The Influence of the @Irwandiferry Instagram Account on the Political Interest of KPI Students at UIN North Sumatra

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the extent to which the Instagram account @irwandiferry influences the political interest of students in the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting (KPI) program at UIN Sumatera Utara. The study employs a quantitative approach with an associative-causal design, involving a sample of 30 KPI students from UIN Sumatera Utara selected via purposive sampling. Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale and subsequently processed and analyzed using IBM SPSS version 27 via simple linear regression. Test results indicate that all instrument items were valid, as the calculated R-values exceeded 0.361, and the instrument demonstrated a very high level of reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.946. Hypothesis testing via the t-test revealed that the @irwandiferry Instagram account has a positive and significant influence on the political interest of KPI students; the calculated t-value of 18.312 exceeded the critical t-value of 2.048, and the p-value was less than 0.001. The resulting linear regression equation is Y = 2.000 + 0.857X. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.923 indicates that the use of the Instagram account @irwandiferry contributes 92.3% to the variation in political interest among students of the Communication Science (KPI) program at UIN Sumatera Utara, while the remaining 7.7% is influenced by factors not included in the research model. These findings demonstrate that visual-based social media plays a significant role both as an educational tool and as a means to foster political awareness among the younger generation.

Keywords: *Instagram @Irwandiferry, Political Interest, KPI Students, Simple Linear Regression.*

A. INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has brought significant changes to people's communication patterns, including in the political field. Advances in the internet have enabled information to be disseminated rapidly, interactively, and without geographical boundaries, allowing people to obtain various political information in real time through digital media. Based on the results of the 2024 survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the number of internet users in Indonesia has reached 221.56 million people, or approximately 79.5% of the total population. This high level of internet penetration indicates that digital media has become an important part of Indonesian society, including as a means of obtaining information about government, public policies, and national political dynamics.

Along with the increasing use of the internet, social media has developed into a digital public sphere that plays a strategic role in political communication. Unlike conventional mass media, which tend to be one-way, social media allows two-way

communication between communicators and audiences through comment features, content sharing, and direct discussions. Instagram is one of the platforms widely used to convey political information because of its visual and interactive characteristics and its accessibility to younger generations. Instagram functions not only as an entertainment medium but also as a means of conveying political information to the public. Through visual content, videos, and interactive features, political information can be delivered in a more engaging and accessible manner. Hasibuan et al. (2024) explained that Instagram can be utilized as a medium for political information, particularly in conveying various political information and activities to the public. With the development of information technology, social media has transformed into a highly strategic digital public sphere for political communication and public education (Simamora, 2022; Effendy, 2022). Changes in media consumption patterns among university students require more interactive and visual political message delivery to foster political interest and students' democratic literacy (Sazali, 2020; Rahmawati, 2022). These findings provide a basis for this study to examine the influence of the Instagram account @irwandiferry on the political interest of KPI students at UIN North Sumatra. Various studies have explained that Instagram is used not only as an entertainment medium but also as a means of shaping public opinion, political image-building, political education, and increasing public involvement in political issues.

University students are a group of society that holds a strategic position in democratic life because they have a relatively high level of education, critical thinking skills, and broad access to various sources of information. In the context of digital democracy, university students do not only act as recipients of political information but also as disseminators of information, opinion formers, and agents of change who are expected to make positive contributions to national and civic life. One Instagram account that actively presents information about political issues, government, public policies, and Indonesia's socio-political dynamics is @irwandiferry. The account conveys information through short videos, infographics, and communicative narratives, making it easier for the public, particularly university students, to understand. The presentation of engaging and easily understandable political information has the potential to increase audience attention to political issues and encourage interest in continuously following national political developments. From the perspective of Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory, content published through an Instagram account can be regarded as a stimulus that is then processed by an individual (organism), resulting in a response in the form of an increase or decrease in students' political interest in various political issues. Thus, content quality, exposure intensity, and the attractiveness of information presentation on the Instagram account are presumed to be factors influencing students' political interest.

Based on the explanation above, research on the influence of Instagram accounts on university students' political interest remains limited, particularly regarding social media accounts that present political content and public

information. In addition to filling the research gap in previous studies, this study is also expected to provide novelty in the study of social media and political communication, particularly regarding how the content presented through the Instagram account @irwandiferry can influence students' political interest. Therefore, the researcher conducted a study entitled "The Influence of the Instagram Account @irwandiferry on the Political Interest of KPI Students at UIN North Sumatra.

B. METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative-causal design to examine the influence of social media on the psychological aspects of audiences (Sazali, 2020; Sugiyono, 2019). The research population consists of active students from the 2022 cohort of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program at UIN North Sumatra. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique based on specific criteria, namely respondents who actively use digital media. This technique is in line with the principles of Islamic communication methodology, which emphasize the suitability between the characteristics of the target audience and the messages conveyed (Rubino, 2021; Sugiyono, 2019). The independent variable in this study is the Instagram account @irwandiferry (X), while the dependent variable is the political interest of KPI students (Y). This study was conducted in the active Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program, Faculty of Da'wah and Communication, UIN North Sumatra.

The population consists of all objects or subjects that possess certain characteristics and qualities identified by the researcher as research objects, from which conclusions are subsequently drawn (Sugiyono, 2019). In this study, the population consists of all undergraduate (S-1) students of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program, Faculty of Da'wah and Communication, UIN North Sumatra, from the 2022 cohort, with a total of 176 students. The data were obtained from the academic records of the study program.

Table 1. Number of Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Students in the 2022 Academic Year

No	Academic Year of Students	Male	Female	Total
1.	2022	78	98	176
Total Number of Students in the Cohort				**176**

Source: KPI Academic Data, processed by the researcher in 2026

A sample is a subset of a population that has the same size and characteristics as that population (Sugiyono, 2019). The determination of the sample size in this study was based on Arikunto's recommendation, which states that for a large population, a sample of 10%–20% or 20%–25% of the total population may be taken (Arikunto, 2010). Based on this calculation, the sample size used was 30 students from the 2022 cohort of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program at UIN North Sumatra. This figure was obtained by calculating 176 × 17% = 29.92, which was then rounded up to 30 respondents. Furthermore, the researcher used a non-probability

sampling technique, which is a sampling method that does not provide every member of the population with an equal opportunity to be selected as a sample (Sugiyono, 2019). In this technique, the researcher applied purposive sampling to identify participants who best met the research data requirements. The selected participants had specific characteristics, namely students from the 2022 cohort of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program at UIN North Sumatra who were aware of and had followed the Instagram account @irwandiferry for at least the previous three months.

The data collection method used in this study was the distribution of closed-ended questionnaires to 30 respondents. The statements were measured using a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree (STS), 2 = Disagree (TS), 3 = Neutral (N), 4 = Agree (S), and 5 = Strongly Agree (SS). Data were collected from books, journals, and other relevant sources. The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 27. The analytical techniques used included validity testing, reliability testing, normality testing, and simple linear regression analysis: t-test, F-test, and coefficient of determination.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The validity test aims to ensure that each item accurately measures the variables under study. Based on Table 1, all items in the variables "Instagram Account @irwandiferry" and "Political Interest of Students in the Department of Communication Studies at UIN North Sumatra" were declared valid. This is indicated by the calculated r-values being greater than the r-table value of 0.361. The following are the results of the validity test:

Table 1. Validity Test Results

Variable	Indicator	r-value	r-table	Description
Instagram Account @irwandiferry	X1	0,636	0,361	Valid
	X2	0,919	0,361	Valid
	X3	0,826	0,361	Valid
	X4	0,870	0,361	Valid
	X5	0,912	0,361	Valid
	X6	0,896	0,361	Valid
	X7	0,912	0,361	Valid
	X8	0,917	0,361	Valid
Political Interest of KPI Students	Y1	0,861	0,361	Valid
	Y2	0,866	0,361	Valid
	Y3	0,973	0,361	Valid
	Y4	0,967	0,361	Valid
	Y5	0,917	0,361	Valid
	Y6	0,867	0,361	Valid
	Y7	0,792	0,361	Valid
	Y8	0,850	0,361	Valid

Source: Data Processed Using SPSS Version 27

Table 2. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Tollerance	Description
Instagram Account @irwandiferry	0.946	0.70	Reliable
Political Interest of KPI Students	0.946	0.70	Reliable

Source: Data Processed Using SPSS Version 27

The reliability test aims to assess the extent to which a research instrument is consistent and reliable in measuring a concept. Based on Table 2, the reliability test was conducted by analyzing the Cronbach's Alpha value for each variable. A research instrument is categorized as reliable or consistent if its Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds the reference threshold of 0.70. The analysis results showed that the variable "Instagram Account @irwandiferry" (X) obtained a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.946. Similarly, the variable "KPI Students' Political Interest" (Y) obtained the same value, namely 0.946. Since these values are well above the threshold of 0.70, all research instruments were declared highly reliable and valid for use in the data collection process.

Table 3. Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

			Standardized Residual
N			30
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean		.0000000
	Std. Deviation		.98198051
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		.358
	Positive		.228
	Negative		-.358
Test Statistic			.358
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)[c]			.000
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)[d]	Sig.		.000
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.000
		Upper Bound	.000

Source: Data Processed Using SPSS Version 27

Based on Table 3, the results of the normality test using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test showed that the significance value, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed), was less than 0.001. Since the significance value was less than 0.001 and therefore below 0.05, it can be concluded that the residual data in this study were not normally distributed. Although the data were not normally distributed, the study could still proceed using simple linear regression analysis. This was based on a sample size of 30 respondents and the Central Limit Theorem, which states that when the sample size is 30 or more, the distribution of sample means will approach a normal distribution. Thus, simple linear regression could still be used to analyze the relationship between variables. This statement is also consistent with the view expressed by Sugiyono (2022), who explained that regression analysis can be applied to samples consisting of 30 or more individuals.

Table 4. t-Test

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.000	2.176		.919	.366
	Total_X	.857	.047	.961	18.312	.000

Source: Data Processed Using SPSS Version 27

Based on the results of the t-test in Table 4, the variable "Instagram account @irwandiferry" yields a calculated t-value of 18.312 with a significance level of less than 0.001. When compared with the significance level of 0.05 and the critical t-value of 2.048, these results indicate that the significance level is less than 0.05 and the calculated t-value is greater than the table t-value. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Instagram account @irwandiferry has a positive and significant influence on the political interest of students majoring in KPI. Thus, the research hypothesis stating that the Instagram account @irwandiferry influences the political interest of students majoring in KPI at UIN Sumatera Utara is accepted.

Table 5. F-Test

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	983.265	1	983.265	335.335	.000[b]
	Residual	82.101	28	2.932		
	Total	1065.367	29			

Source: Data Processed Using SPSS Version 27

Based on the F-test results in Table 5, the calculated F-value was 335.335, with a significance level of less than 0.001. Since this significance level is below 0.05, the regression model in this study is considered a good fit for predicting the influence of the Instagram account @irwandiferry on the political interest of students in the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting (KPI) Department at UIN North Sumatra. Thus, it can be concluded that the Instagram account @irwandiferry influences the political interest of KPI students at UIN North Sumatra.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination Test (R^2)

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.961[a]	.923	.920	1.71236

Source: Data Processed Using SPSS Version 27

Based on Table 6 regarding the results of the coefficient of determination test, the R value was 0.961. This figure indicates a very strong relationship between the Instagram account @irwandiferry and the political interest of students in the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting (KPI) Department at UIN North Sumatra. The R Square value of 0.923 indicates that the Instagram account @irwandiferry accounts for 92.3% of the variation in students' political interest. Meanwhile, the remaining 7.7% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study, such as political

education on campus, the family environment, and other mass media.

The results of this study indicate that the use of the Instagram account @irwandiferry has a positive and significant influence on the political interest of students in the Communication Studies Study Program at UIN North Sumatra. This finding is consistent with the results of research conducted by Hasibuan et al. (2024), which stated that Instagram can be used as a medium for conveying political information to the public. The similarity between the findings of these two studies indicates that Instagram functions not only as an entertainment platform but also as an effective medium for political communication. Through content shared on the platform, political information can reach the public, particularly university students, and potentially foster their interest in political issues. The difference between the two studies lies in their research focus. The study conducted by Hasibuan et al. emphasized the use of Instagram as a medium for obtaining and disseminating political information, whereas this study specifically examines the influence of the Instagram account @irwandiferry on students' political interest. The widespread use of social media has changed the way people obtain information and interact in their daily lives. These changes have also created opportunities for platforms such as Instagram to play a role in disseminating information and fostering political awareness among the public, including university students. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media refers to various internet-based applications developed on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0. These platforms enable users to independently create, share, and exchange content with one another. In the context of modern politics, Instagram is no longer viewed merely as a social networking platform. It has evolved into a space where people can engage in discussions, conduct campaigns, and disseminate political information widely and rapidly (Effendy, 2022).

The Instagram account @irwandiferry serves as an example of how social media can be utilized as a tool for political communication. Through various types of content, such as legal education, debates, and responses to national issues, the account seeks to convey political information to the wider public. Students in the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting (KPI) Department at UIN North Sumatra, as part of the younger generation, are among those who actively use social media. They are considered to hold a strategic position because they not only have broad access to digital information but also have the potential to act as agents of change in democratic life (Budiardjo, 2018). Based on the results of simple linear regression analysis, a significance value of 0.001 and a calculated t-value of 18.312 were obtained. These findings indicate that the Instagram account @irwandiferry has a significant influence on students' political interest. With a significance value of 0.001, which is lower than 0.05, it can be concluded that the Instagram account @irwandiferry has a positive and significant influence on the political interest of KPI students. This means that the more frequently students access and interact with content on the account, the greater their political interest. The magnitude of this influence is reflected in the R-squared value of 0.923, or 92.3%. This value indicates

that the Instagram account @irwandiferry accounts for 92.3% of the political interest of KPI students. Meanwhile, the remaining 7.7% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study, such as the family environment, campus environment, and other media.

The findings of this study can also be explained through Uses and Gratifications Theory, which states that individuals actively use media to fulfill specific needs. In this case, students use the Instagram account @irwandiferry to obtain political information, deepen their political knowledge, and understand various national issues. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Anam and Aulia (2021), which stated that a person's political preferences are influenced by their attitudes, values, knowledge, and information obtained from the media. Thus, the content uploaded to the Instagram account @irwandiferry can play a role in shaping students' political understanding and interest. At this stage, social media, particularly Instagram, plays an important role in presenting political information that is easily accessible and understandable to the younger generation. As a visual platform, Instagram offers various types of political content, ranging from infographics and campaign videos to statements by public figures, as well as discussion forums through comment sections and poll features. In this context, Agenda-Setting Theory, proposed by McCombs and Shaw, is relevant for explaining the role of the media in shaping public perceptions. The media not only conveys information but also helps determine which issues are considered important by the public.

Furthermore, the simple regression analysis results show that the linear regression equation obtained is: Y = 2.000 + 0.857X

Description:

Y = Political Interest of KPI Students

X = Instagram Account @irwandiferry

2.000 = Constant value, meaning that if the variable Instagram Account @irwandiferry (X) has a value of 0, the value of Political Interest of KPI Students (Y) is 2.000.

0.857 = Regression coefficient, meaning that for every 1-unit increase in the Instagram Account @irwandiferry variable (X), the Political Interest of KPI Students (Y) will increase by 0.857.

The interpretation of this equation indicates that if the variable "Instagram Account @irwandiferry" has a value of zero, the political interest of KPI students is at a baseline value of 2.000. Furthermore, every one-unit increase in the use of this account will increase the political interest of KPI students by 0.857. The positive regression coefficient indicates that the relationship between the two variables is positive and direct. In other words, the more frequently students access political content on the account @irwandiferry, the higher their level of political interest. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Nurcholis et al. (2019), which stated that social media plays an important role in increasing political participation and awareness among first-time voters. A similar view was also expressed by Dimaz

Andriyedi et al. (2023), who emphasized that Instagram is one of the most influential platforms in shaping the political attitudes of the younger generation. This influence becomes increasingly evident during important political moments, particularly general elections.

Thus, it can be concluded that the Instagram account @irwandiferry plays an important role in shaping and influencing students' political interest, particularly among students in the Department of Islamic Communication and Broadcasting (KPI). Political content presented through this platform serves as a primary source of information that encourages political engagement, raises awareness, and strengthens individuals' convictions as they form their political attitudes. Therefore, the wise and critical use of social media is essential to enable students to become informed voters and actively participate in a healthy and responsible democracy. In addition, political content creators on social media are encouraged to consistently present educational, fact-based, and non-provocative information to improve political literacy among the younger generation.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings regarding the influence of the Instagram account @irwandiferry on the political interest of KPI students, it can be concluded that social media particularly Instagram has become a highly influential medium for conveying and shaping political information among university students. This platform not only presents information through text but also features engaging visual content, such as infographics, educational videos, debate excerpts, and interactions through comment sections, which can strengthen students' political awareness. The statistical analysis results indicate a significant relationship between the use of the Instagram account @irwandiferry and the political interest of KPI students. This is reflected in the p-value of less than 0.001, which is below the significance threshold of 0.05, and the R-squared value of 0.923, or 92.3%. Thus, the use of the Instagram account @irwandiferry has been shown to contribute significantly to the development of political interest among KPI students. The resulting simple linear regression equation, $Y = 2.000 + 0.857X$, indicates that each increase in the use of the Instagram account @irwandiferry is accompanied by a corresponding increase in political interest.

This positive correlation supports the hypothesis that social media plays an active role in influencing the political interest and decisions of the younger generation. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that social media, particularly Instagram, plays an important role in increasing political participation, fostering political awareness, and shaping political attitudes among young people. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Instagram account @irwandiferry, as a social media platform with a large following among university students, has a significant influence on the development of political interest among KPI students.

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