



## Influencer Culture and Public Opinion: A Study on the Impact of Digital Influencers on Political Mobilization

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**Abstract** This study aims to analyze the influence of influencer culture on public opinion and political mobilization in Indonesia. Using descriptive quantitative methods and purposive sampling approaches, data was collected from 400 respondents of active social media users who followed digital influencers who voiced political views. The results of the analysis show that digital influencers have a significant influence in shaping political views and mobilizing political action among their followers, especially the younger generation. These findings reveal that trust in influencers plays an important role in amplifying the effects of this influence. Based on agenda-setting theory, influencers act as agents who are able to direct public attention to certain issues, strengthen political participation, but also have the potential to pose challenges related to the accuracy and objectivity of information. Therefore, this study highlights the importance of digital literacy and regulatory settings to prevent the potential manipulation of political information through social media.

**Keywords:** *budaya influencer, opini publik, mobilisasi politik*

### 1. Introduction

Social media influencers have become key actors in shaping public opinion in this digital era, where global internet users are constantly increasing rapidly. Platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter provide space for individuals to have a significant influence on their audiences, particularly in discussing significant social and political issues. This phenomenon can be seen in various countries, where influencers play a strategic role in building political narratives, mass mobilization, and social campaigns that touch various levels of society. On the other hand, the ability of influencers to disseminate information, even political ones, brings new challenges to public communication, especially related to the accuracy of information and objectivity that can affect the perception and view of the public at large.

In particular, in Indonesia, this trend is getting stronger, especially among the younger generation who tend to be more easily influenced by opinions spread by influencers than by traditional media institutions. The involvement of influencers in political issues, such as in the Presidential Election or Legislative Election, shows that they can influence the political decisions of their followers. This creates a challenge to the democratic process because most of the narratives conveyed by influencers are not always based on objective facts, but are sometimes subjective or commercial. The power of this influence, especially in political issues, requires a deeper understanding of its impact on political mobilization in society.

Previous studies have addressed the role of social media in politics, one of which is a study by Enli and Thumim (2012), which examines how social media opens access to previously marginalized voices, and provides space for a more inclusive democracy. In addition, research by Munger, Luca, and Nagler (2018) found that influencers' influence in politics depends not only on the content they convey, but also on the level of trust followers have in them. However, research on the specific role of digital influencers in shaping political opinion and their impact on political mobilization is still limited, especially in the context of Southeast Asia and Indonesia. Therefore, this research will contribute to filling the knowledge gap related to this matter.

The urgency of this research is very high considering the increasing influence of influencers in the socio-political dynamics of modern society. Without a deep understanding, there is a risk of information manipulation by parties who want to use influencers as a propaganda tool, which can ultimately jeopardize the integrity of the democratic process. Therefore, this study will provide a comprehensive overview of how digital influencers influence people's political opinion and how these influences are mobilized in the context of political actions.

The novelty aspect of this study lies in its approach that specifically focuses on the influence of influencer culture on political public opinion, which has rarely been discussed in previous studies. Most previous studies have highlighted the role of social media in general, without specifically examining the dynamics of the relationship between influencers and their followers in a political context. With this focus, the research will result in a deeper understanding of the important role of influencers in shaping and mobilizing public political opinion, particularly in Indonesia.

The purpose of this study is to analyze how influencer culture influences public opinion in a political context, as well as how this influence can mobilize political actions in society. This research also aims to understand the extent to which the credibility and content conveyed by influencers has an impact on public trust in the political messages they convey. With an in-depth qualitative approach, this research

is expected to provide a clearer picture of the process of forming political opinions influenced by influencers.

The contribution of this research is expected to add to the literature related to digital political communication, especially regarding the unique role of influencers in modern politics. In addition, this research is expected to provide insight for policymakers in designing regulations that regulate the use of social media by influencers, so that their influence is not abused in a political context. In addition, the results of this study will also be useful for other researchers who are interested in exploring the same topic in the future.

Implicitly, the results of this study are expected to provide practical recommendations for the public, especially in choosing political information sources that are credible and not easily influenced by opinions that are not necessarily valid. In addition, the findings of this study will also provide insights for educational institutions and civil society organizations in improving people's digital literacy related to the influence of influencers on social media. With adequate literacy, it is hoped that the public can be more critical in responding to political information they receive through social media.

Thus, this study seeks to further uncover how influencer culture in the digital context can influence public opinion and mobilize political actions in Indonesia. This is not only important for the development of political communication but also for a healthy democracy in the digital era.

## 2. Method

The type of research used in this study is descriptive quantitative research. Descriptive quantitative research aims to describe certain characteristics or phenomena objectively through numerical data measurement and statistical analysis (Sugiyono, 2017). Using this approach, the research focuses on analyzing the relationship between influencer cultural influence and public opinion in the context of political mobilization. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to identify and measure the impact of influencers on political perceptions and actions among the public.

The population in this study is active social media users in Indonesia who follow at least one digital influencer who is active in voicing political views. From this population, a sample of 400 respondents was selected through the purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique is used to ensure that the selected respondents have certain characteristics, namely following political influencers and having been exposed to political content on social media (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). The use of this technique is based on the need to get respondents relevant to the research topic, so that the results obtained can be more accurate in describing the phenomenon being studied.

The research instrument used was in the form of a questionnaire consisting of several questions related to the influence of influencers on the opinions and political actions of the respondents. The data collection technique is carried out online by distributing questionnaires through social media platforms to reach target respondents more effectively. The data obtained were analyzed using a simple linear regression analysis technique to test the relationship between independent variables (influencer influence) and dependent variables (opinion and political mobilization). This regression analysis is carried out with the help of statistical software, such as SPSS, to ensure accurate and valid results (Ghozali, 2018). The results of this analysis are expected to provide a clearer picture of the extent to which digital influencers influence public opinion and encourage political mobilization in Indonesia.

### **3. Result & Discussion**

Penelitian ini menganalisis pengaruh budaya influencer terhadap opini publik dan mobilisasi politik di Indonesia. Data penelitian diperoleh dari 400 responden yang memenuhi kriteria purposive sampling, yaitu pengguna media sosial aktif yang mengikuti setidaknya satu influencer yang menyuarakan pandangan politik. Dari data yang terkumpul, ditemukan bahwa 72% responden mengaku terpengaruh oleh opini yang disampaikan oleh influencer, baik secara langsung maupun tidak langsung, dalam membentuk pandangan politik mereka. Sebanyak 58% responden mengindikasikan bahwa mereka pernah mendukung gerakan atau aksi politik setelah terinspirasi oleh konten yang dibagikan influencer.

Data disajikan dalam bentuk persentase untuk setiap kategori jawaban responden terkait tingkat pengaruh influencer. Temuan utama menunjukkan bahwa generasi muda (usia 18-30 tahun) adalah kelompok yang paling rentan terhadap pengaruh influencer, dengan 78% dari mereka menyatakan bahwa konten influencer berperan penting dalam membentuk pandangan politik mereka. Hasil juga menunjukkan bahwa kategori influencer yang paling berpengaruh adalah mereka yang memiliki rekam jejak sebagai aktivis atau jurnalis independen, yang dipercaya 62% responden sebagai sumber informasi politik yang lebih kredibel dibandingkan media mainstream.

Analisis regresi linier sederhana digunakan untuk menguji pengaruh antara pengaruh influencer (variabel independen) dan opini serta mobilisasi politik (variabel dependen). Hasil analisis menunjukkan nilai signifikansi ( $p < 0,05$ ), yang menandakan bahwa pengaruh influencer memiliki hubungan yang signifikan terhadap mobilisasi politik di kalangan responden. Nilai koefisien regresi sebesar 0,64 mengindikasikan bahwa terdapat hubungan positif yang kuat antara konten influencer dan kecenderungan responden untuk terlibat dalam aksi politik.

Interpretasi data ini menunjukkan bahwa influencer memiliki peran signifikan dalam membentuk pandangan politik dan mendorong keterlibatan publik dalam aksi

politik. Influencer yang kredibel dianggap sebagai figur yang dapat dipercaya, sehingga opini mereka lebih mudah mempengaruhi pengikutnya. Temuan ini mengimplikasikan bahwa influencer, khususnya yang sering membahas isu politik, memiliki potensi untuk menjadi aktor politik yang kuat dalam memobilisasi dukungan publik, baik dalam konteks pemilu maupun aksi sosial.

Salah satu temuan menarik dari penelitian ini adalah peran influencer dalam menyebarkan informasi politik secara real-time, yang sangat efektif dalam meningkatkan kesadaran publik akan isu-isu mendesak. Sebagai contoh, ketika terjadi krisis atau isu politik tertentu, influencer dapat secara langsung menyebarkan informasi melalui story atau live video, yang memudahkan pengikut untuk mengikuti perkembangan terbaru. Hal ini memberikan alternatif bagi audiens yang mungkin tidak mempercayai media tradisional atau mencari perspektif yang lebih kritis.

Hasil penelitian ini mendukung temuan sebelumnya oleh Munger et al. (2018), yang menunjukkan bahwa tingkat kepercayaan terhadap influencer berperan besar dalam mempengaruhi opini publik. Namun, penelitian ini lebih spesifik dalam konteks politik di Indonesia, di mana media sosial memainkan peran dominan dalam menyebarkan informasi politik. Penelitian lain oleh Enli dan Thumim (2012) juga menemukan bahwa media sosial membuka akses bagi suara-suara yang terpinggirkan, tetapi penelitian ini memperkuat temuan tersebut dengan menunjukkan bagaimana influencer dapat memperkuat suara tersebut dan menggerakkan massa untuk bertindak.

Untuk memitigasi potensi penyalahgunaan pengaruh oleh influencer dalam konteks politik, perlu adanya regulasi yang mengatur transparansi konten politik yang disampaikan oleh influencer. Misalnya, setiap konten yang bersifat politis atau berpotensi memobilisasi massa sebaiknya dilengkapi dengan label peringatan, sehingga audiens dapat menyadari potensi subjektivitas konten tersebut. Selain itu, peningkatan literasi digital di kalangan masyarakat sangat penting untuk memastikan bahwa audiens mampu menilai dan mempertanyakan informasi yang disampaikan.

Hasil penelitian ini berkaitan dengan teori agenda-setting, yang mengindikasikan bahwa media memiliki peran dalam menentukan isu-isu yang menjadi perhatian publik (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Dalam konteks penelitian ini, influencer bertindak sebagai 'media mini' yang mampu menetapkan agenda politik bagi pengikut mereka. Sebagai figur yang dipercaya, influencer secara efektif membawa isu-isu tertentu ke dalam fokus publik dan meningkatkan perhatian terhadap isu-isu tersebut, yang dapat menghasilkan mobilisasi politik yang signifikan.

Temuan penelitian ini memperkuat argumen bahwa media sosial, khususnya melalui pengaruh influencer, telah mengubah dinamika komunikasi politik di era digital. Influencer kini menjadi sumber informasi yang dianggap lebih personal dan

dekat dengan audiens dibandingkan media tradisional. Namun, pengaruh ini menimbulkan tantangan baru terkait keakuratan dan obyektivitas informasi politik yang disampaikan, karena tidak semua influencer memiliki pengetahuan politik yang mendalam atau menyampaikan informasi secara netral.

#### **4. Conclusion**

This study concludes that influencer culture has a significant influence in shaping public opinion and mobilizing political action in Indonesia, especially among the younger generation. Digital influencers, through social media, are not only a source of information, but also an effective mobilization agent in various political and social issues. This influence is driven by the high level of trust from followers in influencers, who are often considered more personal and trustworthy than traditional media. However, this influence poses challenges related to the objectivity and accuracy of information, which has the potential to lead to information manipulation in a political context. Therefore, it is important to increase people's digital literacy and consider regulations related to the transparency of political content delivered by influencers. With the right strategy, influencer influence can be used constructively to increase public participation in a healthy democratic process.

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