
Donating via crowdfunding	60	Kitabisa campaigns

Sharing civic content	75	Infographics, activist reels
Joining protests (offline, mobilized via SM)	42	#ReformasiDikorupsi protests
Volunteering via SM networks	35	Environmental clean-up drives

The data indicate that Indonesian millennials are remarkably responsive to digital calls for action, yet this responsiveness does not always evolve into sustained offline participation. This finding underscores a critical distinction between *visibility* and *impact* in digital activism. While hashtag campaigns, online petitions, and crowdfunding initiatives can rapidly attract attention and engagement, they often generate symbolic participation rather than structural change. Such actions, though valuable for awareness-raising, may produce what scholars term “ephemeral activism,” where civic energy dissipates once online momentum fades. This pattern suggests that the convenience and immediacy of digital platforms can encourage expressive involvement without the logistical or emotional commitment required for offline mobilization.

Moreover, the gap between online enthusiasm and physical participation reveals the complex interplay between motivation, trust, and opportunity structures. Many millennials perceive social media as a safer, more accessible channel for civic expression compared to traditional political spaces, which are often viewed as hierarchical or exclusionary. However, without institutional pathways or community networks to channel digital awareness into collective action, online engagement risks remaining isolated from tangible civic outcomes. The challenge, therefore, lies not in the quantity of online participation but in its ability to foster continuity, accountability, and collaboration beyond the screen. Strengthening digital literacy, building civic infrastructure, and encouraging hybrid models of activism that connect virtual campaigns to real-world initiatives are essential to transforming transient engagement into enduring democratic participation.

Political Awareness and Knowledge through Social Media

The next dimension measured was political awareness shaped by social media exposure. Respondents acknowledged that platforms provide real-time updates and critical perspectives, though many also expressed concerns about misinformation.

This result illustrates the double-edged nature of social media in political education. While it fosters awareness and inclusivity, it also risks shallow or misleading understandings of issues if not combined with critical evaluation.

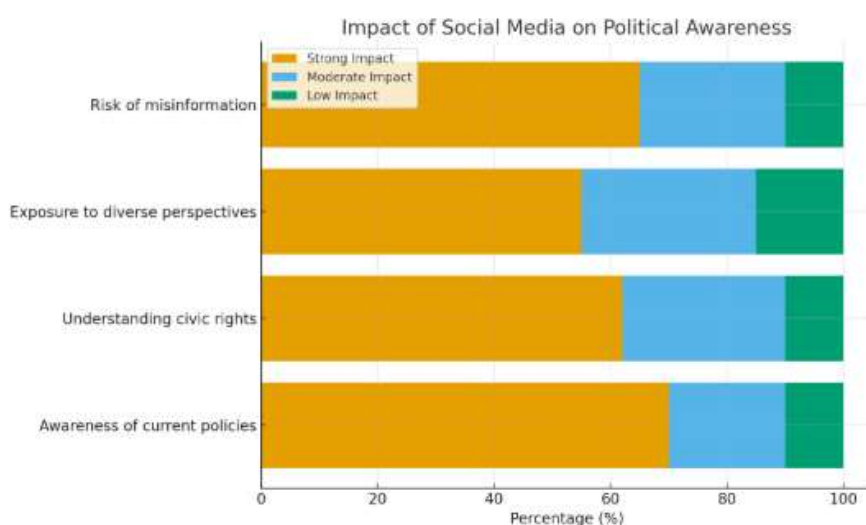


Figure 1. Impact of Social Media on Political Awareness

The findings unequivocally show that while Indonesian millennials have a comparatively high level of political awareness, this awareness does not always equate to educated comprehension. Social media platforms' propensity for propaganda, disinformation, and algorithmic bias frequently skews civic knowledge and degrades the standard of public conversation. Excessive exposure to information does not ensure critical evaluation; rather, it can lead to what academics refer to as information illusion, a state in which people feel knowledgeable but lack precision or depth in their understanding. This contradiction emphasizes how important it is to distinguish between awareness and critical literacy.

In addition to being a technical issue with inaccurate content, misinformation is a structural problem with digital communication systems. Algorithms that prioritize virality over accuracy magnify sensational or emotionally charged information, strengthening ideological division and echo chambers. Users are consequently presented with a fragmented civic reality that is formed by selective exposure, undermining reasoned discussion and group trust. This situation is especially troubling in Indonesia's dynamic but precarious digital democracy, where a high vulnerability to misinformation and a poor verification culture coexist with civic fervor.

Thus, media literacy needs to be viewed as a civic competency that is essential to maintaining democratic engagement rather than just a collection of technical abilities. Reflective digital behavior, ethical engagement, and critical thinking should all be incorporated into successful media literacy programs. Media literacy turns passive awareness into active, educated engagement by empowering citizens to recognize trustworthiness, challenge prejudices, and participate responsibly. In the end, enhancing media literacy involves more than just thwarting false information; it also entails fostering a critical citizenship culture that serves as the foundation for democracy in the digital era.

Barriers to Social Media-Based Civic Engagement

The findings also revealed significant barriers to effective civic participation through social media. The most frequently cited challenges include misinformation, online harassment, and a sense of “slacktivism” where engagement is superficial.

These barriers suggest that although millennials are highly active online, there is still a gap between online enthusiasm and sustainable civic involvement. Institutional and community support are needed to overcome these obstacles.

Table 3. Reported Barriers in Social Media Civic Engagement

Barrier	Percentage (%)
Misinformation/hoaxes	72
Online harassment	45
Superficial engagement (slacktivism)	58
Political polarization	50
Digital fatigue	40

The results demonstrate that although social media serves as a powerful catalyst for civic engagement, its potential remains constrained without robust structural and educational support. The very openness that makes digital platforms inclusive also renders them vulnerable to misinformation, polarization, and performative participation. Regulatory frameworks are therefore essential not to curtail freedom of expression but to ensure accountability, transparency, and ethical data governance. Current efforts in Indonesia to monitor digital content remain fragmented, leaving significant gaps in enforcement and public trust. Without

consistent and participatory regulation, civic discourse risks being dominated by unverified information, political manipulation, and toxic interactions that erode democratic values.

Equally important is the promotion of comprehensive digital literacy programs that go beyond technical skills to include critical thinking, ethical communication, and media responsibility. Civic empowerment in the digital age depends not merely on access to platforms but on the ability to navigate, interpret, and challenge online information. Strengthening digital literacy through formal education and community-based initiatives can help transform passive users into active, informed citizens. However, such initiatives must be accompanied by collective responsibility—among governments, tech companies, and civil society—to cultivate a culture of integrity and empathy in digital spaces. Only through this synergy can social media evolve from a fragmented arena of expression into a sustainable ecosystem that genuinely enhances democratic participation.

Correlation between Social Media Use and Offline Civic Action

Lastly, the study examined the relationship between the frequency of civic engagement on social media and offline civic engagement. According to the findings, people who regularly participate in civic activities online are more inclined to participate in real activities like protests or community service.

This research highlights how digital environments can influence civic behavior in the real world and demonstrates how, with the help of networks and organizational structures, online interaction can really encourage offline participation.

Table 4. Correlation between Online and Offline Civic Engagement

Frequency of Online Engagement	Offline Participation Rate (%)
High (daily civic interaction)	72
Moderate (weekly engagement)	55
Low (occasional interaction)	28
None	10

This correlation reinforces the view that social media functions not merely as a symbolic arena for activism but as a dynamic catalyst for civic participation. When effectively harnessed, digital platforms can translate online enthusiasm into tangible social action by enabling coordination, visibility, and inclusivity in public discourse. Hashtags, petitions, and online campaigns do more than signal support—they construct shared narratives and mobilize individuals who might otherwise remain disengaged.

However, this potential is not self-fulfilling. The capacity of social media to stimulate civic engagement depends on how effectively users, institutions, and networks channel digital awareness into organized collective efforts. Without clear pathways linking online interaction to offline participation, activism risks remaining performative. Therefore, social media should be viewed not as an end in itself but as an evolving infrastructure of participation that requires strategic design, ethical moderation, and sustained civic education.

Discussion

The empirical data obtained in the course of this study indicate that social media plays a central role in the development of civic engagement in the Indonesian millennials. Social space Social media platforms like Instagram, Tik Tok, and Twitter (now X) are the main spaces where political consciousness, activism, and socializing occur. This finding is in line with those at the international level that social media has transformed hierarchical and centralized forms of civic communication into more decentralized and participatory ones (Swastiningsih et al., 2024; Ariestandyy et al.,

2024). The fact that these platforms are very visual and interactive, makes them particularly appropriate in terms of spreading civic messages in creatively and emotionally captivating formats, such as short videos, infographics, and hashtags. Accordingly, this development is an indicator of a more general change in the way youth individuals think about participation, not as the formal membership in organizations but as an amorphous, issue-oriented engagement mediated by technology (Yates, 2022).

However, the issue of depth has been brought to the forefront despite improved accessibility. Online content's length and algorithmic structure frequently encourage rapid consumption rather than thoughtful analysis. As a result, social media's active potential is combined with the risks of superficial engagement, when activism turns into a symbolic performance through likes and shares. The idea that online participation raises awareness without requiring any sustained engagement is repeated in other international conversations about "clicktivism" or "slacktivism" (AlSayyad & Guvenc, 2015). The necessity for more structured online civic education programs and cross-platform efforts that strike a balance between digital bliss and real-world community participation is underscored by these findings in the Indonesian setting.

According to the report, the millennial generation's primary forms of civic engagement are hashtag campaigns, crowdfunding initiatives, and online petitions. Campaigns like the reformasiDikorupsi and save KPK campaigns serve as examples of how internet channels may be leveraged to facilitate quick mobilization without going via the established political gatekeepers. The idea that digital activism has evolved into a legitimate extension of civic life is supported by these evidence (Safitri, 2025; Ramadhan, 2025). Due to the lack of institutional and geographic constraints that previously limited civic engagement, online involvement also empowers individuals to support causes; as a result, participation is becoming more democratic in hitherto unidentified ways.

The relative dearth of offline mobilization, however, suggests that there isn't a constant disconnect between awareness and action. Even though 75,000 respondents said they participated in online civic activities, just 42% of those surveyed said they also participated in offline movements. This disparity shows that internet engagement is typically restricted to expressive engagement rather than transformative civic engagement. Similar patterns have been observed in other democracies, where digital activism results in mobilization effluxes that subside in the absence of sustained organizational follow-up (Saud & Margono, 2021).

Limiting online participation to slacktivism, however, is a mistake since it oversimplifies the civic value of participation. Symbolic engagement facilitates agenda-setting, visibility, and collective consciousness all of which are necessary prerequisites for structural transformation. According to Br Purba (2025), platforms like Instagram and Tik Tok are not just places for amusement but also for cultural negotiation and meaning-making, where young people reframe social issues into relatable, captivating narratives. Accordingly, it is possible to view online engagement as a flexible civic practice that resonates with awareness, expression, and action all of which are dynamically linked rather than distinct stages.

The findings also lend credence to the notion that social media is currently the primary source of political knowledge and awareness for Indonesia's millennial age. The respondents emphasized that these websites provide immediate access to social agendas, policy debates, and different viewpoints. The ability of digital communication to democratize discourse by allowing marginalized voices to challenge it is demonstrated by this phenomena (Nurhayati & Suryadi, 2017; Khan et al., 2025). In contrast to traditional media, social media allows for two-way

communication, which makes political education experiential and participatory (Utari et al., 2023).

However, the pervasiveness of polarization and false information restrains the empowerment. Misinformation was cited by nearly three-quarters of those surveyed as one of the main barriers to effective communication. Under the effect of algorithmic promotion, the rapid dissemination of unverified content might exacerbate ideological differences and misinterpretations of civic awareness (Harriyani, 2024). This two-sidedness's resulting effects a rise in information accessibility and a fall in epistemological quality are prime examples of the so-called infodemic phenomenon, which undermines democracy's deliberative component (Swastiningsih et al., 2024).

Consequently, one of the essential prerequisites for meaningful contact is the improvement of digital literacy. According to Sari (2019), millennials in Indonesia have disproportionately high levels of media literacy, and many users are unable to filter the material they are exposed to. Incorporating media literacy into popular education and academic programs has the potential to transform passive consumption into civic critical thinking. These efforts would ensure that the democratization of understanding occurs concurrently with the democratization of access. The study also found that social media has significant cultural and structural limitations that limit its capacity to change society. Misinformation is accompanied by electronic polarization and online torture, which, in particular, discourage sustained engagement with women and shielded groups. These findings are similar to those of Ariestandy et al. (2024), who discovered that negative online environments frequently mimic actual power relations, undermining inclusivity in digital participation.

Polarization in politics, mentioned by half of participants, is a sign of how digital space is influenced by identity politics instead of rational thinking. Algorithms serve to strengthen the effects of the echo chambers in which users receive mostly the content that fits their already held beliefs (Saud and Margono, 2021). This process makes empathy less significant and cross-group conversation discouraged, thus, undermining the civic fabric. It is necessary not only to find technological solutions to these challenges but also a cultural change towards the respectful digital citizenship.

Digital exhaustion also became an implicit but increasingly significant problem, and 40 per cent of those surveyed reported feeling disengaged because of the continuous flood of online activism and political news. This point provides an indication of a psychological point of exhaustion in the attention of the civic sphere, and it is essential to have healthier uses of the Internet or more alternative ways to engage than more in-depth screen-based activities. This can be reduced by promoting offline community projects and hybrid approaches using digital coordination paired with in-person collaboration to improve fatigue and long-term participation.

What is probably the most important contribution of this study is that it proved the existence of positive correlation of online and offline civic engagement. Millennials who regularly accessed civic content on social media were considerably more prone to attend civic activities in the real world including volunteering, environmental clean-ups, and also demonstrations. The discovery questions the classical ideology of virtual/real activism (AlSayyad & Guvenc, 2015). Rather it upholds the perception that online and offline civic actions constitute a self-sustaining ecosystem.

Such movements as the #ReformasiDikorupsi or the #SaveAru are the examples of how digital networks could result in physical mobilization in case of the combination with organizational coordination and mutual moral intent. The same trends have been witnessed all over the world, with digital networks offering the platform on

which real-world collective action can happen, whether it is the Arab Spring or climate justice movements (AlSayyad and Guvenc, 2015). In Indonesia, social media is a recruitment method and a magnification, converting the individualized issues to big swings. But this synergy needs to be maintained using institutions. Civil society organizations and schools need to take advantage of the communicative power of social media by offering systematic avenues between digital interaction and social action. The case in point is that universities could collaborate with youth organizations to convert online campaigns into service-learning projects. Connecting digital activism with materialized civic experiences, the social media interaction may turn into a response of an episodic kind into a lasting democratic one.

CONCLUSION

The research concludes that social media significantly influences civic engagement among Indonesian millennials by serving as a primary platform for political information, mobilization, and participation in civic activities. Quantitative findings indicate that frequent and active use of social media is strongly correlated with higher levels of political awareness, online activism, and offline participation such as volunteering and voting. Qualitative insights further reveal that millennials view social media as an accessible and empowering space to express opinions, debate public issues, and organize collective action, though concerns remain about misinformation and superficial engagement. Overall, the study affirms that social media is not merely a communication tool but a critical driver of civic engagement, shaping the political behavior and democratic participation of Indonesia's young generation.

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