

Media Use and Online Political Participation: The Mediating Roles of Media Credibility and Political Trust in Jakarta and Islamabad

Drina Intyaswati¹, Qasim Mahmood², Anter Venus³, Kusumajanti⁴, Windhi Tia Saputra⁵

This study aimed to improve the understanding of how political information consumption through social media and other online platforms related to online political participation. It further investigated the role of political trust and the mediating influence of media credibility. A survey method was used and questionnaires were distributed through social media. The study consisted of two populations namely residents of Jakarta (520) and Islamabad (386). Furthermore, the model analysis used a structural equation model (SEM) with the assistance of the AMOS 24 program. The results showed that the adoption of political information from social media in Jakarta and Islamabad had a significant impact on online political participation both directly and indirectly. However, using political information from social media in Islamabad did not contribute to developing political trust. These results were consistent with publications in Pakistan where journalists and media institutions were expected to be independent and provide more credible information. The study further suggested that Jakarta's online media proprietors (websites/blogs) should improve the quality of political information distribution and only highly credible media channels should increase the political trust of the society. Additionally, the concept of source credibility which provided the basis for understanding the importance of credibility in information communicated through social and online media was confirmed to have an impact on political trust.

Keywords: Media Credibility, Online Media, Online Political Participation, Political Trust, Social Media.

¹ Drina Intyaswati is an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta, Indonesia. Please contact the corresponding author via drina.intyaswati@upnvj.ac.id

² Qasim Mahmood is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Media and Communication Studies, National University of Modern Language, Pakistan.

³ Anter Venus is a Professor in the Department of Communication, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta, Indonesia.

⁴ Kusumajanti is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta, Indonesia.

⁵ Windhi Tia Saputra is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta, Indonesia.

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Introduction

Many Indonesian societies are consuming political information through internet-based media, although other media sources remain an alternative. Previous publications verified that social media serves as an important source of political information among students (Intyaswati et al., 2021a). Besides social media, websites, blogs, and various other online news media platforms play a crucial role as additional sources of political information aiming to actively include the societies in politics (Kim, 2023).

In Indonesia, political articles emphasizing negative information about institutions and legal cases such as the illegal levies at the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) and the controversial Omnibus Law on Job Creation raise questions concerning political trust. Previous publications consistently found that media plays a crucial role in shaping individual's political trust (Warren et al., 2014). Earlier study established a connection between various forms of media consumption and individual's political trust (Wu, 2014). Koivula et al. (2021) suggested that individuals with low political trust engaged in political participation using social media.

Pakistan further shares similar demographic characteristics with Indonesia in terms of population size. The 2022 National Corruption Perception Survey (NCPS) conducted by Transparency International Pakistan (TIP) shows a lack of public trust in the effectiveness of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) which is the anti-corruption entity in Pakistan. The survey further suggests that the majority of individuals perceive the role of anti-corruption agencies as "ineffective" in addressing corruption issues in the country. Some residents also believe that the reporting of news channels is biased (Correspondent, 2022). Furthermore, Pakistan experiences a period of crisis in April before the survey marked by the military withdrawing support for Khan's government and leading to a vote of no confidence in Parliament (Hadid & Sattar, 2023). The economy further experiences inflation due to this withdrawal and society becomes politically polarized (Davies, 2023).

Indonesia and Pakistan share a background of government ownership along with negative media publicity concerning corruption issues. Evaluating credibility of online media distribution is essential, as it directly relates to political trust. This trust is crucial for increasing participation, which is a key indicator of democratic life. Both countries have low democracy indices which further emphasize the importance of political trust. Additionally, the convenience of online activities has heightened concerns about online political participation.

The exposure of users to an excessive amount of information from social media can substantially impact the level of political participation, as the information's accuracy and reliability are associated with confidence (Saboor et al., 2022). Furthermore, the ease of starting a YouTube channel has empowered prominent journalists and talk-show hosts in Pakistan to establish various channels, offering independent analyses of current events (Saboor et al., 2022). This adoption of social media can also promote political awareness, enhance efficacy and participation, as well as provide valuable information on election and voting procedures (Intyaswati et al., 2021b; Batool et al., 2020).

User-generated content shared on social media platforms is often devoid of professional filtering, and individuals may post content without clearly establishing the identity (Johnson & Kaye, 2015). Generally, users often lack the ability to effectively evaluate information found online making media credibility a crucial concern (Westerman et al., 2014). Credibility further plays a significant role in establishing trust, as individuals tend to avoid sources perceived as lacking trustworthiness (Johnson & Kaye, 1998).

However, the mechanisms connecting the consumption of political information through social media and other platforms to online political participation, considering credibility of sources and political trust have not been extensively evaluated. The issue pertains to the potential impact of varying contextual factors in Indonesia and Pakistan on the consumption of political information through internet-based media. The study further explores how media credibility and trust mediate the relationship with online political participation.

Therefore, this study aims to improve understanding of how political information consumption through social media and other outlets relates to online political participation. It also examines the role of political trust and the mediation of media credibility with the following study questions.

RQ1: How do the associations between online media use, online political participation, and political trust differ between Jakarta, Indonesia, and Islamabad, Pakistan?

RQ2: How does media credibility differ between these two cities?

Literature Review

Political Trust, Participation, and Media Use

The proposed definition of political participation comprised citizen's engagement in activities related to government policies, elections of bureaucrats, and the formation of the structures (Himmelboim et al., 2012). From an online perspective, this definition remained applicable but the platforms for participation were confined to the internet-based world (Brady, 1999). Furthermore, online participation enabled a greater number of individuals to engage in political activities due to the relatively low cost (Gibson, 2015). Political information and online media news coverage provided opportunities for individuals to actively engage and share opinions through comments (Nelson et al., 2018).

Previous publications consistently showed that news and information played a significant role in promoting participation in political action (Bode, 2015). Online media platforms allowed users to filter out unpleasant information, enabling a more customized and selective form of participation (Zhang et al., 2022). Political activities on social networking sites also suggested an important influence in motivating participation (Lee, 2021). The metadata indicates a favorable correlation between use of social media and participation in civic and political activity (Boulianne, 2015).

Individuals have fundamental confidence in the government serving as the main provision for political trust (Shen & Guo, 2013) or the endorsement of a specific political structure (Hooghe & Kern, 2015). Previous publications consistently showed that media played a

crucial role in influencing individuals' political trust (Warren et al., 2014; de Haan & Bardoel, 2011). Empirical analysis on the influence of media use on political trust varied, as some publications suggested a positive effect while others showed a negative impact (Aarts et al., 2012). The influence differed depending on the type of media being examined (Aarts et al., 2012; Moy & Pfau, 2000). Additionally, Huang (2021) found that online political information did not directly affect trust but was mediated by perceived source credibility.

The impact of political trust fluctuated depending on the context as elements including political interest, personal circumstances, and socioeconomic status had a significant influence on political engagement (Pecorari, 2024). Furthermore, the connection between political trust and political engagement varied among non-democratic and democratic countries. Individuals in democracies participated in non-electoral political activities when a medium degree of trust in political institutions was observed while the association was negative in non-democratic countries (Kutuk & Usturali, 2023). Additionally, Koivula et al. (2021) found that low political trust played a crucial role in online participation, motivating individuals to produce political content on social media platforms actively.

After the 2019 Indonesian election, there was growing distrust among Muslim society towards the government, particularly among teachers working in the education sector (Basya, 2021). Groups, including the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), also expressed political distrust towards the election results (Basya & Hamka, 2023). The reality remained that democratic life in Indonesia was not improving, while online-based media increased political trust by providing access to information about political issues. Polarization and the explosion in election campaign costs have worsened contemporary politics in the country (Tomsa, 2020).

The issue of political trust also needs attention in Pakistan. For instance, the end of Prime Minister Imran Khan's term in April 2022 was marked by a vote of no confidence from parliament in Pakistan. Allegations of corruption within the government, a deteriorating economy, and a government's attitude towards the opposition were among the reasons for the vote (Almeida, 2022). Religious parties and groups that used religious populism had significant political influence in Pakistan, and society often collaborated with the groups due to a general distrust of the state's institutional capabilities. Consequently, this led to xenophobic and racist tendencies towards other groups (Yilmaz & Saleem, 2021).

Considering additional explanatory factors that contribute to a more comprehensive understanding was essential to comprehend the reasons behind the varying effects of different forms of media use on political trust. Social media provided individuals with the medium to access and share a variety of data, including differing viewpoints on political matters (Li & Chan, 2017). Based on the examination of previous publications, this study formulated the following hypotheses.

H1: Using social media-related political information directly influenced online political participation among residents of (a) Jakarta and (b) Islamabad.

H2: Online political participation was directly influenced by the consumption of political information from online media among residents of (a) Jakarta and (b) Islamabad.

H3: Using information about politics from social media directly influenced political trust among residents of (a) Jakarta and (b) Islamabad.

H4: Political trust was directly influenced by the consumption of online media political information among residents of (a) Jakarta and (b) Islamabad.

H5: Online political participation was directly influenced by political trust among residents of (a) Jakarta and (b) Islamabad.

Media Use and Credibility

Source Credibility Theory (Hovland et al., 2015) suggested that the positive attributes of the communicator influenced the recipient's perception and reception of the message. This study examined media credibility specifically and not the credibility of sources in general. Credibility of media refers to the perception of the message's credibility within the context of information obtained from the particular media source. Roslan and Rahim (2022) further showed that news quality was a factor contributing to assessing credibility of news on Facebook in a survey among students. Previous publications also suggested that political trust was directly influenced by media consumption (Wu, 2014). Additionally, mediation variables were used to elucidate how media consumption and political trust are related. Credibility of media distributing the message became crucial in elucidating the mechanisms by which media influenced political trust.

Gong et al., (2022) showed that media credibility played a significant mediating role in the connection between political social media usage and political trust. Credibility of information was crucial in initiating, sustaining, and nurturing relationships with users which further influenced the level of trust established (Jo, 2005). Brosius (2019) also confirmed that a correlation existed between media credibility and potential trust where more unbiased or positive information was available with certain European individuals more inclined to trust the EU.

Emeraldien et al. (2021) emphasized the issue of unbalanced news in Indonesia's online media. Effective media verification mechanisms were established to ensure that online journalism was reliable and trustworthy. Ernungtyas and Boer (2023) also emphasized the significance of the individual's trust in information from government websites and social media. The fast-paced nature of reporting in online media made the process difficult to avoid inaccuracies which led to a loss of credibility and idealism (Sumardi & Suryawati, 2022). Media should maintain public trust by providing accurate and balanced information, specifically in support of the democratization process. Dharmajaya and Setiawan (2023) suggested that various platforms could enable wider public participation in discussing and understanding political issues.

The spread of misinformation on social media as observed among Facebook and Twitter users in Pakistan constituted a global challenge. It underscored the necessity to enhance fact-checking sources. Social media users should also cultivate literacy and exercise caution while navigating these platforms (Mahmood & Shahzad, 2023). Students in Pakistan have expressed concerns regarding the portrayal of political information on online media as biased, inaccurate, and unethical. This emphasized the essential for media to adopt an objective

method, deliver accurate information, implement necessary improvements, and actively engage in rebuilding trust within the society (Saeed et al., 2021). The conceptual framework emphasizing hypothesized relationships between variables was depicted in Figure 1. The proposed hypothesis to examine the mediating role of media credibility was as follows.

H6: Social media credibility mediated the relationship between social media use of political information and political trust among residents of (a) Jakarta and (b) Islamabad.

H7: The mediating of online media credibility existed in the relation between online media consumption of political information and political trust among residents of (a) Jakarta and (b) Islamabad.

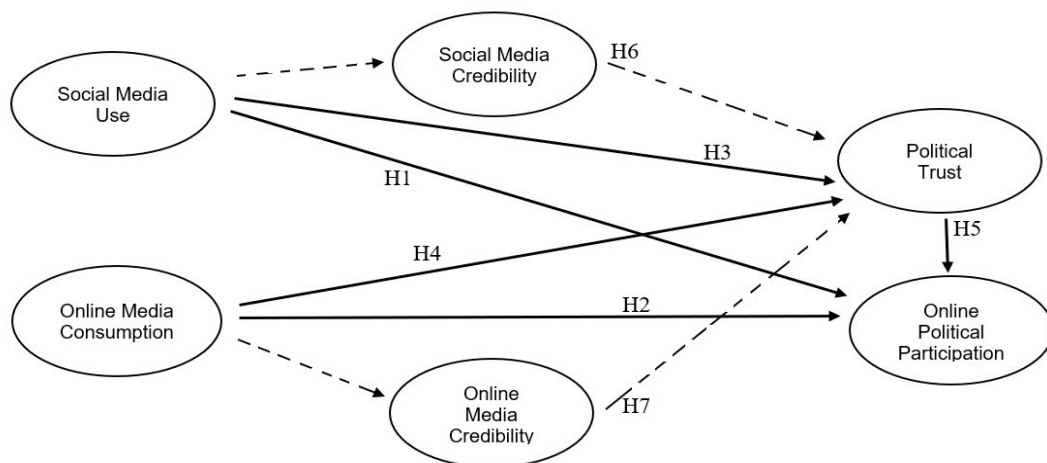


Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework for the Study.

Methodology

Respondents

The study used a survey method for data collection, conducted from 2 March to 30 April 2023. The population of the study included residents in Jakarta and Pakistan which represented the capital cities were selected to represent an equal online media access environment. The unit of analysis in this study comprised individuals from two distinct populations namely residents of Jakarta (Indonesia) with a total sample size of 520 and Islamabad (Pakistan) with a selected sample size of 386. Purposive sampling was adopted, targeting internet-based media users who also engaged with social media residing in the two population areas (Jakarta and Islamabad) within the age range of 17 to 64 years. The selection of this age range was based on the productive (adult) age of the respondents (Kusnandar, 2022) with the minimum age set at 17 years. Instruments in Islamabad adhered to a predetermined age range. The questionnaire was distributed via social media networks. A Google Form link to the questionnaire was distributed mostly through a WhatsApp group in a non-personalized manner. Membership in the WhatsApp group was common among residents in both cities. Before completing the questionnaire, respondents who met the criteria were required to state a willingness to participate in providing data for the study questionnaire. The sample characteristics of residents from Jakarta and Islamabad were

presented in Table 1. In the Islamabad sample, there was a relatively equal distribution between men and women with a ratio of 49:51.

Table 1

Characteristics of Respondents

Respondent	Jakarta (Indonesia)	Islamabad (Pakistan)
Sex:		
Male	148(28.5%)	189(49.0%)
Female	372(71.5%)	197(51.0%)
Age (years):		
Mean	22.60	29.64
Standard Deviation	5.13	11.96
Minimum	17	18
Maximum	55	64

N=520 (Jakarta). N=386 (Islamabad).

Measurement Tool

The study incorporated six variables and experienced rigorous evaluation to ensure that both validity and reliability criteria were met. Answer-optional rates were graded on a scale from “never” (1) to “everyday” (5) for social media use, online media consumption, and online political participation. Additionally, social media credibility, online media credibility, and political trust had alternative answers ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Table 2 showed the variable measurement indicators and references.

Table 2

Variable Measurement Indicators

Variable	Items	References
Social Media Use	YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, Twitter	Gong, 2022
Online Media Consumption	Sites/websites Search Engine Blogs/mini-blogs	Gong, 2022
Social Media Credibility	Truth, Accuracy, Fair reporting, Information depth, Trusted	Gong, 2022
Online Media Credibility	Truth, Accuracy, Fair reporting, Information depth, Trusted	Gong, 2022
Political Trust	Political competence Politicians know job Politicians help constituents Honesty of Politicians Politicians admit mistakes Keeping promises	Seyd, 2016

	Socialization of ministerial work Fair treatment of the government	
Online Political Participation	Follow political discussions Participating in political discussions Share political information Create content (opinions/images/videos)	Koivula, 2021

Social Media Use. This variable was measured by asking respondents about the frequency of using various social media platforms to access political information.

Online Media Consumption. The amount of time respondents spent accessing political information online during the previous three months was used to measure this variable.

Social Media Credibility. This variable was measured by capturing respondents' perceptions regarding the legitimacy of social media as a source of political information.

Online Media Credibility. Credibility of online media (websites/search engines/blogs) was evaluated using the same set of indicators as credibility measurement of social media as a source of political information.

Political Trust. Political trust variable was measured by assessing the respondents' feelings toward politicians and the government. Questions concerning politicians comprised various aspects while those concerning the government included diverse considerations.

Online Political Participation. This variable was assessed by examining respondents' engagement on social media, including activities such as following political discussions, actively participating in political discussions, sharing political information, and creating political content (opinions, pictures, or videos).

Table 3 presented the measurement results for each variable along with the corresponding reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficient ensured that the measurements met the standard criterion ($\alpha \geq 0.7$). In terms of accessing political information and engaging in online political participation, the average frequency of social media use was higher in Islamabad compared to Jakarta. However, when it came to the consumption of online media, users in Jakarta exhibited a higher frequency compared to residents in Islamabad. Both media credibility and political trust were higher in Jakarta compared to Islamabad.

Table 3

Measurement of Study Variables

Variable	Jakarta (Indonesia)			Islamabad (Pakistan)		
	Mean	SD	α	Mean	SD	α
Social Media Use	3.145	0.032	0.701	3.202	1.025	0.700
Online Media Consumption	3.065	0.038	0.706	2.811	0.877	0.702
Social Media Credibility	3.273	0.032	0.880	2.784	0.726	0.871
Online Media Credibility	3.293	0.032	0.904	2.824	0.703	0.909
Political Trust	3.938	0.032	0.871	2.370	0.719	0.833

Online participation	2.348	0.044	0.870	2.546	0.913	0.798
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N=520 (Jakarta). N=386 (Islamabad).

The validity of the study instrument was a six-construct measurement model that was validated using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the measurement of (a) Jakarta and (b) Islamabad. Furthermore, the analysis was conducted with the assistance of the AMOS 24 program. The results of the CFA tests showed that values of chi-square (chi-square/df) were 2.936 for (a) and 0.2951 for (b), meeting the specified threshold of less than 3. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) values showed 0.061 for (a) and 0.078 for (b), satisfying the agreed-upon criteria of less than 0.08. The goodness of fit index (GFI) values were 0.916 for (a) and 0.908 for (b) while the comparative fit index (CFI) values were 0.930 for (a) and 0.916 for (b). Additionally, the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) values were 0.920 for (a) and 0.914 for (b), and the adjusted goodness of fit (AGFI) values were 0.912 for (a) and 0.906 for (b). All these fit indices met the standards of at least 0.90.

The measurement model had five test criteria, all of which matched the standards stated by Zainudin (2012). The CFA test showed that all six constructs met the validity standards and indicators from each construct were considered acceptable. However, three indicators of social media use (TikTok, Facebook, and Twitter) were excluded from Islamabad. This suggested that YouTube and Instagram were the only platforms considered valid sources of political information for Islamabad residents. Each measurement construct fulfilled the specified Cronbach alpha criterion ($\alpha > .70$), with the value of Cronbach alpha was calculated using SPSS 25 software.

Results

SEM analysis met the standard criteria for fit indices, where each value of Jakarta (a) and Islamabad (b) were as follows. RMSEA was 0.061 for (a) and 0.069 for (b), the value of chi-square (chi-square/df) values were 2.940 for (a) and 0.2862 for (b), and CFI values were 0.929 for (a) and 0.934 for (b). Additionally, GFI values were 0.912 for (a) and 0.916 for (b), TLI values were 0.919 for (a) and 0.915 for (b), and AGFI values were 0.912 for (a) and 0.916 for (b). The results of the analysis using the Structural Equation Model (SEM) were shown in Tables 4a and 4b. The direct impact between variables had unstandardized estimated values (B) and corresponding significance values (P). Furthermore, the standardized estimate (β) allowed the magnitude of the direct relationship between variables to be compared.

Table 4a.

Regression Weights (Jakarta)

Items	Unstandardized			Standardized Estimate (β)
	Estimate (B)	S.E.	P	
Soc_Media → Credibility_SM	0.588	0.078	***	0.474
Online_Media → Credibility_OL	0.273	0.052	***	0.294
Credibility_SM → Political_Trust	0.237	0.052	***	0.282
Credibility_OL → Political_Trust	0.232	0.041	***	0.320
Soc_Media → Political_Trust	0.140	0.068	0.041*	0.134
Online_Media → Political_Trust	-0.019	0.037	0.600	-0.029
Political_Trust → P_Participation	0.258	0.080	0.001**	0.006
Soc_Media → P_Participation	0.981	0.117	***	0.604
Online Media → P Participation	0.440	0.060	***	0.419

N=520 (Jakarta). ***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Table 4b.

Regression Weights (Islamabad)

Items	Unstandardized			Standardized Estimate (β)
	Estimate (B)	S.E.	P	
Soc_Media → Credibility_SM	0.170	0.056	0.002**	0.231
Online_Media → Credibility_OL	0.125	0.065	0.054	0.114
Credibility_SM → Political_Trust	0.374	0.064	***	0.487
Credibility_OL → Political_Trust	0.147	0.036	***	0.136
Soc_Media → Political_Trust	-0.112	0.044	0.011*	-0.198
Online_Media → Political_Trust	0.097	0.046	0.036*	0.136
Political_Trust → P_Participation	0.349	0.107	0.001**	0.220
Soc_Media → P_Participation	0.456	0.108	***	0.510
Online Media → P Participation	0.547	0.099	***	0.485

N=386 (Islamabad). ***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Table 4a and Table 4b show the results of the direct relationship analysis between the two variables from Jakarta and Islamabad, respectively. The significance value (P) of each relationship becomes the basis for accepting or rejecting the hypothesis that has been set.

Hypothesis 1

Based on the data analysis results among Jakarta residents in Table 4a, the study observed that the use of social media produced a positive and significant effect on online political participation (B = 0.981, SE = 0.117, p < 0.001). These results formed the basis for accepting H1(a). Similarly, Table 4b showed that the use of social media among Islamabad residents also had a positive and significant effect on online political participation (B = 0.456, SE = 0.099, p < 0.001) leading to the acceptance of H1(b).

Access to political information through social media for Jakarta (YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and Twitter) and Islamabad (YouTube and Instagram) residents had a direct impact on online political information. The higher frequency of access to political information through social media led to increased online political participation.

Hypothesis 2

Among Jakarta residents as described in Table 4a, the consumption of political information from online media showed a positive and significant effect on online political participation ($B = 0.440$, $SE = 0.060$, $p < 0.001$) leading to the acceptance of H2(a). Similarly, Table 4b depicted that online media use among Islamabad residents had a positive and substantial effect on online political participation ($B = 0.547$, $SE = 0.108$, $p < 0.001$) leading to the acceptance of H2(b).

Consumption of political information through online media such as websites, search engines, and blogs among Jakarta and Islamabad residents showed a significant impact directly on online political participation. Increased online media consumption related to political information tended to raise online political participation.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3(a) stated that the use of information about politics from social media directly influenced political trust among residents of Jakarta ($B = 0.140$, $SE = 0.068$, $p < 0.05$) with the significance shown in Table 4a, thereby accepting H3(a). Furthermore, Table 4b showed that the use of social media related to political information among Islamabad residents had a direct effect on political trust ($B = -0.112$, $SE = 0.044$, $p < 0.05$), leading to the acceptance of H3(b). This suggested that high access to political information via social media was considered to stimulate political trust among Jakarta residents where the opposite was true in Islamabad.

Hypothesis 4

Table 4a showed that the consumption of political information through online media among Jakarta residents had no direct impact on political trust ($B = 0.019$, $SE = 0.037$, $p > 0.05$) resulting in the rejection of H4(a). However, consumption of online media related to political information had a significant direct impact on political trust among Islamabad residents ($B = 0.097$, $SE = 0.046$, $p < 0.05$) as shown in Table 4b with the significance value leading to the acceptance of H4(b). The direct impact of consuming online political information on political trust was only true for Islamabad residents but not for Jakarta residents. This suggested that online media in Islamabad provided political information increasing political trust of the residents.

Hypothesis 5

Political trust among Jakarta residents influenced online political participation ($B = 0.258$, $SE = 0.080$, $p < 0.01$) with the significance shown in Table 4a resulting in the acceptance of H5(a). Similarly, Table 4b showed that online political participation among Islamabad residents was influenced by political trust ($B = 0.349$, $SE = 0.107$, $p < 0.01$) leading to the

acceptance of H5(b). Political trust had a direct influence on online political participation among residents in the cities of Jakarta and Islamabad. The existence of political trust toward the government and politicians fostered political participation through social media.

Hypothesis 6

Table 5a described the indirect connection between political trust and social media use among Jakarta residents which was significantly mediated by social media credibility with a value of 0.139 and $p = 0.002$ ($p < 0.05$), leading to the acceptance of H6(a). Similarly, social media credibility also significantly mediated the relationship between political trust and social media use among Islamabad residents (Table 5b), with a value of 0.064 and $p = 0.007$ ($p < 0.05$), resulting in the acceptance of H6(b). Social media credibility is a consideration for Jakarta and Islamabad residents using social media information to form political trust.

Hypothesis 7

Credibility of online media acted as a mediator in the relationship between online media political information consumption and political trust among Jakarta residents with a value of 0.064 represented in Table 5a with $p = 0.001$ ($p < 0.05$), leading to the acceptance of H7(a). However, Table 5b showed that credibility of online media did not work as a mediator in the relationship between political trust and online media political information consumption among Islamabad residents with a value of 0.018 and $p = 0.133$ ($p > 0.05$), resulting in the rejection of H7(b). The legitimacy of online media is an essential concern for Jakarta residents who use online media information to establish political trust. However, this does not apply to residents of Islamabad.

Table 5a

The Indirect Effect on Media Credibility in the Relationship between Using Media and Political Trust (Jakarta)

Parameter	Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
Soc_Med → Credibility_SM → Political_Trust	0.139	0.072	0.226	0.002
Online_Med → Credibility_OL → Political_Trus	0.064	0.032	0.117	0.001

Table 5b

The Indirect Effect on Media Credibility in the Relationship between Using Media and Political Trust (Islamabad)

Parameter	Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
Soc_Med → Credibility_SM → Political_Trust	0.064	0.022	0.123	0.007
Online_Med → Credibility_OL → Political_Trus	0.018	-0.001	0.043	0.133

Figures 2a and 2b depicted the association between the use of internet-based media for political information and online political participation in Jakarta and Islamabad. The images

2a (Jakarta) and 2b (Islamabad) further showed significant standardized estimates (β) of the direct association between variables. Among Jakarta residents as observed in Figure 2a, social media use had a greater direct effect on online political participation (0.604) than online media consumption (0.419) or political trust (0.006). Media credibility served as a mediator in creating political trust among users on social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and Twitter and online media such as Websites, Search Engines, and Blogs. Increased access to political information via social media could also promote political trust directly.

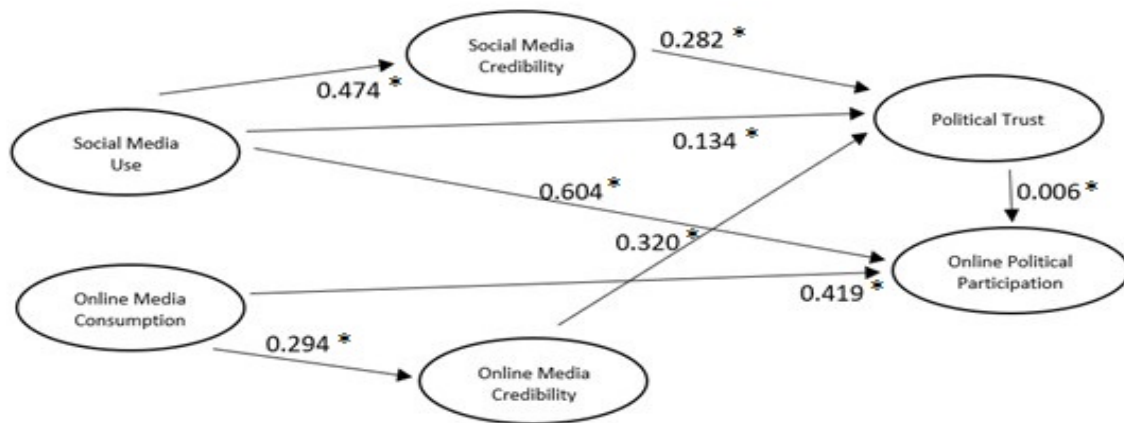


Figure 2a. Relationship of Media Use and Online Political Participation Among Jakarta Residents.

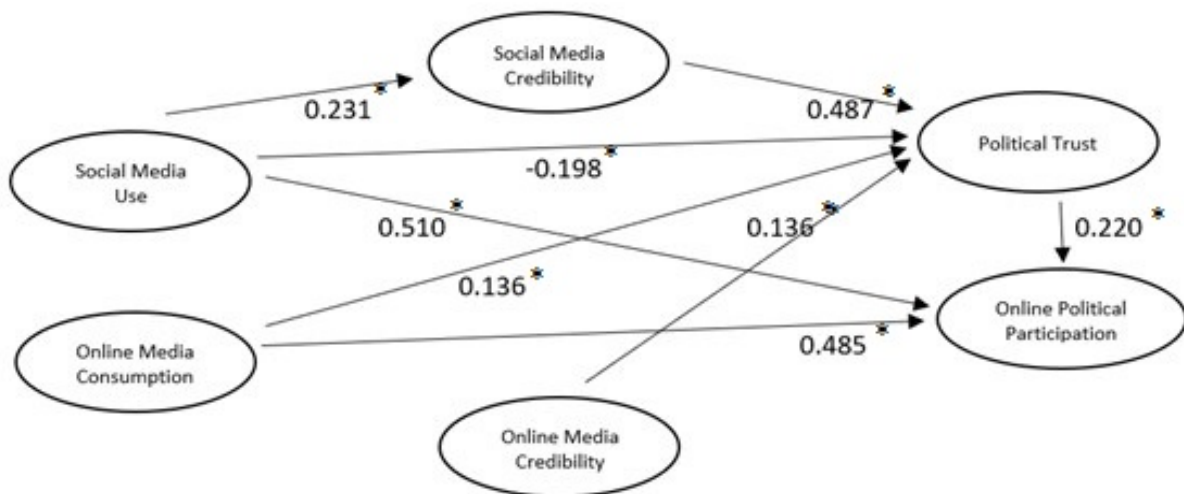


Figure 2b. Relationship of Media Use and Online Political Participation Among Islamabad Residents.

Social media use and online media consumption related to political information had a direct effect on online political participation among Islamabad residents as shown in Figure 2b with

social media having a stronger influence (0.510) than online media (0.485). Additionally, political trust had a direct impact on online political participation (0.220). The amount of trust contributed more to online political participation in Islamabad than in Jakarta. The perception of media credibility among social media users such as YouTube and Instagram contributed to an increase in political trust. Online media credibility influenced political trust, although the intake of political information via online media had no relationship with the recognition of online media credibility. Social media usage and online media consumption both had a direct impact on political trust but access to political information via social media had a negative impact, implying that frequent access reduced confidence.

Access to political information through social media, websites, search engines, and blogs among residents in both locations, Jakarta and Islamabad, impacts online political participation. The contribution of social media is more significant in Jakarta than in Islamabad, whereas information from websites, search engines, and blogs is more meaningful in Pakistan. Social media has contributed to the growth of political trust in Jakarta by providing information about politicians and the political situation. However, information from websites, search engines, and blogs does not directly foster trust; only credible channels foster confidence, which triggers political engagement. In Pakistan, information from websites, search engines, and blogs holds a greater place in political trust, whereas information from social media can lower political trust. Only credible social media accounts can foster trust, triggering political engagement.

Conclusion and Implications

The results show that political information received through social media and other online platforms has a direct and positive influence on online political participation through social media for residents in Jakarta and Islamabad. This correlates with previous publications that the presence of internet-based media enables users to access excessive information, express opinions, and create content as a form of political engagement. Waqas et al., (2020) further stated that the majority of Pakistani students were heavy users of online media with a significant portion of time spent accessing the internet through mobile phones. YouTube and Google are the preferred platforms for obtaining the latest political information and news. Additionally, Indonesian students practice second screening using social media to verify political information from television. This activity fosters political efficacy and motivates political engagement (Intyaswati et al., 2023; Intyaswati et al., 2024). In both Jakarta and Islamabad, access to political information through social media has a greater influence on online political participation than consumption of others. The findings complement the metadata of the previous study (Boulianne, 2015) and corroborate the relationship between social media and political participation in diverse geographical contexts.

The significant use of political information from social media directly impacts political trust in both cities. However, this relationship is negative among residents in Islamabad. The reality of trust in media varies across countries and is influenced by different factors (Newman et al., 2019; Hanitzsch et al., 2018). A negative relationship between using social media and political trust was also found in a study by Saleh (2022) among young individuals in Egypt. Youth tend to have less trust in political information sources on social media, leading to a decline in social and political engagement. In contrast, the positive contribution of social media use to political trust among residents in Jakarta is supported by Ghifari

(2023). This publication stated that an increasing number of Indonesians trust social media as a reliable source of information, according to a survey conducted by the Communications and Information Ministry.

The consumption of political information through online media platforms such as websites, search engines, and blogs significantly influences political trust among residents in Islamabad. The effect of using social media and other outlets on political trust in Islamabad correlates with Ceron's (2015) study. Among residents in Jakarta, political information obtained from online media does not directly foster political trust. This suggests that Jakarta residents prefer social media as the primary source of political information. Additionally, most websites or blogs are connected to social media leading users to favor information communicated through these platforms. The strength of using social media to obtain political information among Jakarta residents is shown by the dominant influence on online political participation, compared to the low influence of political trust.

Political trust has a significant direct impact on political participation through social media among residents in both cities. This suggests that political participation through social media is driven by political trust. Furthermore, the contribution of political trust to online political participation is greater among Islamabad than Jakarta residents.

An indicator of online political participation is participating in online political discussions. This participation mediates online political discussions as confirmed by previous study among Indonesian students (Intyaswati & Fairuzza, 2023). Islamabad residents engage in online political participation through YouTube and Instagram by sharing political information, participating in online political discussions, creating political content, and following political discussions. Mahmood et al., (2020) stated that young individuals in Pakistan use social media to stay updated on political issues, and those who actively share political information are more inclined to engage in political participation. Social media in Punjab, Pakistan, can enhance awareness of political rights as well as mobilize individuals in political decision-making (Ghania et al., 2020).

The positive relationship between political trust and online political participation correlates with previous studies. Dewi et al. (2022) discovered a relationship between political trust and political participation among residents in Tasikmalaya, Indonesia, where trust was based on institutions and personal factors. Cognitive factors play an important role in how individuals evaluate political information consumed through social media (Venus et al., 2023). Bakar et al. (2022) conducted a survey in Makassar, Indonesia, referring to the 2018 regional elections where the "Empty Boxes" candidate evolved victorious, emphasizing the significant role of political trust in political participation. Political participation significantly correlates with political trust across all the components including internal political efficacy that young individuals in Pakistan believe the influence on the government, although this trust is not strongly established. Furthermore, young individuals believe the system does not provide opportunities to hold the government and the officials accountable (Ahmad et al., 2019).

Credibility of social media serves as a mediator between social media use of political information and political trust in Jakarta and Islamabad. In Jakarta, online media credibility mediates the consumption of political information and political trust while in Islamabad it does not function as a mediator. Media institutions and journalists in Pakistan are generally

perceived as dishonest due to bias and influence from corrupt political leaders (Saeed et al., 2021).

Political trust influences online political participation among Jakarta's social media users. When absorbing political information from online media, credibility should be considered before political trust can be established leading to participation in online politics. Political trust influences online political participation among Islamabad residents who use online media. Users are more inclined to participate in online politics when having political trust. However, the intake of political information via social media in Islamabad does not promote political trust.

The comparative study regarding the relationship between internet-based media use and online political participation in Jakarta and Islamabad has the following implications. (a) Social media users in Islamabad have negative perceptions of Pakistani politicians and the government. The Pakistani government can improve regulations regarding social media use to ensure political information fosters political trust. Politicians and the government need to maintain positive political behavior to enhance the image among society. (b) Among Jakarta residents, social media use related to political information can foster political trust but the contribution to online political participation is small. Politicians and the Indonesian government need to improve performance to create positive perceptions among the residents, driving online political participation. (c) Online media journalists in Pakistan should work more professionally to increase media credibility and make media a credible source of political information. (d) Online media managers in Jakarta should also improve the quality of political information to directly impact political trust among the public. The theory of source credibility which underscores the importance of credibility in information distributed through social and online media is confirmed to impact political trust.

Limitations and Future Research

In conclusion, the use of political information from social media impacted engagement in online political participation both directly and through the mediation of social media credibility or political trust in Jakarta and Islamabad. Similarly, political trust had a direct influence on online participation in both cities.

The consumption of political information through online media had a direct effect on political participation via social media for users in Jakarta and Islamabad. For residents in Jakarta, engagement in online participation could be mediated by credibility of online media. High credibility fostered political trust and triggered participation in politics. However, the perception of credibility towards online media was generally lacking among residents in Islamabad. The direct influence of consuming political information from online media on online participation of residents in Islamabad was possible due to the consumption of political information through search engines, which allowed access to media sources from outside Pakistan.

The limitation of this study was observed in the selection of a population consisting of only a single region within each country. Future publications were expected to conduct the survey longitudinally to provide a more comprehensive understanding of causal effects. Future measures of political trust and online political participation should use more comprehensive

indicators. Additionally, the selection of social media platforms and other outlets could be adjusted to the study context.

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