



THE INFLUENCE OF TIKTOK ON THE POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES OF CIVICS STUDENTS OF THE CLASS OF 2025, STATE UNIVERSITY OF MALANG

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Abstract: TikTok has become one of the most influential social media platforms in shaping public political opinions in the digital era, including among university students. This study aims to analyze the impact of TikTok usage on the political perspectives of students in the Undergraduate Program of Pancasila and Civic Education (PPKn), Class of 2025, at State University of Malang, as well as to identify the challenges they encounter when expressing political opinions through the platform. The study employed a quantitative approach using a survey method with a random sampling technique. Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to PPKn students of the 2025 cohort. The findings indicate that TikTok plays a significant role in broadening students' political insights by exposing them to diverse political information and perspectives. However, students also face several challenges, including difficulties in distinguishing valid information from hoaxes, exposure to information bias, and social pressure within digital spaces. This study provides a clearer understanding of TikTok's influence on students' political awareness and highlights the importance of digital literacy and critical thinking skills in responding to political content on social media platforms

Keywords: Tiktok, Political Perspective, Political Awareness, Digital Literacy, PPKn Students.

Abstrak: TikTok pada era digital saat ini menjadi salah satu media sosial yang paling masif dalam memengaruhi pembentukan opini politik masyarakat, termasuk di kalangan mahasiswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dampak penggunaan media sosial TikTok terhadap cara pandang politik mahasiswa Program Studi S1 Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan (PPKn) Angkatan 2025 Universitas Negeri Malang, serta mengidentifikasi berbagai kendala yang mereka hadapi saat menyampaikan opini politik melalui platform tersebut. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei dan teknik random sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui penyebaran kuesioner berbasis Google Form kepada mahasiswa PPKn Angkatan 2025. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa TikTok berperan dalam memperluas wawasan politik mahasiswa melalui paparan berbagai informasi dan perspektif politik yang beragam. Namun, mahasiswa juga menghadapi sejumlah kendala, seperti kesulitan membedakan informasi yang valid dengan hoaks, potensi bias informasi, serta tekanan sosial dalam ruang digital. Penelitian ini memberikan gambaran mengenai pengaruh TikTok terhadap kesadaran politik mahasiswa sekaligus menegaskan pentingnya literasi digital dan kemampuan berpikir kritis dalam menyikapi konten politik di media sosial.

Kata Kunci: TikTok, Perspektif Politik, Kesadaran Politik, Literasi Digital, Mahasiswa PPKn

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INTRODUCTION

Social media, especially TikTok, is now one of the main sources of information for students. TikTok social media is a means of communication in the public space that can not only be used as a place for aspirations but also contains various kinds of knowledge, one of which is knowledge about politics (Kusnadi & Annisa 2023). However, political content on TikTok is often superficial, provocative, or unverified. This condition can affect the way students view the world of politics, especially for students who should have critical, objective thinking, and based on Pancasila values. If students are too easily to believe in information on TikTok without filtering it first, this can cause their perspective on politics to become narrow, or not in accordance with the actual values of democracy, this is in line with what has been researched before, which is to emphasize the need for a critical evaluation of the use of popular platforms by students because the rapid consumption patterns of information on social media can affect the quality of their political understanding (Umran 2025). Therefore, it is very important to examine the extent of the influence of TikTok social media on the political perspective of PPKn students of the 2025 class of the State University of Malang. Through this study, it is hoped that it can be found out whether TikTok has a positive impact on increasing students' political knowledge, or vice versa. Later, it will make students less critical and easily influenced by the flow of inaccurate information. The results of this research can later be used as evaluation and learning material so that students are wiser in using social media, especially in terms of understanding political issues in the digital era.

TikTok has become a new means in the non-formal political education process. Students learn about political issues, figures, and values from this media in line with the goal of PPKn in fostering political awareness of S1 PPKn students class of 2025 State University of Malang, and of course the student's political perspective reflects their civic attitude. Social media, especially TikTok, has an important value as a space to build awareness of each individual or group of social values, including building sensitivity to social problems, sensitivity to power, the interests of others, and sensitivity to all crimes where all of these things are included in political knowledge (Kusnadi and Annisa 2023).

This phenomenon is interesting to research, especially for S1 students of Pancasila and Citizenship Education Class of 2025 at the State University of Malang who are academically related to political formation and awareness. Through TikTok, students can easily access various political content. This ease of access makes them more quickly exposed to various political viewpoints that can influence the way of thinking and attitudes towards political issues. TikTok is a platform that tends to be short and has limitations in delivering complex content in depth. Therefore, it is important for users to remain critical in evaluating and verifying (Sari & Candrasari 2023). In addition, the use of TikTok also gives rise to a new pattern in conveying political opinions that are freer, creative, and open to public discussion and this is in line with previous research by Rintia and Shadri, namely, social media such as TikTok provides opportunities for students to have freedom of opinion related to the political situation. Students are able to use it well, then technological developments can build the sustainability of the country. (Rintia and Shadri 2024). However, behind this openness, students also face the risk of hoaxes, social pressure, and challenges in maintaining the objectivity of their political views in the midst of a very fast flow of information. This condition makes this research important to understand how social media plays a role in shaping the political awareness of the younger generation, especially PPKn students of the class of 2025. Previous research has shown that TikTok's social media has a huge impact on the political outlook and behavior of the younger generation. Research by Widyawati (2024) at

Merdeka University of Malang found that political campaigns through TikTok have a positive relationship with student democratic participation. Students who often see political content on TikTok are usually more interested in political issues and more active in democratic activities.

The research was titled "The Use of TikTok Social Media as a Means of Political Information for Generation Z" using an incidental sample research method (Ain et al., 2023). Social media, which has been used as an intermediary for political communication, can be used well for the public to convey several programs and is more interesting so that Generation Z is able to receive various discussions of political information that is developing. Research conducted by Gen Rintia & Shadri, (2024) with the title "The Importance of Sociological Analysis in the Use of Tiktok (Study on Gen Z Politics)" using the literature study method. Gen Z needs good sociological analysis skills in the use of TikTok for politics, TikTok can be used as a social media to convey the aspirations of Generation Z because of its effective, easy, and practical use. Research according to Sari et al., (2024) with the title "Analysis of the Influence of TikTok Social Media Exposure on Student Political Participation in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election: A Quantitative Approach" shows that TikTok social media is widely used as a means of political campaigns in the 2024 Election, TikTok is one of the social media used as a political campaign strategy. Research by (National University, n.d.) with the title "The Role of Political Content in Tiktok Social Media on Political Preferences of Generation Z Individual Voter Behavior Among Political Science Students" discusses how political content on TikTok affects the political preferences of Generation Z, especially Political Science students. The results show that TikTok has a significant role in shaping students' political views and choices through engaging and accessible content. Based on previous research conducted by several researchers, most of the previous research still focused on political participation and democratic activities in general, not many have researched the influence of TikTok use on the political perspective of Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn) students, who have a scientific basis about Pancasila and citizenship values. Therefore, this research is expected to provide a new understanding of how TikTok affects the political perspective of PPKn students, especially at the State University of Malang.

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of the use of TikTok social media on the political perspective of students of the S1 Pancasila and Citizenship Education Study Program (PPKn) Class of 2025, State University of Malang. Through this research, it will be examined how TikTok affects students' understanding, attitudes, and views on political issues that develop in society. Several local studies have also shown mixed results regarding the impact of TikTok on political understanding, so a contextual study of the PPKn study program will help clarify the implications of education and citizenship (Q. A. A. Sari and Candrasari 2023). In addition, this research also focuses on the obstacles faced by students when expressing their political opinions through TikTok, such as the risk of dissent, misuse of information, and social pressure in the digital space. Thus, this study is expected to provide an overview of the relationship between the use of TikTok and the formation of political perspectives of PPKn students in the context of political life in the era of social media.

Based on the phenomenon of the rampant consumption of political content on TikTok among students, this research is directed to answer a number of important questions related to how the platform shapes the political perspective of the younger generation. This study specifically seeks to understand the extent to which the use of TikTok affects the political perspective of Pancasila and Citizenship Education S1 students of the State University of Malang Class of 2025. In addition, this study also examines how students' involvement with various

political content they encounter on TikTok, both in the form of interaction, participation, and response to developing political issues. Furthermore, this study also seeks to identify various obstacles faced by students in filtering, understanding, and responding to the flow of political information on TikTok, especially related to digital literacy challenges and information bias.

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative description approach with a random sampling model to obtain data that is representative of the entire population of S1 PPKn students, State University of Malang. This method was chosen because it is able to provide an objective picture of the phenomenon that we will research, namely the Influence of TikTok Use on the Political Perspective of S1 PPKn Students Class of 2025. Data collection was carried out using a Google Form-based questionnaire which will be distributed to S1 PPKn students Class of 2025. The instrument contains questions related to the influence of TikTok use, what obstacles are found, and how to form the involvement of S1 PPKn students of the State University of Malang Class of 2025. The data obtained from the questionnaire was then analyzed descriptively to determine the tendency of the respondents' answers.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

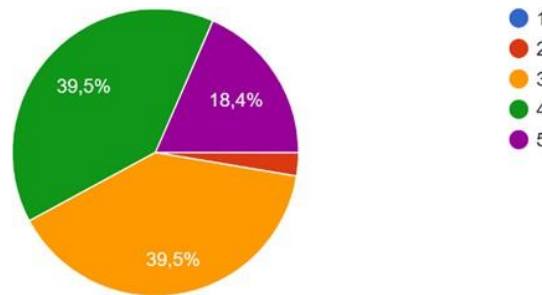
Political awareness can basically be understood as a condition when a person knows, understands, and is able to feel the dynamics related to the effort to achieve a better life together. In general, political awareness also involves the ability of individuals to be aware of the processes, decisions, and actions related to the management of people's lives. After that, the definition was emphasized by Kusnadi and Annisa, who explained that consciousness means a state when a person knows, understands, and feels something happening, while politics is understood as an effort to achieve a better life. (Kusnadi and Annisa 2023), while media exposure is generally defined as the level of a person's involvement in receiving information disseminated through various media channels, both print and digital. This includes the frequency of the appearance of information, information, the ethnicity of people viewing or consuming the information. This general understanding was then explained by W.P. Sari that Exposed by the media means how often information appears in various types of media, such as newspapers, television, radio, or on the internet. It also includes how much of that information is seen and understood by the crowd. Exposure to the media can be an important indicator to understand how much influence an information has on society (W. P. Sari et al. 2024).

This study involved 38 students of the S1 PPKn Study Program Class of 2025 as respondents. All Respondents are active students who at the time of this research were in the first semester. The characteristics of the respondents in this study are important to provide an overview of the social and academic context of the group being studied, as well as to help understand how their backgrounds can influence the way respondents view politics through TikTok. In terms of gender, the composition of these respondents is dominated by female students, namely 28 respondents (73.7%), while male students amount to 10 (26.3%). The disparity between these compositions reflects the general characteristics of students who fill out the questionnaire and provide information about the groups involved in this study.

Based on the results of the questionnaire, the influence of TikTok use on the political perspective of S1 PPKn students of the Class of 2025 shows a fairly strong tendency. As many as 39.5% of respondents said they agreed that TikTok makes them more open to various political views, while another 18.4% strongly agree. This indicates that the majority of students feel that

there is an expansion of their perspective on politics after being exposed to political content on TikTok

Figure 1.1 Pie Chart of Students' Attitudes to Political Views Through TikTok



From the data collected from this Google Form, it shows that most respondents feel that TikTok helps them see various political viewpoints that they have never known or noticed before. This condition not only illustrates students' interest in political issues, but also shows how TikTok is able to open up access to a variety of information that they may not get from traditional media. Percentage data showing that 39.5% of respondents agree and 18.4% strongly agree shows that more than half of college students experience an expansion of their political perspective after being exposed to content on TikTok. This figure gives an idea that TikTok's algorithm, which tends to present content based on user interaction and preferences, is one of the factors that inadvertently expose students to different opinions. Thus, TikTok not only serves as an entertainment platform, but also as a new space that introduces students to an increasingly wide and varied diversity of arguments, debates, and political viewpoints.

This openness does not just happen. The TikTok format based on short videos makes it easier for students to absorb political issues that take place quickly. The presentation of politics in a concise visual form makes it easier for students to understand the essence of information without having to read long explanations as in articles or mainstream media reports. This pattern is in accordance with the findings (Kusnadi and Annisa 2023), which explain that TikTok plays a role in shaping political awareness through the presentation of dense but still intense content. In addition, students can also find other opinions that were previously not on their radar, as TikTok's algorithm often expands the scope of views based on trends, comments, and watch time. Even students who initially did not have a strong interest in politics were still exposed to information due to the nature of the platform that displayed random but relevant content. With this exposure, students become more familiar with political issues that are being talked about, even though they do not actively seek them. This condition shows that student openness does not only come from personal interests, but also from algorithmic mechanisms that encourage the emergence of new perspectives on user screens.

However, openness to broader political views does not always indicate a deep understanding. Several studies explain that media consumption in a short duration tends to produce an understanding that is only on the surface, because users focus more on visual packaging than content analysis (Sari and Candrasari 2023). This situation can be seen in respondents who are in the hesitant category in assessing how much influence TikTok has on their political openness. This doubt illustrates that some students do receive a variety of information, but are not yet fully convinced to make it a foundation for mature political understanding.

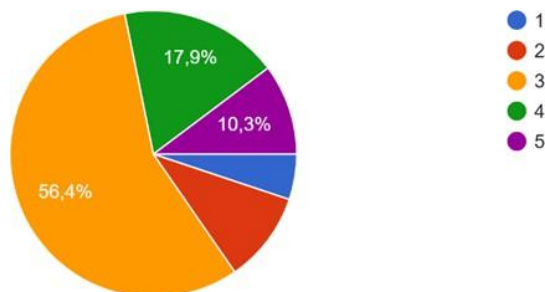
Students may see differences of opinion as interesting, but they do not always analyze the source of information or the validity of the content. This attitude shows that the process of forming political understanding is still ongoing and has not reached the stage where students dare to conclude something based on a solid theoretical foundation or facts. Thus, the openness seen in the diagram describes more of a readiness to receive new information than an ability to critically internalize information.

The condition of student openness in Diagram 1.1 is in line with the results of the study (Rintia and Shadri 2024), which shows that TikTok provides space for the younger generation to see diversity of opinions more openly. TikTok presents a flow of information that allows students to understand that differences of opinion are part of a normal political dynamic. This gives students direct experience of seeing content that contains criticism, support, debate, and rejection of an issue. By looking at these various forms of political communication, students slowly build a more inclusive mindset and not just fixate on one perspective. This process leads students to the understanding that politics is not just a two-sided choice, but a broader and more colorful one. They began to understand that in politics there is dialogue, tug-of-war, and arguments that are opposed to each other. Although they do not yet have a strong depth of analysis, students are already on the right track to develop more mature political insights in the future. This pattern shows that openness is the initial stage in building political awareness and becomes an important foothold before students reach the stage of critical reflection.

In addition, students' openness to various political views through TikTok shows a major change in the way they interact with political issues. Students no longer rely solely on television news, lengthy articles, or formal discussions in class as a source of information. They tend to use platforms that suit their digital lifestyle, which are fast, visual, and interactive. This is in line with the research of Ginting and Pribadi (2025), which explains that TikTok is able to embrace generation Z through the presentation of political issues in a visual, simple, and attractive way. The combination of short narratives and creative visuals makes complex political issues seem easier to understand, especially for students who prefer information formats that don't take long to process. Through trends, reaction videos, stitching, and open comments, students can see the direct response of the community to an issue, and can even compare the points of view of different groups. This change in information consumption patterns shows that the digital political space has become a new alternative that is more dynamic and relevant for students, especially in understanding rapidly changing political developments.

Overall, students' attitudes towards the openness of political views through TikTok show that PPKn students use this platform not only as a means of entertainment, but also as a place to expand their political horizons. This openness is the initial foundation for students to understand that the world of politics does not contain just one voice, but consists of many interests, arguments, and complex social dynamics. Although the depth of their analysis is not yet fully mature, students have shown a readiness to accept new views as part of the process of learning and shaping their intellect as aspiring educators. This understanding is in line with the civic values they learned, where openness to differences is one of the important competencies in building a democratic society. TikTok in this case acts as an alternative space that brings together students with broader political realities, thereby helping them develop more diverse perspectives before entering the world of professions that require critical, inclusive, and objective thinking skills.

Figure 1.2 Pie Diagram of the Form of Involvement of S1 PPKn Students at State University of Malang with Content on TikTok



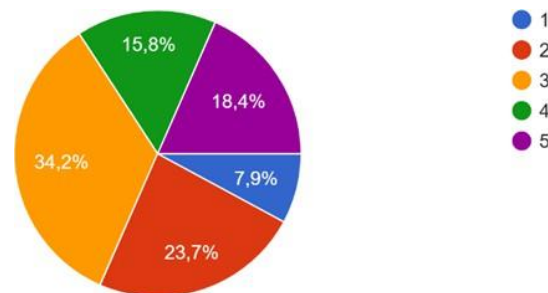
From the information obtained through this Google form, it can be seen that student participation in political content on TikTok can be said to be low, this can be seen from the percentage of respondents who admitted that they were not sure (56.4%). This majority figure shows that many S1 PPKn students of the State University of Malang often find political content on their pages, but have not reached the level of actively contributing. They generally only watch the video to the end or only half of it, then continue scrolling without leaving any traces such as likes, comments, shares, or create reply content. This "unsure" or "sometimes" attitude reflects a very typical position of Generation Z, Political participation through the internet has emerged as a significant thing, which includes activities such as conversations in cyberspace, signature raising, and campaigns on social media. For Millennials and Generation Z, these activities are not just part of citizen engagement, but also a manifestation of their social identity and digital capabilities (Judijanto et al. 2024). They are aware of the political presence around them, but have not felt interested in getting more involved. This exposure occurred inadvertently because TikTok's algorithm continued to present similar content, not because they specifically searched for the topic. However, there are small groups that are quite visible that already show higher levels of engagement. As many as 17.9% of survey participants indicated that they "frequently" engage with political material, while another 10.3% admitted to doing so "very often". If calculated as a whole, almost 30% of PPKn students are already at a significant level of active participation. They not only watch, but also regularly respond, write long comments, follow accounts that focus on politics or civic education, and even often share the videos in class groups or families. Some of them have also started trying to create their own content, such as explaining articles of the Constitution in simpler language, correcting misinformation about history, or creating short videos related to religious tolerance. This group shows that when political content is delivered in a concise, entertaining, and relevant way to daily life, PPKn students will be very responsive and able to become agents of change in the digital world.

On the other hand, there are students who deliberately choose not to engage with political content on TikTok. Although their numbers are relatively small (seen in the blue and red segments in the diagram), their existence reflects a positive critical attitude. They often feel that political content on TikTok is too simple, emotional, or even contains facts that are doubtful of the truth. With a background of systematic thinking through PPKn subjects, they prefer to seek information from more reliable sources such as journals, books, or classroom discussions. For them, TikTok is

just a medium for fun, and they actively use the "not interested" feature whenever a political video appears so that the algorithm doesn't suggest similar content in the future.

Overall, the illustration mentioned in Figure 1.2 shows a highly variable ecosystem rich in opportunities. Most students (56.4%) are still in an unclear state, i.e. exposed but have not participated, while about 28% have shown an active level of involvement, and the rest deliberately choose not to participate. This situation actually offers an ideal moment for the PPKn study program to participate in the TikTok platform with more mature plans such as establishing an official account for the study program, involving students in creating short content about Pancasila and citizenship, and organizing educational video competitions with prizes. If these measures are implemented with consistency and creativity, a large percentage of the "sometimes" category could switch to "often" and "very often," so that TikTok not only becomes a place to fill your free time, but also turns into a place to learn citizenship that is interesting, efficient, and can reach millions of young people in Indonesia.

Figure 1.3 Pie Diagram of Students' Difficulties in Distinguishing Political News on TikTok (Obstacles Faced)



The results of the questionnaire also show that some S1 PPKn students for the Class of 2025 still have difficulty distinguishing between true political news and hoaxes on TikTok. These findings show a fairly diverse distribution of responses. As many as 18.4% of respondents stated that they strongly agreed and 15.8% said they agreed, so that a total of about a third of respondents admitted that there are difficulties in distinguishing between true political information and hoaxes on the platform. The neutral category received the largest percentage, which was 34.2%. It shows that some students do not have a certain tendency to have a certain attitude regarding this issue. Meanwhile, 23.7% voted against and 7.9% strongly disagreed, indicating that some respondents did not find it difficult to distinguish between politically correct news and hoaxes on TikTok. Overall, this data shows that students' perceptions of the ability to distinguish between hoax and true political news on TikTok are quite varied, and of course without a certain dominance.

The data collected from the Google Form shows interesting dynamics regarding how PPKn students understand the presence of TikTok as a forum for political information. Respondents who came from various offerings were partly men, the majority of whom were women, gave an idea that the student group was in the phase of "active consumption but still cautious" of political content on TikTok. Their understanding of politics is heavily influenced by the rapid flow of information that TikTok offers, but the data also shows that these influences are not uniform and do not fully form a deep understanding.

Students deeply feel that TikTok makes them more open to various political views, even though the level of openness is not very high. The average score in the medium range of 3.73

(medium) shows that students do receive a lot of new perspectives, but also maintain a critical distance from the exposure to the news they see. The data collected from the Google form shows interesting dynamics regarding how PPKn students understand and respond to political content on TikTok. TikTok in this context means being a space that they access naturally, not as an object of forced research. This makes the data formed reflect an authentic perception of daily social media experiences. Political content that is short, dense, and visually packaged makes information feel easier to understand, so that many students claim to be able to follow political issues more comfortably. However, because the TikTok video format naturally focuses on simplifying information only, the understanding gained is more at the surface level. TikTok not only serves to influence political views at the campus level, but also helps students to better understand global issues. The platform provides an opportunity for young people to get political information at the international level in a quick and interactive way, which makes it easier for them to see different perspectives on political issues happening around the world. By presenting engaging content through short videos, visual narratives, and creative effects, TikTok is able to make complex issues easier to understand for its users (Ginting and Pribadi 2025).

But this does not provide enough space for a comprehensive explanation, so students still need other social media sources to build a complete political consciousness. This is related to the theory of mass communication known as the hypodermic needle theory, or often called the Magic Bullet or Response Stimulus Theory. This theory explains that viewers can be directly affected by information disseminated according to the media's wishes. This theory is also believed that the media has a greater power of control, so the audience is considered an inactive party. Therefore, the audience can be deceived by the news conveyed by the media. So, to avoid the adverse effects of news broadcast by mass media, it is very important for viewers to always sort out information that comes from the mass media (Rintia and Shadri 2024). In this section, it can be seen that the pattern of students' exposure to political content on TikTok has similarities to the Magic Bullet theory, namely that media messages are presented quickly, directly, and attractively packaged so that they can enter the audience's attention without any obstacles. TikTok with its short video format and crisp visuals works like a "bullet" that is fired directly into students' minds, making information feel easy to understand and very quickly to influence their initial awareness of political issues. However, unlike the prediction of the Magic Bullet theory which sees the audience as a passive recipient, the students in this study still show the ability to select and consider quite critically.

Another interesting thing is that data shows that students are starting to realize the risk of bias and misinformation in political content on TikTok. Some questions related to the ability to check facts, recognize hoaxes, and be aware of information bias resulted in an average score of 3.13-3.87 (medium). This indicates that students have a sufficient level of digital literacy, but it is not stable. There is a desire to be selective and critical, but that ability is not fully established, so some of these respondents still feel doubtful in determining the truth of a political information on TikTok. Nevertheless, students showed a desire to remain cautious and check the political information they encountered. There is a picture of them trying to apply a critical attitude and present mature skills. This effort can be seen in the attitude of those who try to re-examine information, although it does not always succeed in judging which content is trustworthy and which is only manipulative of opinion. Some aspects of digital literacy are strengthened, such as awareness of bias and the desire to understand the motives of certain political content. However, other aspects, especially those related to deeper evaluative abilities, do not seem to be optimally

developed. There is a blank space where students are not yet fully able to grasp the manipulative patterns or strategic framing commonly used in certain political content. This condition is certainly a reflection that the very fast flow of information in TikTok is often not in harmony with the need to think slowly and deeply, so students are in a situation where they have to balance between the ease of access to information and the risk of manipulation of opinions.

In addition to political understanding, data also shows that students are trying to maintain ethics in responding to political content on TikTok. The average score that tends to be high in statements about polite and fact-based attitudes indicates a moral commitment to maintain healthy discussions, even though the TikTok environment itself is often with provocative and often *polarizing comments*. Students seem to realize that political debates on social media often turn into conflict arenas, so most of them choose to remain cautious in commenting. Based on these facts, it shows that students are not only passive consumers of information that is widely spread on TikTok, but also carry personal moral values when engaging in digital discussion spaces. This ethical attitude is not formed in a vacuum, which means that students seem to understand that TikTok, as a platform that prioritizes instant interaction, is often a place for emotional comments, hate speech, and even conflicts between political supporters. This commitment also reflects the reflective mindset of students as prospective educators. That they talk about politics is not only about expressing opinions, but also exemplifying the right way of dialogue. They position themselves as part of a group that is supposed to maintain the quality of public discourse, so that politeness is not just a personal choice, but part of the academic identity they want to maintain. In other words, while TikTok often doesn't provide a space for in-depth and deliberative discussions, students do show adaptive skills: they remain present in the fast-paced flow of political conversations, but with a higher ethical standard than is commonly found on the platform.

This indicates that their digital ethical literacy is evolving, and moral values are still a grip when they are faced with the dynamics of political content that are full of pressure and potential conflict. In this context, the ethics shown by students not only serve as personal guidelines, but also as a mechanism to maintain a safe space for healthy political dialogue. When they choose not to be provoked by aggressive comments or content that deliberately provokes emotions, they are actually building a counter-culture to the fast-paced and often superficial digital communication model. This attitude shows that students have an awareness that the quality of political conversations is not something that can be allowed to follow the flow of algorithms, but needs to be actively maintained by its users. Research by Hilva Nuriyah Utomo and Nina Yuliana (2023) found that the use of TikTok has a positive impact such as increasing students' creativity and communication skills, although it also poses a risk of exposure to unethical content that affects moral norms. This is in line with the findings of Ahmad Faridh Albarzand (2024), who states that the millennial generation shows a high awareness of the potential for disinformation on TikTok, so they remain critical in discussing politics even though the content format is short and viral. Thus, students are not only adaptive to algorithmic platforms, but also actively promote media literacy to avoid polarization and build responsible political participation.

Furthermore, students' ability to maintain these ethical standards reflects the process of internalizing the values they have gained from the academic environment, such as the importance of thinking critically, respecting differences, and placing arguments based on data. These values are automatically carried over into the way they view interactions on social media. They do not just consume or share information, but position themselves as actors responsible for creating a more rational discussion climate. Thus, the digital space is not only a place for passive learning, but also a place for students to practice the competencies that they will bring to their profession

in the future. Interestingly, this tendency to be ethical also shows that students are able to negotiate their identity in the midst of digital cultural pressures that normalize spontaneous and emotional expression. They choose not to get caught up in a pattern of reactive communication, but rather to maintain reflective communication, which is a communication style that considers the long-term impact of each word spoken. This decision marks moral maturity in interacting with political issues that are often fraught with interest and manipulation.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that TikTok is one of the most frequently used places by PPKn students of the Class of 2025 to follow political developments. Short and visual content makes various issues feel easier to understand so that many students feel more open to different views. Even so, the understanding that has been formed is still at the basic level and has not yet reached a deeper understanding of politics. The results of the questionnaire also showed that students experienced a change in perspective after consuming political content on TikTok. Information presented in a simple style helps them keep up with current issues, but the limitations of duration make political explanations often appear in such a concise form that they are not enough to build a comprehensive understanding. This condition makes TikTok more of a role as an initial introduction to information, rather than as the main source of knowledge. The biggest challenge that arises comes from the rapid flow of information that makes it difficult for some students to distinguish between true content and which is only in the form of hoaxes or bias. The sheer number of opinions, framing, and provocative narratives often cast doubt on their judgment. Even so, students still try to maintain ethics when responding to political issues and try to express their opinions politely and based on facts, even though this platform is often a discussion space full of emotions. Overall, this study shows that TikTok has a real influence on the way students view politics, both in broadening their horizons and in challenging their ability to sort information. These influences bring benefits, but they also pose risks in the form of superficial misunderstandings and misinformation. Therefore, the ability to think critically, carefully assess information, and the habit of verifying the truth of content are important steps so that TikTok can be used wisely in understanding political issues in the digital era.

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