



ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFORMATION QUALITY, FREQUENCY OF USE, AND POLITICAL MARKETING IN INCREASING TRUST AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AMONG GEN Z WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: To investigate the impact of social media information quality, frequency of use, and political marketing activities on political trust and engagement among Gen Z women. **Method:** A quantitative survey was conducted with 250 respondents. The data was analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). **Results:** The study found that social media information quality significantly increased political trust but had no direct impact on political engagement. The frequency of social media use positively affected both political trust and engagement. Political marketing activities via social media increased trust but did not directly influence political engagement. **Findings:** Trust plays a significant mediating role in linking political marketing activities with political engagement. The frequency of social media use, previously overlooked, is a crucial factor in political engagement. **Novelty:** This study highlights the role of social media use frequency as a key factor in political engagement among Gen Z women. **Originality:** This research fills a gap in political marketing by examining the relationships between social media information quality, frequency of use, political marketing activities, political trust, and political engagement among Gen Z women. **Conclusions:** To boost political engagement among Gen Z women, political marketers should focus on creating quality social media content and increasing interaction frequency, while recognizing the key role of trust in fostering engagement. **Paper Type:** Empirical Research Article.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has brought significant changes in various aspects of life, including the political sphere. Social media, as part of the digital revolution, has become the main platform for Gen Z women to obtain political information, express opinions, and participate in public discussions (Osei-Appiah et al., 2023). The information disseminated through social media contributes to the formation of political trust. Accurate, relevant, and easily accessible information encourages more active and significant political participation (Arshad & Khurram, 2020). The frequency of social media use also affects the way women interact with political issues. Studies indicate that women tend to use social media platforms that provide political information more frequently, making them more active in political activities, both online and offline (Mari et al., 2022). The frequency of social media use, particularly on platforms such as

Facebook and Twitter, has a significant impact on political participation. Activities such as sharing, posting, and commenting on political content can shape broader patterns of political interaction (Kullolli & Trebicka, 2023). However, the relationship between social media usage frequency and levels of trust and political engagement has not been extensively explored in previous studies (Hamid et al., 2022). While prior research has suggested that social media usage frequency positively affects political engagement and trust levels, its impact is not always statistically significant (Zagidullin et al., 2021).

In addition, political marketing activities through social media have become a common strategy for increasing political trust and civic engagement (Gearhart et al., 2024). Politicians typically adopt a formal approach when posting content on Facebook, but they often utilize Instagram to develop their personal brand, demonstrating how they adapt to the unique characteristics of each social media platform to maximize audience appeal. Social media also enhances women's political engagement, stating that social media provides equal opportunities and advantages for female politicians, who tend to interact more frequently with the public compared to men, resulting in more likes and shares, which ultimately mobilizes support, increases visibility, and strengthens women's representation in politics (Murayama et al., 2023). Research by Susila et al., (2020) reveals that political marketing through social media positively impacts public trust. Relevant and consistent communication enhances a candidate's image, strengthens emotional connections with voters, and increases public trust in the political process. Social media functions not only as a communication tool but also as a means to build emotional relationships and reinforce political legitimacy.

In a study conducted by (Malhotra, 2023), researchers found that women's ability to manage emotions and communicate with empathy influences their level of trust in female leaders, especially in times of crisis. Women who possess these skills tend to gain greater trust in politics, particularly in uncertain situations. Furthermore, public perceptions of politicians' integrity and the level of information they receive affect women's trust and political engagement. Trust in specific institutions or politicians encourages women to participate more actively in political activities (Kreutzer, 2023). This finding underscores that trust is a crucial component in determining women's political participation. According to Yuan et al., (2023) high public trust in government social media positively impacts political engagement. This trust fosters a sense of security and confidence in the transparency, accountability, and credibility of the information provided. As a result, it encourages the public, including women, to actively participate in political discussions and activities, thereby strengthening the relationship between society and political institutions.

According to previous studies, women and social media are key components that can influence trust and political engagement (Maximova & Lukyanova, 2020); Ahmed & Madrid-Morales, 2021). However, prior research has produced mixed results or revealed gaps in findings. Waeterloos et al., (2021) stated that social media information quality does not have a positive or significant impact on political engagement and trust. Additionally, Zagidullin et al., (2021) found that the frequency of social media use does not positively or significantly affect political engagement and trust. Political campaigns or promotions conducted through various channels are not sufficient to influence public views or political involvement, meaning that political marketing activities do not necessarily impact trust or political engagement (Abid et al., 2021). Finally, trust does not directly influence political engagement; in other words, how much a person trusts the political system does not necessarily determine their willingness or desire to participate in political activities (Devine, 2024). Therefore, to provide further insights into this research area, this study aims to examine the relationship between information quality, usage frequency, and political marketing activities on social media with political engagement and trust.

This study makes a significant contribution to understanding the relationship between social media, trust, and political engagement. It provides a comprehensive model explaining the connections between social media information quality, usage frequency, political marketing activities, political trust, and political engagement. This study offers a new perspective that has not received much attention in the past. First, it examines how the frequency of social media use directly impacts trust and political engagement. This approach differs from the study by Hamid et al., (2022), which did not specifically address this topic. Instead, this study offers a fresh perspective relevant to contemporary social dynamics. Second, while previous research primarily focused on political blog users as a population, this study also investigates social media users, who may exhibit unique characteristics due to the modern preference for social media over blogs or other conventional media for political information. Social media positively contributes to political trust and engagement by enabling direct communication between voters and candidates, disseminating information widely,

and fostering interactive discussions. This is attributed to increased transparency, a sense of connection, and active participation in the political process (Davidson-Schmich et al., 2023). Finally, this study highlights that creating a social media environment that facilitates inclusive discussions can enhance women's political participation (Koc-Michalska et al., 2021).

Reasoned Action Theory

Relationship Marketing Orientation (RMO) emphasises the importance of long-term relationships built on trust, shared values, and engagement. RMO helps political brands enhance trust and engagement among voters, particularly women, by leveraging social media (Abid et al., 2021). The quality of social media information, frequent usage, and transparent political marketing activities build political trust. This fosters political engagement by increasing social connectivity and information credibility (Kwon et al., 2021). Women use social media as a platform to build trust through parasocial relationships with influencers engaged in specific topics or issues. Social influence and the ability of the media to disseminate opinions widely through electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) reinforce this trust, significantly impacting women's political attitudes, behaviours, and engagements (Balaban et al., 2022). Social Exchange Theory (SET), which asserts that people often weigh the pros and cons of social interactions, including social media use for political participation, aligns with this situation. Trust is a crucial factor in encouraging political participation (Urbonavicius et al., 2021). Advancements in digital technology have shifted women's paradigms, allowing them to actively participate, empower themselves, and create new identities through social media (Tang et al., 2021). Social Exchange Theory (SET) is relevant in this context to explain how social relationships on social media based on the principle of cost-benefit exchange shape trust and political engagement, particularly among women. Individuals can develop parasocial relationships that strengthen their involvement in political discussions through the exchange of credible and transparent political information.

Women Activist

Social media has become a powerful tool for women to enhance political engagement and advocate for gender equality. Through these platforms, women can voice their opinions, influence public discourse, and actively participate in political discussions, creating opportunities for empowerment and positive societal change (Hurley, 2021). Since social media information reflects gender inequalities that affect women's political participation, the quality of information influences women's trust and political engagement. This highlights the need for policies that support more inclusive political representation (Beltran et al., 2021). In today's technology-driven era, dominated by Generation Z and Millennials, the quality of social media information, frequency of use, and political marketing activities play a crucial role in increasing women's political trust and engagement (Childers & Boatwright, 2021). According to Fuchs & Schäfer, (2021), women on social media, especially those facing challenges such as hate speech, need access to accurate and relevant information to strengthen their trust in politics. Social media can empower women, encourage their participation in politics, and create a more inclusive discussion space by implementing effective political marketing strategies.

Political Marketing Social

Media can overcome gender barriers and enhance women's participation in politics through communication approaches that incorporate female-centric elements into political campaigns (Bauer & Santia, 2022). According to Fenton et al., (2023), the quality of information disseminated through social media impacts women's level of political engagement and their trust in the political system. Accurate, relevant, and easily accessible information improves women's understanding of political issues and enhances their trust in the system. Additionally, such information encourages them to actively participate in political activities. The frequency with which women use social media also affects their exposure to political information. According to Li et al., (2021) the more frequently women engage with social media, the greater the influence of political marketing activities and high-quality information on their political trust. Political marketing plays a crucial role in reaching voters directly and personally. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram enable

political campaigns to interact with audiences quickly and effectively while delivering political messages relevant to individual interests (Shehata & Strömbäck, 2021). With the right strategy, social media can strengthen the relationship between political campaigns and voters. Lee, (2020) explains that effective social media use enhances women's political engagement, strengthens their confidence in the political system, and improves their understanding of relevant political issues.

Empirical model, hypothesis development, and proposed model

In political marketing, social media has emerged as a crucial strategy for shaping public opinion and increasing participation through direct interaction (Xia et al., 2020). In the era of digital transformation, social media, particularly among women, has become an essential tool for political mobilization, building trust, and encouraging active participation in the new technological era. The objective of this study is to examine three key aspects of how social media can enhance women's political trust and engagement, including information quality, frequency of social media use, and political marketing activities (Moon & Bai, 2020). According to Theocharis et al., (2021), political marketing on social media has been proven to help women become more involved in politics and strengthen their political trust. Based on the above statements, this study develops the following hypotheses :

Social Media Information Quality and Trust

In the political context, high-quality information helps fulfill public expectations of media as a reliable source, making it a crucial component in building trust in political actors and institutions (Fawzi et al., 2021). In political marketing, the quality of information disseminated through social media, such as accuracy, relevance, and transparency, affects female voters' trust. According to Social Exchange Theory, women are more likely to engage in reciprocal relationships with sources that provide valuable political knowledge and emotional connections. Findings from Relationship Management Theory suggest that openness and trust built through high-quality information can increase female voters' engagement and support for political messages conveyed via social media (Coco & Eckert, 2020). This hypothesis asserts that the quality of social media information, particularly its accuracy and transparency, influences trust-building. Reliable information encourages female voters to participate more actively and support the political messages presented to them. Both Social Exchange Theory and Relationship Management Theory support this argument. The way information is presented significantly impacts trust in social media. Accurate, relevant, and reliable information enhances users' perception of media credibility, thereby strengthening trust.

H1. The quality of social media information has a positive and significant impact on trust.

Social Media Information Quality and Political Engagement

Social media contributes to increasing political knowledge, political participation, and political success among young people, including women. Additionally, the use of social media fosters political discussion and engagement while facilitating access to political information. According to Cheng et al., (2020), social media plays a crucial role in enhancing political engagement, especially among young people and women, by providing broader access to information and strengthening political knowledge. Research shows that accurate and relevant information encourages active political participation, enabling women to engage more actively in political discussions and activities. However, according to Windsor, (2020), good information on social media can improve political engagement, but its effects are often small because many users tend to engage superficially or select information that aligns with their opinions. Therefore, by providing information that raises political awareness, social media and alternative media platforms (AMP) can enhance political participation. Accurate and relevant information can increase users' trust, including women, and encourage more active political involvement. Hence, maintaining this trust is crucial for social media to effectively promote inclusive political participation (Müller & Schulz, 2021).

H2. The quality of social media information has a positive and significant impact on political engagement.

Social media usage frequency and trust

Political trust strengthens the relationship between political participation and the frequency of social media use. The higher the trust in political institutions, the more effective the information obtained through social media becomes. Research by Su & Xiao, (2022) supports the idea that the frequency of social media use has a positive and significant impact on political trust. This is because actively using social media to search for political information and express opinions increases access to new perspectives, which in turn enhances individuals' trust in political institutions, especially across various social and cultural contexts. Additionally, the findings show that social media plays a crucial role in building political trust and citizen participation. The frequency of social media use specifically influences women's information consumption patterns. Their trust in social media increases as they are exposed to diverse information (Valenzuela et al., 2022). According to Gil de Zúñiga et al., (2021), discussions on social media platforms such as WhatsApp can improve political participation and women's trust in the media. Moreover, actively using social media mediates the impact of news and social media information on political participation and women's trust in the media.

H3. The frequency of social media use has a positive and significant impact on trust.

Social Media Usage Frequency and Political Engagement

Ferrucci et al., (2020) found that individuals who are more active on social media, particularly Facebook, tend to be more engaged in political activities. This study shows that social media use influences online political expression. Additionally, Rossini et al., (2021) emphasize that WhatsApp, as a platform for political discussion, increases political engagement through its usage intensity, enabling people to share information, converse, and build political awareness in the digital world. According to Schemer et al., (2021), social media has become not only a space for social interaction but also a strategic tool for women to voice their political opinions. Social media helps women expand their networks, boost their confidence, and participate in political activities. Digital platforms also play a vital role in providing broader access to information and encouraging women to take part in discussions and political activities. Higher frequency of social media use generally increases political awareness and engagement both directly and indirectly, allowing individuals to access political information, interact with others, and participate in various political activities.

H4. The frequency of social media use has a positive and significant impact on political engagement.

Social media political marketing activities and trust.

According to Kavanagh & Brown, (2020), political campaigns on social media can enhance trust in women by showcasing their achievements. This method helps change unfair gender perceptions and encourages calls for protection from online violence. It portrays women as capable and reliable individuals in the public sphere. Heavey et al., (2020) emphasize that politicians can use social media to promote women's achievements and advocate for gender issues. This strategy aims to build women's images as trustworthy figures in the public domain. Lakshmi et al., (2023) also found that political marketing on social media can increase trust in women by supporting relevant policies and utilizing technology to drive women's empowerment. Social media allows political leaders to promote gender issues, display empowered images of women, and enhance public trust in them. Overall, social media-based political marketing helps promote empowerment policies, change gender bias perceptions, and highlight women's achievements, making women more respected and reliable in the public sphere.

H5. Social media political marketing activities have a positive and significant impact on trust.

Social media political marketing activities and political engagement.

Well-planned political marketing activities on social media can drive greater political engagement, particularly among women. This strategy not only aims to improve political attitudes but also helps individuals participate actively in politics. As explained by Ohme, (2021), this approach is relevant when considering the factors that can strengthen such arguments. Yamamoto et al., (2020) state that social media provides many opportunities for women to engage in political activities because it can aid political marketing, increase access to information, encourage expression of opinions, and promote active participation. Additionally, Sinpeng, (2021) points out that initiatives like #FreeYouth can strategically use Twitter to promote pro-democracy campaigns involving women. People use social media to voice criticism, build public support, and facilitate broader political engagement. Overall, social media plays a crucial role in encouraging women's participation in politics, doing so by strengthening political attitudes, enabling participation, providing access to information, and strategically promoting expression through digital platforms.

H6. Social media political marketing activities have a positive and significant impact on political engagement.

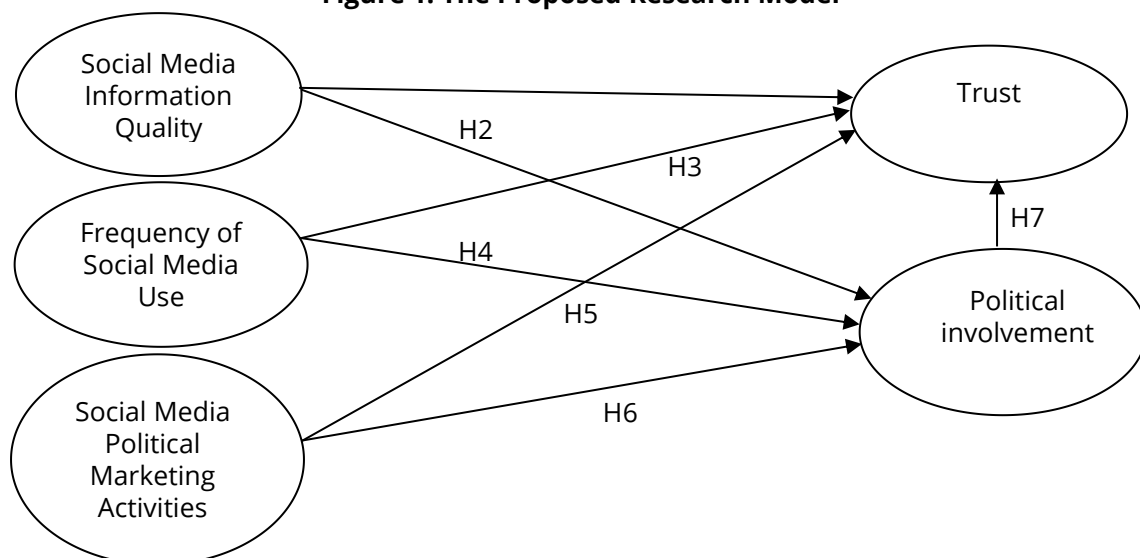
Trust and Political Engagement

Trust in social norms and technology has a significant impact on political engagement, including among women. Baber, (2020) states that political interest and awareness increase participation. Additionally, online communities and crowdfunding platforms are major drivers of women's political engagement. Ardanaz et al., (2023) argue that women can become more involved in politics by building trust through active political participation. Ultimately, these advances will encourage more just and sustainable governance. Holum, (2023) adds that building trust through successful participation initiatives can strengthen the relationship between the public and the government. By facilitating clear communication and providing easy access to digital political platforms, these initiatives encourage women's political involvement. Overall, this study indicates that trust in social norms, technology, and online platforms is a crucial component driving women to actively engage in politics. Effective communication and direct access to political platforms can enhance women's political engagement and help build more just and sustainable governance.

H7. Trust has a positive and significant impact on political engagement.

Based on the description of the research hypotheses (Figure 1), we can depict the research model and proposed hypotheses as follows.

Figure 1. The Proposed Research Model



METHOD

This study includes all female activists in North Luwu as part of the population. Since the entire population is unknown, we applied non-probability sampling for data collection. When the sample size cannot be accurately determined and is very large, the use of non-probability sampling is considered appropriate (Latan et al., 2021). Social media helped identify respondents through snowball sampling techniques. There were 300 respondents from North Luwu who agreed to participate in this study. However, we received only 250 responses. We excluded 50 incomplete responses in the initial analysis. Therefore, this study achieved a response rate of 83.33%. According to Baruch & Holtom, (2008), a response rate exceeding 15% is considered acceptable for survey methodologies. Thus, this study has collected 250 responses and meets all the requirements. Based on the information about the sample characteristics (Table 1), the sample consists of Gen Z women, with a frequency of social media usage of 2-3 times a day (0.376%). In general, social media usage can reach up to 80 times a day (Boer et al., 2021). Furthermore, the dominant duration of social media usage is 1-2 hours (0.496%), with the general usage range being between 1 and 2 hours (Hamid et al., 2022). WhatsApp, with 105 users (0.42%), is the most dominant social media platform used.

Table 1. Respondent Description

Variable	Cases(%)	Variable	Cases(%)
Frequency of Social Media Usage in One Day		Types of social media used	
Once a Day	32 (0.128%)	WhatsApp	105 (0.42%)
2-3 Times a Day	94 (0.376%)	Facebook	30 (0.12%)
4-5 Times a Day	55 (0.22%)	Instagram	79 (0.316%)
More than 5 Times a Day	69 (0.276%)	TikTok	36 (0.144%)
Duration of time spent using this social media			
Less than 1 hour	42(0.168%)		
1-2 hours	124 (0.496%)		
2-4 hours	72 (0.288%)		
More than 4 hours	12 (0.048%)		

Source: Primary processed data 2024

Justification of Analysis Method Selection

The Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method was used in this study because it considers two main factors, namely sample size and model complexity.

PLS-SEM is a more flexible method for handling data with a limited number of samples compared to Covariance-Based SEM (CB-SEM). With 250 respondents, this approach is more suitable because it does not require the assumption of normal data distribution and is able to provide more accurate estimates even though the sample size is not too large. This research model consists of several latent variables that are interconnected with several measurement indicators. Under these conditions, PLS-SEM is superior in handling complex models, especially those that are predictive and exploratory in nature. This method is able to estimate causal relationships without the need to assume small measurement errors, as with CB-SEM (Dash & Paul, 2021).

PLS-SEM is also better at dealing with multicollinearity issues and can look at both reflective and formative latent variables, which makes it the perfect method for this study. Therefore, PLS-SEM was chosen for this study based on how well it fits the characteristics of the data and the purpose of the analysis.

Item and measurement scale

In quantitative research, measurement and scales are crucial components that often influence the research outcomes. To ensure accuracy, measurement items must accurately represent the construct concept being studied. Previous empirical studies often reuse the same measurement items. Using existing measurement items is generally considered more efficient than creating new items, given the difficulty of developing new scales (Latan et al., 2021). We measured the quality of social media information, frequency of social media use, social media political marketing activities, trust, and political engagement using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Data collection procedure

This study collected data through several steps. First, the study translated the questionnaire content from English to Indonesian and back to English to ensure that the content was clear (Hamid et al., 2022). Second, after receiving the questionnaire, the researchers retranslated its content (Table 2). We conducted a pilot test of the final version of the questionnaire by distributing it to fifty people for preliminary data analysis. This method checks for mistakes in survey methods like method bias, response bias, and social desirability bias. The goal is to improve the quality of the survey, lower any biases that might affect the validity of our research findings (Latan et al., 2021), and make sure that the people who filled out the questionnaire understood it (Fulton & Kibby, 2017). Third, we conducted the main research by sending the questionnaire via email and social media, followed by text notifications to respondents. This method is widely regarded as one of the most effective ways to reach a large number of respondents at low cost in a short period of time (Latan et al., 2021; Hamid et al., 2022). We sent emails and text messages on social media to respondents daily during the study period to remind them and increase the response rate. To maintain data confidentiality, we assured respondents we would not reveal their names or identities. We collected data from September 2024 to January 2025.

Table 2. Measurement items

Construct	Loadings
<i>Social Media Information Quality (SMIQ) Adapted from Parsons et al. (1998), Barua et al. (2000); Sanchez-Villar dkk. (2017), (Hamid et al., 2022) $\alpha = 0.763$; CR = 0.847; AVE = 0.581</i>	
Information Diversity	0.736
Dynamic Content	0.762
Information Content	0.777
Up-to-date Information	0.773
<i>Frequency of Social Media Usage (FSMU) Adapted from kankanhalli et al., 2005; Yan & Davison, 2013) (Zha et al., 2018) $\alpha = 0.801$; CR = 0.870; AVE = 0.626</i>	
Frequently use social media for political information	0.760
Regularly follow political marketing content on social media	0.796
Use social media to monitor political campaigns	0.844
Spend time on social media for political topics	0.763
<i>Social Media Political Marketing Activities (SMPMA) Adapted from Kim and Ko (2010); Tatar and Eren-Erdogmus (2016). (Hamid et al., 2022) $\alpha = 0.744$; CR = 0.854; AVE = 0.662</i>	
Online Interactivity	0.846
Clear Social Media	0.786
Trends	0.807
<i>Trust (T) Adapted from Kim and Ko (2010); Tatar and Eren-Erdogmus (2016) (Hamid et al., 2022). $\alpha = 0.775$; CR = 0.870; AVE = 0.690</i>	
Social Media Security	0.829
Social Media Reliability	0.827

Social Media is Trustworthy	0.836
<i>Political Engagement (PE) Adapted from Sanchez-Villar et al. (2017);(Hamid et al., 2022)</i>	
$\alpha = 0.867$; CR = 0.909; AVE = 0.714	
Politics is very important to me	0.819
Political issues are important to me	0.837
Political issues are an important part of my life	0.868
Politics is personally important to me	0.855

Note: Social Media Information Quality (SMIQ); Frequency of Social Media Usage (FSMU); Social Media Political Marketing Activities (SMPMA); Trust (T); Political Engagement (PE).

Source: Stata, primary processed data 2024

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

This study uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) version 4 approach to test the hypotheses (see Figure 1). The PLS method can model the connections between all the hidden factors at the same time, which fixes mistakes in the structural model caused by measurement errors. We chose this method because of its predictive accuracy, especially in complex cases. Additionally, PLS has proven valuable in situations with limited available theory or when model specifications are difficult (James et al., 2024).

Here are the criteria for evaluating the structural model (outer model) using SEM-PLS:

- Conducting reliability testing using composite reliability values and Cronbach's alpha
- Factor loadings and the average variance extracted (AVE) value indicate convergent validity.
- The correlation between latent constructs and the square root of the AVE value indicates discriminant validity.

Next, we conducted reliability testing on the outer model to verify the accuracy, consistency, and precision of the instrument in measuring the constructs. Combining composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, and rho-c, we found that all three statistics were above the recommended value (>0.70) (James et al., 2024) for reliability. Therefore, Table 3 concludes that the information is reliable. In line with the convergent validity principle, we checked for convergent validity by making sure that the construct indicators, or observed variables, had high correlations. We compared the factor loadings with the practical rule threshold (>0.6) (Hamid et al., 2022). Since the AVE was greater than 0.50, convergent validity is considered acceptable. The discriminant validity was checked by James et al., (2024) who looked at the relationship between latent variables and the square root of the AVE. The convergent validity test showed that the factor loadings for each construct were higher than the practical rule (>0.60), and the AVE values for each construct were also higher than the practical rule (>0.50). Table 3 shows the results of the convergent validity test. We used two criteria to evaluate discriminant validity. First, we applied the technique from Fornell & Larcker, David, (1981). For each construct, the square root of the AVE value should be larger than the correlation between other constructs. The Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio is another new way we suggest you use to check the discriminant validity of variance-based SEM. The goal of this method is to address significant issues in testing discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). HTMT is more sensitive to detecting discriminant validity problems compared to other criteria. To make sure discriminant validity, the HTMT value between two constructs should be less than (<0.90). All of the variables in our study meet both of these requirements, as shown in Table 3.

Structural Model

The criteria used to evaluate the structural model (inner model) using SEM-PLS are as follows:

- For dependent constructs, we use R-squared.
- To determine the significance values, the bootstrapping procedure is applied, ensuring that the t-value is greater than (>1.96) and the significance level exceeds 5%
- To test the hypotheses put forward in this study, the bootstrapping method was used on the structural model evaluation (the inner model), which is shown in Table 4.

We use R^2 and Q^2 values for the dependent latent constructs to evaluate the structural model. According to Latan et al., (2021), an R^2 value of 0.75 generally represents a strong category, 0.50 represents a moderate category, and 0.25 represents a weak category. For Q^2 , a practical rule value >0 indicates that the model has predictive relevance, and a practical rule value <0 indicates that the model lacks predictive relevance.

The analysis results yield an R^2 value for each construct, with the construct reputation of Trust at 0.476. This indicates that social media information quality, frequency of social media use, and social media political marketing activities contribute 47.6% of the variability in trust, classifying the model as weak. However, the Q^2 value for trust is $0.457 > 0$, indicating that the model has predictive relevance. The construct value for political engagement is 0.388, which is greater than zero. Social media information quality, frequency of use, and political marketing activities on social media contribute 38.8% of the variability in political engagement, placing it in the moderate category. The model's predictive relevance is demonstrated by the Q^2 value of 0.341, which is greater than 0.

Table 3. Reliability, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
Social Media Information Quality (1)	<i>0.762</i>	0.687	0.649	0.613	0.456
Frequency of Social Media Usage (2)	0.542	<i>0.791</i>	0.839	0.704	0.667
Social Media Political Marketing Activities (3)	0.500	0.647	<i>0.813</i>	0.859	0.661
Trust (4)	0.486	0.558	0.654	<i>0.830</i>	0.620
Political Engagement (5)	0.382	0.561	0.533	0.511	<i>0.844</i>

Note: The values on the diagonal in italics are the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each factor. There are correlations between factors shown below the diagonal, and the HTMT1 Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio shown above the diagonal. The confidence interval does not include 1; HTMT90–Henseler et al. (2015).

Social Media Information Quality (SMIQ); Frequency of Social Media Usage (FSMU); Social Media Political Marketing Activities (SMPMA); Trust (T); Political Engagement (PE).

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	Relationships	Path coefficients	T Statistic	R ² Square	Q ²	p-Values	Decision
<i>Direct Effect</i>							
H1	SMIQ → T	0.162	2.758**			0.006**	Supported
H2	SMIQ → PE	0.018	0.233 ^{ns}			0.816 ^{ns}	Not Supported
H3	FSMU → T	0.170	2.210**			0.027**	Supported
H4	FSMU → PE	0.318	3.815**			0.001**	Supported
H5	SMPMA → T	0.463	6.542**			0.001**	Supported
H6	SMPMA → PE	0.184	1.784 ^{ns}			0.074 ^{ns}	Not Supported
H7	T → PE	0.206	1.975**			0.048**	Supported
<i>Indirect Effect</i>							
	SMIQ → T → PE	0.033	1.417 ^{ns}			0.157 ^{ns}	Not Supported
	FSMU → T → PE	0.035	1.348 ^{ns}			0.178 ^{ns}	Not Supported
	SMPMA → T → PE	0.095	1.967**			0.049**	Supported
	T			0.476	0.457		
	PE			0.388	0.341		
<i>Total Effect</i>							
	SMIQ → T	0.162	2.758**			0.006**	
	SMIQ → PE	0.051	0.728 ^{ns}			0.467 ^{ns}	
	FSMU → T	0.170	2.210**			0.027**	
	FSMU → PE	0.353	4.345**			0.001**	
	SMPMA → T	0.463	6.542**			0.001**	
	SMPMA → PE	0.279	2.942**			0.003**	
	T → PE	0.206	1.975**			0.048**	

Note: ** statistically significant at 5%; ns not significant. The practical rule for R-squared values is as follows: 0.75 for the strong category, 0.50 for the moderate category, and 0.25 for the weak category. The practical rule for Q² > 0 indicates that the model has predictive relevance, and the practical rule for Q² < 0 indicates that the model lacks predictive relevance.

Social Media Information Quality (SMIQ); Frequency of Social Media Usage (FSMU); Social Media Political Marketing Activities (SMPMA); Trust (T); Political Engagement (PE).

We used the bootstrapping method to calculate the path coefficients from the PLS test results to assess significance (Table 4). The analysis results show that social media information quality (H1) has a positive and significant effect on trust ($\beta = 0.162$; $p < 0.05$). Additionally, social media information quality (H2) has a positive but not significant correlation with political engagement ($\beta = 0.018$; $p > 0.05$). These findings suggest that although information delivered on social media can increase trust, its effect on women's political engagement is not as strong as expected. It is observed that frequency of social media use (H3) has a positive and significant effect on trust ($\beta = 0.170$; $p < 0.05$), and frequency of social media use (H4) also has a positive and significant effect on political engagement ($\beta = 0.318$; $p < 0.05$). These findings indicate that the more often a person uses social media, the greater the influence on political trust and engagement. Furthermore, political marketing activities through social media (H5) have a positive and significant effect on trust ($\beta = 0.463$; $p < 0.05$). However, political marketing activities on social media (H6) do not show a significant effect on political engagement ($\beta = 0.184$; $p > 0.05$). This finding indicates that although political marketing through social media can increase trust, its direct effect on women's

political engagement is more limited. Finally, trust (H7) shows a positive and significant influence on political engagement ($\beta = 0.206$; $p < 0.05$), which suggests that confidence can mediate the relationship between information quality, frequency of social media use, and political marketing activities with political engagement.

DISCUSSION

This study aims to evaluate the impact of information quality, frequency of use, and political marketing activities on social media on political engagement, with trust as a moderating factor. The analysis shows that the relationship between political marketing activities and trust has the highest coefficient value ($\beta = 0.463$, $p < 0.05$), which highlights the important role of social media-based political marketing in fostering trust. The results stress the theoretical importance of how the quality of information and activities on social media affect political participation and provide deeper insights into how trust as a moderating factor strengthens the relationship between political marketing and political engagement ($\beta = 0.206$, $p < 0.05$). This research is in line with the findings conducted by (Urbonavicius et al., 2021), which emphasized the importance of information quality in building trust on social media. However, in contrast to previous research, this study also shows that while information quality plays an important role in building trust, political marketing activities and frequency of social media use have a greater influence on political engagement. This is in line with the findings of Hamid et al., (2022) and Zagidullin et al., (2021), which highlight the importance of social media use in increasing political participation, although our study shows a more dominant role of political marketing in building trust. The study has limitations, such as a limited population scope and the lack of a longitudinal approach. Therefore, future research could expand the research design to include a more geographically and demographically diverse sample and adopt a longitudinal approach to understand the dynamic changes in political engagement influenced by social media. In doing so, further research can explore long-term effects and compare results across different segments of the population or different social media platforms.

This study demonstrates that information quality, frequency of use, and political marketing activities on social media enhance trust and women's political engagement. Trust is considered an important component that drives more active and inclusive political participation. The study provides several key insights. First and foremost, the information quality, frequency of use, and political marketing activities found on social media can increase trust. The findings of this study support Social Exchange Theory (SET), which emphasizes the importance of social exchange in building mutually beneficial relationships. In this context, accurate and relevant information quality is considered part of the social exchange that leads to increased trust. In addition, these findings also relate to the concept of relationship marketing orientation (RMO), which emphasizes the importance of building long-term and authentic relationships with audiences. Political marketing conducted through social media with a transparent and authentic approach can strengthen the relationship between politicians and voters and increase political engagement. Accurate, relevant, and reliable information increases trust in social media, leading to positive political relationships and engagement for women (Urbonavicius et al., 2021).

We found that information quality enhances trust and political engagement, but this relationship is not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.018$, $p > 0.05$). While useful information can increase trust, it does not necessarily have a direct impact on increasing political participation. Previous studies have shown that reliable and accurate information increases trust in social media as a source of political information (Feeney & Porumbescu, 2021). Although information quality can increase trust and political engagement, the findings show that this relationship is not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.018$, $p > 0.05$). This variability may be due to the more dominant influence of other variables, such as frequency of social media use and political marketing activities, which are shown to have a stronger impact on political engagement. In contrast, factors like political marketing activities and frequency of social media use have a more significant influence on political engagement. Research has shown that political marketing, particularly through authenticity-driven approaches like loyalty and transparency demonstrated by social media influencers, effectively builds audience trust (Audrezet et al., 2020). Therefore, political marketers should focus on crucial aspects such as information quality and technology-based political communication methods to further enhance women's political engagement.

Second, this study finds that social media usage positively impacts trust and political engagement. This study found that social media use has a positive impact on trust ($\beta = 0.170$, $p < 0.05$) and political engagement ($\beta = 0.318$, $p < 0.05$). These findings suggest that social media plays an important role in increasing political participation, particularly among women, by increasing their trust in the political process. Researchers Hamid et al., (2022), and Zagidullin et al., (2021) have not comprehensively discussed this finding before. Political strategies that leverage social media must consider this dynamic to achieve optimal results. Based on these findings, it is important for policymakers and politicians to pay attention to the importance of social media-based political marketing in increasing public trust, which in turn will encourage political engagement, especially among women. Political communication strategies based on information transparency and authentic interactions should be strengthened in order to build closer relationships with voters. For example, policies that promote the use of social media to reach more women and increase political awareness can be an important step to encourage more inclusive and active political participation. This suggests that while social media use can increase political participation, other factors may be more dominant in driving political engagement (Solihat, 2024).

Direct interaction with political issues and increased access to relevant information can achieve this. Furthermore, this study also finds that engaging in political marketing activities on social media enhances political trust. Political marketing on social media is considered an important part of building political trust and increasing political engagement, especially among women. Through clear, relevant, and targeted communication, the public and politicians can build strong relationships. Women activists use social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube to conduct political marketing activities. Social media functions as an effective tool to expand political reach and strengthen the relationship between politicians and voters, as these platforms are used to receive and share political information and engage in political persuasion aligned with political affiliations (Ahmad & Ahmad, 2020). However, these findings differ from Zagidullin et al. (2021), who emphasize that social media use plays more of a role in increasing political knowledge, while our study indicates that political marketing activities can directly increase political trust and engagement, especially among women. Moreover, this study shows that the coefficient value for the relationship between political marketing activities and trust in social media has the highest value among all tested relationships. The results of this study have important implications for policymakers and political practitioners. Policymakers should pay more attention to the importance of social media-based political marketing, especially to increase public trust, which in turn will encourage women's political participation. According to Park & Jiang, (2023), effective political marketing uses social media to deliver political messages that align with the values and interests of the public. In addition to increasing political participation, this strategy fosters public trust in the candidates and political parties they support.

Finally, this study finds that trust in social media is crucial for promoting political participation. Trust has proven to be an essential component in the process of filtering and evaluating political information on social media, as misinformation and distortions can reinforce biases and test the credibility of sources. The analysis indicates that trust has a significant positive influence on political engagement ($\beta = 0.206$, $p < 0.05$), which is consistent with previous findings showing that trust can increase individuals' political engagement on social media (Dubois et al., 2020). Additional findings reveal two significant indirect effects in the proposed research model. First, the level of trust influenced by social media usage affects political engagement ($\beta = 0.318$, $p < 0.05$). Second, the impact of trust indicates that political marketing activities conducted on social media have a positive correlation with political engagement ($\beta = 0.463$, $p < 0.05$). Trust is an important factor that not only makes people more likely to vote but also strengthens the link between key variables in this study's model, like political marketing activities and how often people use social media. However, this study has some limitations, such as the sample being limited to certain geographical areas and the lack of a longitudinal approach. Therefore, future research could include a more geographically and demographically diverse sample to understand the broader dynamics of political participation. In addition, a longitudinal approach could be applied to explore changes in political engagement influenced by social media over the long term. Future research could also investigate differences in the influence of political marketing across different social media platforms, as well as the social and political factors that influence individuals' political engagement.

This finding is in line with the research of Dubois et al. (2020), which shows that trust increases political engagement through social media. However, the results of this study extend

those findings by showing that trust increases political engagement and plays an important role as a moderating factor that strengthens the relationship between political marketing activities and political engagement.

Overall, this study emphasizes the important role of trust in strengthening the relationship between political marketing through social media and political engagement. The findings suggest that while information quality contributes to increased trust, factors such as political marketing activities and frequency of social media use have a greater influence on political participation. Therefore, to increase political engagement, especially among women, politicians and policymakers need to develop transparent, authentic, and social media-based political communication strategies. Thus, the trust built through political marketing can be the key to encouraging more active and inclusive political participation.

CONCLUSION

This research provides significant theoretical and practical contributions regarding the role of social media in increasing women's political engagement, particularly in North Luwu. Theoretically, this research creates a comprehensive model that explains how social media information quality, frequency of social media use, and political marketing activities conducted through social media influence trust and political engagement among women. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of trust as a mediator, particularly in gender-based politics. According to the study, accurate, relevant, and easily accessible information can enhance trust in social media as a source of political information. However, the findings indicate that other factors, such as the frequency of social media use and political marketing activities, have a stronger influence on political engagement levels. The analysis results show a positive and significant relationship between social media use, trust, and political engagement. This finding is also in line with social exchange theory (SET) and relationship marketing orientation (RMO), which emphasize that relationships built on the basis of trust have a greater impact on political behavior.

Practically, this study provides valuable insights for politicians, party leaders, and political marketing consultants. Political practitioners can utilize social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram to create relevant, transparent, and credible communication with women. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram in reaching women, as these platforms play a crucial role in creating relevant communication and improving transparency and credibility in the political process. According to the study's findings, politicians and decision-makers should leverage these social media platforms to encourage inclusive discussions, empower women, and boost their political participation. In addition, political marketing strategies should consider interactivity and more authentic communication to encourage women's active participation in the political process. Political marketing activities that involve transparent promotion and two-way communication can strengthen women's trust in political institutions.

However, the findings also show that, although political marketing activities on social media have an effect on political trust, no significant direct relationship was found with political engagement. Therefore, further research is needed to dig deeper into other factors that may influence women's political engagement.

This study has limitations, such as limited coverage of women activists in North Luwu. For future research, it is recommended to expand the sample by including respondents from various regions in Indonesia or developing countries in Southeast Asia to increase the generalizability of the findings. In addition, a qualitative approach can be applied to dig deeper into women's motivations in using social media for political engagement. Future research could also consider additional factors, such as digital literacy, e-democracy, and the influence of public figures on social media, which could enrich the understanding of women's political engagement.

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