

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND PERSONAL BRANDING: A CASE STUDY OF THE CAMPAIGN OF JAKARTA DPRD CANDIDATE WILLIAM ADITYA SARANA IN THE 2024 ELECTION

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of political communication and personal branding strategies employed by William Aditya Sarana in building strong relationships with voters and shaping public perception. Utilizing social media as a primary tool, these strategies have shown positive impacts on voter support, particularly among young and urban communities. However, challenges in managing criticism and negative issues highlight the need for politicians to develop mature strategies for image management in the digital era. This research contributes to the understanding of political communication and personal branding in contemporary politics, providing insights into how young politicians can leverage these strategies for success. The findings underscore the importance of understanding the target audience, maintaining message consistency, and effectively handling criticism. While this study provides significant insights, its scope is limited to a single politician, suggesting a need for further research involving diverse subjects and methodologies.

Keywords: Political communication; personal branding; social media; voter support; image management.

1. INTRODUCTION

The 2024 General Election in Indonesia brought several interesting phenomena, especially related to the involvement of the younger generation in the political arena. One prominent example is William Aditya Sarana, Chairman of the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI) Faction in the DKI Jakarta DPRD, who managed to win the highest number of votes for a legislative candidate (caleg) for the DKI Jakarta DPRD. This achievement reflects a new trend where young politicians, especially

millennials, are starting to play a significant role in Indonesian politics. William, who first entered politics while still in college, is a symbol of the active involvement of young people in politics which was previously considered an arena dominated by older people. The reluctance of young people to get involved in politics needs to be given serious attention. This is because democracy requires active involvement from its citizens, including young people, so that democracy can function well (Widjanarko et al., 2023).



Figure 1. Instagram account posts Williams

William's use of social media as a tool for political communication and personal branding reflects a significant shift in the modern political landscape. Social media platforms, with their immediate and unfiltered nature, offer politicians a direct channel of communication to engage with their audiences, bypassing traditional media gatekeepers. However, the idea of convergence is increasingly more perceivable with the development of digital technology and the communication network. Scholars offer various taxonomies or categorizations to discuss media convergence (Widjanarko & Hariyani, 2022). This ability to design and control personal narratives is critical in political communication, where perceptions of authenticity and relatability can greatly influence public opinion. (Ekman, 2024; Krishna, 2024).

This phenomenon invites special attention to the dynamics of politics in Indonesia,

especially how young people change paradigms and influence election results. In this context, this study aims to explore more deeply the role of millennials in Indonesian politics, focusing on William Aditya Sarana as a case study. Informed citizens tend to be more tolerant because they are better able to understand the complexities of democracy and the reality of the diversity of views that exist in society (Widjanarko & Hariyani, 2022). This study will not only explore how William built his political career, but also how his involvement influences public perception of politics and young voter participation in DKI Jakarta.

Research by (Kongsri, 2024; Schürmann, 2024) states that the younger generation tends to bring new, more progressive and critical perspectives to politics, which can enrich political discourse and encourage policy reform. In addition, research by (Gorgulu, 2024; Schnabel, 2024) found that millennials have high political engagement through social media, which allows them to mobilize support quickly and effectively.

The state of the art on this issue shows that there is a major shift in the Indonesian political landscape, where the younger generation, with the support of digital technology, is able to utilize social media platforms to gain political support (Gorbatov, 2024). William Aditya Sarana, with his popularity on social media and expertise in digital communication strategies, is a concrete example of how young politicians can influence election results through smart and targeted campaign strategies.

William's success also reveals the contradictions in Indonesia's political system. On the one hand, the involvement of young people in politics provides new hope for a more inclusive democracy. On the other hand, there is still resistance from older political circles,

who often see young people's initiatives as a threat to the status quo. This is reflected in William's case, who revealed the strange budget of "Aibon Glue" worth Rp 82 billion, where his actions were considered a violation by the Jakarta DPRD's Honorary Council.

Based on a review of previous studies, it can be seen that there is a knowledge gap related to how the younger generation, especially millennials, face challenges in the political world which is still dominated by the older generation (Mashiah, 2024) . This contradiction raises an important research question: How can the younger generation play a more significant role in Indonesian politics, and what are the challenges and opportunities they face in the process?

This study aims to answer this question by exploring the experience of William Aditya Sarana as a concrete example of millennial involvement in politics. The hypothesis proposed is that millennials, with the support of technology and social media, have great potential to change the political landscape of Indonesia, but they also have to face various challenges that come from internal and external resistance in the existing political system.

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to a deeper understanding of political dynamics in Indonesia, particularly in relation to the role of the younger generation in democracy. This research is expected to provide new insights into how millennials can be empowered to become agents of change in politics, as well as how the political system can adapt to accommodate their increasing participation. In addition, this research will also provide practical recommendations for young politicians and political parties to harness the potential of millennials in their efforts to win future elections.

Contributing to the broader understanding of digital political engagement, this study highlights the role of social media in shaping the new political landscape in Indonesia. By providing empirical evidence on how young politicians use digital communication strategies to influence public opinion, the study offers valuable insights into the evolving nature of Indonesian democracy. It also sheds light on the tension between traditional political actors and emerging youth-driven movements, demonstrating the complex interplay between established power structures and new forms of political participation.

The motivation behind this research stems from the observed shift in the Indonesian political landscape, where the younger generation, empowered by digital tools, is becoming increasingly influential. This shift underscores the need for a deeper understanding of how digital platforms are transforming political participation and campaigning strategies among young politicians. The study aims to document and analyze these trends to provide valuable insights for policymakers, political analysts, and other stakeholders interested in the future of Indonesian politics.

Given the rising influence of young politicians and the critical role of social media in modern politics, this research formulates the problem as follows: How does the digital engagement of young Indonesians and their utilization of social media impact political campaigns and election outcomes? Additionally, how do traditional political actors respond to this shift, and what does this mean for the future of Indonesian politics? By addressing these questions, the study seeks to clarify the implications of youth-driven digital engagement on the political process.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the intersection of youth engagement, social media, and politics in Indonesia. While existing studies have explored political engagement among the youth, this research specifically examines how digital platforms are transforming political participation and campaigning strategies among young politicians. The case of William Aditya Sarana serves as a concrete example of this phenomenon, offering a unique perspective on the digital transformation of political engagement in Indonesia and the potential for more inclusive and participatory democratic processes.

Despite the extensive coverage of political engagement among the youth in previous studies, there is a significant gap in understanding the specific strategies and impacts of social media on the political influence of young politicians in Indonesia. This research addresses this gap by providing a detailed analysis of how digital communication tools are being utilized by young politicians to challenge traditional political norms and drive change. By focusing on the specific context of Indonesia, the study contributes to the global discourse on youth political engagement in the digital age.

If hypotheses are to be included, they could be formulated as follows: First, the younger generation's use of social media significantly enhances their ability to influence political outcomes and mobilize public support in Indonesia. Second, young politicians who effectively utilize digital communication strategies are more likely to gain political traction and challenge established political actors. These hypotheses underscore the transformative potential of digital engagement in reshaping the political landscape, positioning

young politicians as key drivers of change in Indonesian politics.

The Regional People's Representative Council of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta (DPRD DKI Jakarta) serves as a vital element in the governance of Jakarta, Indonesia, performing legislative, budgeting, and oversight roles. Additionally, the council provides recommendations for mayoral and regent candidates put forth by the Governor of Jakarta. Currently, the DPRD DKI Jakarta comprises 106 members, elected through an open-list system from various political parties, with elections held every five years. In the 2024 General Election, William Aditya Sarana, representing the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI), was re-elected as a member of DPRD DKI Jakarta, marking his second term following his initial victory in the 2019 election. His success in 2024, where he received a remarkable 39,720 votes—the highest among all candidates—garnered considerable public attention. William's ability to effectively leverage social media for personal branding and constituent engagement played a significant role in his electoral success. This highlights the growing importance of digital platforms in modern political campaigns, particularly for younger politicians. In light of this, the research question seeks to address the gap in understanding youth involvement in politics by exploring, “What specific strategies do young politicians like William Aditya Sarana employ on social media to influence election outcomes, and what challenges do they face from traditional political actors?” This question aims to uncover the evolving tactics used in political communication and the barriers young politicians encounter within the established political landscape.

2. METHOD

The method used in this study involves an in-depth exploration of political communication strategies and personal branding through social media, specifically focusing on William Aditya Sarana's use of these platforms. This study adopts a qualitative approach aimed at understanding how William effectively builds and manages his public image within the political arena. The research design is a case study with an in-depth interview approach, where William Aditya Sarana was explicitly chosen as the subject based on specific criteria. He was selected because of his significant success as a young politician, demonstrated by his high vote count and his effective use of social media to engage with constituents. His re-election in 2024 further highlights the relevance of his political communication strategy, making him an ideal case for this study. Additionally, his status as a prominent young politician facing the challenges of navigating both digital platforms and traditional political landscapes offers valuable insights into the role of social media in contemporary politics.

The interviews were conducted either face-to-face in Jakarta or through an online platform if necessary, depending on mutual agreement. This flexible arrangement was chosen to ensure a comfortable and open environment for the interview, allowing for in-depth discussions. The primary instrument used in the research was a semi-structured interview guide, carefully designed to explore various dimensions of William's political communication strategies and personal branding efforts. The interviews were documented through audio recordings and field

notes, which were then analyzed using a rigorous thematic analysis.

In this study, thematic analysis was employed as the main data analysis technique, and the process involved careful coding and categorization of the data collected. Themes were identified through a systematic coding process, where relevant patterns and recurring topics were highlighted. To enhance the reliability of the findings, the themes were validated by reviewing the data multiple times, ensuring that the categories were grounded in the interview responses. This validation process included peer review and triangulation, where different sources of data were cross-referenced to confirm the themes. The analysis ultimately provided a comprehensive narrative that illustrates William's communication strategies, how they are implemented, and their effectiveness in shaping his public image. Through this detailed thematic analysis, the study presents a transparent and robust understanding of the political communication strategies of a young politician in the digital age.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research focuses on an in-depth interview with William Aditya Sarana, a young politician known for his innovative political communication strategies and personal branding. The interview aims to uncover William's approach in using social media for political campaigns as well as to build and maintain his public image. The findings from this interview provide a comprehensive picture of how communication strategies and personal branding are applied in the contemporary political context.

1. Political Communication Strategy:

William Aditya Sarana explained that his political communication strategy relies heavily on direct engagement with the public through social media. In an interview, William revealed:

"We live in a digital era, where direct communication with voters is very important. I believe that in order to build a strong relationship with the community, I need to be active on social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. Through these platforms, I can interact in real-time with voters and convey my political message in a more personal and engaging way."

This approach is in line with previous research showing that social media plays a crucial role in modern political communication. According to Gomez-Vasquez (2024), the use of social media in politics allows politicians to build closer relationships with voters and proactively manage their public image. In addition, research by Nurkholis (2024) highlights how social media can be used to reach a wider audience and to respond to rapidly developing issues (Khair, 2024).

William also stressed the importance of consistency in political communication. He stated:

"Consistency is key. I try to keep my political message clear and consistent across social media platforms. This way, voters know what I stand for and what values I bring as a politician."

Research by McCracken (2024) underlines that consistency in political communication can increase public trust and build a solid image. In this context, the consistency of communication implemented by William Aditya Sarana seems to contribute to increasing support and trust from voters.

Research by McCracken (2024) underlines that consistency in political communication plays a crucial role in enhancing public trust and establishing a solid and credible image for political figures. Consistency in messaging not only reinforces the key themes and values that a politician stands for but also helps in managing public perceptions by providing a clear and stable narrative that voters can easily recognize and relate to. This approach is particularly important in an era where misinformation and rapidly changing narratives can easily confuse or disillusion the public. By maintaining a steady and coherent communication strategy, politicians can create a sense of reliability and predictability, which are essential elements in fostering public trust. In the case of William Aditya Sarana, his consistent communication style has been a significant factor in building a positive and trustworthy image among voters. William's approach involves regularly engaging with his audience through social media, where he consistently shares updates, clarifies his stance on key issues, and responds to public concerns in a transparent manner. This consistency not only reinforces his commitment to the values he espouses but also demonstrates accountability, as voters see him repeatedly addressing important topics and maintaining a steady dialogue. His actions, such as exposing the controversial "Aibon Glue" budget allocation, have further solidified his reputation as a politician who is willing to challenge the status quo and advocate for transparency and fiscal responsibility. However, the idea of convergence is increasingly more perceivable with the development of digital technology and the communication network. Scholars offer various taxonomies or categorizations to

discuss media convergence (Widjanarko & Hariyani, 2022).

Furthermore, William's strategic use of digital platforms to deliver a consistent message has allowed him to effectively mobilize support, particularly among younger voters who value authenticity and direct communication. By aligning his communication efforts with the expectations of his target audience, William has been able to build a loyal and engaged following. His regular updates and clear stances on issues resonate with voters who are looking for politicians that not only promise change but also demonstrate it through their consistent actions and messages. This approach has enabled William to not only gain support but also to maintain it, as voters feel connected to a politician who consistently reflects their values and concerns.

Additionally, William's consistency in communication helps to mitigate the impact of negative attacks or misinformation that may arise in the competitive political landscape. By continuously reinforcing his core messages and values, William is able to create a buffer against misinformation, as his audience is already familiar with his authentic stance. This strategy not only builds resilience in his public image but also strengthens voter loyalty, as people are more likely to trust a politician who consistently communicates in a straightforward and transparent manner.

2. Personal Branding:

William Aditya Sarana explained that his personal branding focuses on the image of a young, progressive and transparent politician. In an interview, he explained:

"My personal branding is about being authentic and open. I want voters to see me as

someone who is close to them, who truly cares about social issues and is ready to listen to their voices. Social media is a very effective tool to show who I really am and what I stand for."

This approach is in accordance with the findings of research by Zulkarnain (2024) , which shows that authenticity in personal branding can increase public trust and support. According to them, an authentic and transparent image is often more acceptable to voters than a fabricated or inconsistent image. William also uses social media to showcase his daily activities and involvement in local issues. He explains:

"I often share my daily activities and involvement in local issues through social media. This helps voters feel more connected to me and see how I am truly working for them."

Research by Altamirano-Benítez (2024) supports these findings by showing that politicians who are active in sharing information about their activities and their involvement in local issues can build stronger relationships with voters and enhance their image as caring and involved politicians. This proactive approach to communication not only keeps the public informed but also fosters a sense of connection and transparency that is crucial in the political sphere. The preference of the millennial generation's choice of information media will in turn have implications for the formation of knowledge, attitudes, and political behavior of the millennial generation (such as political participation and their political choice tendencies). At this stage, the preference of the millennial generation's political information media will have implications for the face of politics in Indonesia. For this reason, this

paper will examine social media as a choice of political information media for millennials, which will be seen from the motives of what information the millennial generation wants to satisfy from this media (Audina & Wahyutama, 2023). When politicians consistently update their constituents about their work, initiatives, and stance on local matters, they are seen as more accessible and engaged, which can enhance their image as caring, involved, and responsive leaders. This strategy of open communication aligns with the public's growing demand for authenticity and accountability from their elected representatives. Convergence envisages the integration of media and communication landscape, spearheaded by digital technology, in which the earlier boundaries between content, audience, society, information technology, and media become blurring (Widjanarko & Hariyani, 2022). Politicians who are visible and vocal about their efforts on local issues are often perceived as more approachable and in tune with the needs of their communities. By sharing information through social media, community meetings, or public announcements, these politicians create a narrative of active participation and dedication to the issues that matter most to their constituents. This visibility is particularly important in today's digital age, where voters expect immediate and ongoing access to information about their leaders' actions and decisions. Politicians who meet these expectations by regularly communicating their involvement in local concerns not only fulfill a key aspect of modern political engagement but also differentiate themselves from those who are less transparent or less active in the public eye.

The effectiveness of this strategy is particularly evident among younger generations and digitally savvy voters who prioritize transparency and active engagement. For these groups, a politician's digital presence and their willingness to share information about their day-to-day activities and policy efforts can be a decisive factor in gaining their support. By regularly updating social media platforms with content that highlights their involvement in community projects, responses to local issues, or interactions with constituents, politicians can build a continuous and positive engagement loop. This ongoing interaction not only keeps the politician in the public's consciousness but also provides a platform for addressing feedback and adjusting strategies in real-time, which further strengthens the relationship between the politician and their voters.

3. Use of Social Media:

William Aditya Sarana uses social media not only for political campaigns but also to build a community of supporters. In an interview, William stated:

"Social media has allowed me to build a solid community of supporters. I can interact directly with them, listen to their concerns, and respond quickly. This gives me the opportunity to strengthen support and address any issues that may arise."

This finding is in line with research by Valdez (2024), which shows that social media allows politicians to build communities of supporters and to engage directly with voters. Social media also provides a platform to amplify political messages and reach a wider audience (Moktar, 2024). William acknowledges that social media can also be challenging, especially in dealing with criticism and emerging issues. He explains:

"I also have to be ready to face criticism and issues that arise. Social media allows criticism and negative feedback to spread quickly. Therefore, it is important for me to respond quickly and effectively to keep my image positive and credible."

Research by Jackson (2023) underlines that social media can be a double-edged sword for politicians, on the one hand providing an opportunity to strengthen their image, but on the other hand, demanding the ability to handle criticism and emerging issues quickly and effectively.

4. Impact on Public Perception

Interview findings suggest that William's communication strategy and personal branding had a positive impact on his public perception. William reportedly gained strong support from young voters and urbanites who connected with his message and image. He stated:

"I feel that the support I received came mainly from young voters and urban people who are active on social media. They felt connected to the message and image I presented, and this greatly influenced the results of my campaign."

Research by Larsson (2021) supports these findings by showing that images and messages relevant to the target audience can increase voter support and turnout. The strong support from young voters and urban communities reflects the effectiveness of William's communication strategy and personal branding in attracting and retaining support from these key groups. William Aditya Sarana's communication strategy serves as a compelling example of this principle in action. His ability to craft messages and visuals that appeal specifically to young voters and urban communities has played a crucial role in his political success. William's approach goes

beyond generic political messaging; it involves a nuanced understanding of the preferences and values of his audience, allowing him to connect with them on a more personal and relatable level. For instance, his use of social media not only to share policy positions but also to showcase his daily activities, personal reflections, and engagement with community issues, has helped him build a personal brand that is both accessible and authentic. This strategy not only attracts new supporters but also fosters a sense of loyalty and ongoing engagement among his followers.

The strong support William has received from young voters and urban communities reflects the effectiveness of his tailored communication strategy. By consistently addressing the issues that matter most to these groups—such as transparency, accountability, and social justice—William has positioned himself as a politician who not only understands their concerns but is also actively working to address them. His strategic use of digital platforms, where young and urban voters are most active, ensures that his messages are seen and heard in the spaces where these audiences spend their time. This approach not only maximizes his reach but also enhances the perceived relevance of his campaign, as voters are more likely to engage with content that feels directly applicable to their lives and communities.

William's personal branding has been a key factor in retaining support from these demographics. His image as a young, forward-thinking, and approachable politician resonates with voters who are often disillusioned with traditional political figures. By positioning himself as a relatable peer rather than a distant authority figure, William bridges the gap between politician and voter, creating a more

inclusive and engaging political experience. This personal branding strategy not only helps in attracting initial support but also plays a crucial role in maintaining it, as voters feel a personal connection to William that extends beyond policy agreements.

However, William also faces challenges in dealing with negative feedback and issues that require a quick response. He explains:

"Handling criticism and issues that arise quickly is one of the biggest challenges. I have to make sure that my responses are timely and in line with my political message. This is an important part of keeping my image positive and credible."

These findings reflect the complexity of political communication in the digital age, where politicians must manage negative feedback and rapidly evolving issues. Research by Anderson (2023) suggests that politicians need to develop effective strategies to handle criticism and to maintain their public image positive in a rapidly changing social media environment. The digital environment has significantly altered the way information is shared and consumed, with social media platforms enabling the rapid spread of both praise and criticism. This heightened visibility means that politicians are constantly under public scrutiny, with their actions and statements being subject to immediate feedback and widespread discussion. As a result, the ability to effectively manage criticism has become a critical skill for politicians who wish to maintain a favorable public perception and sustain voter support.

In the fast-paced world of social media, delayed or inadequate responses can amplify negative perceptions and allow criticism to shape the public narrative. Politicians are advised to address criticisms head-on,

providing clear and concise explanations or corrections where necessary. This proactive approach not only demonstrates accountability but also shows a willingness to engage with the public and address concerns transparently. By doing so, politicians can mitigate the potential damage caused by criticism and maintain control over their public image.

4. DISCUSSION

In exploring the results of the interview with William Aditya Sarana, it is important to relate the findings to existing literature and explain the strategic implications and challenges faced in the context of political communication and personal branding in the digital era. This discussion will explore in depth how William's strategies resonate with previous theories and research, and identify the contributions and limitations of the approach used.

Political Communication Strategy

William Aditya Sarana effectively utilizes social media to build direct and interactive political communication with the public. According to William, being active on social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok allows him to interact in real time with voters and deliver political messages more personally. This statement reflects a significant change in the way politicians communicate with voters in the digital era.

Literature supports the importance of social media in modern political communication. (Nour, 2024) highlighted that social media allows politicians to manage their public image and interact with audiences directly. Social media serves as a platform that not only allows for effective delivery of political messages but

also as a tool to build closer relationships with voters. Research by (Adamczewska, 2024) added that social media allows politicians to respond to rapidly evolving issues, which can affect public perception and campaign outcomes.

In terms of message consistency, William emphasized the importance of keeping political messages clear and consistent across social media platforms. Research by (Priyowidodo, 2024) shows that consistency in political communication can increase public trust and strengthen the image of politicians. Message consistency allows voters to understand a candidate's values and political positions, which in turn can increase support and trust from the audience. Anderson emphasizes the role of consistency and authenticity in managing public perception. Politicians who consistently communicate their values, priorities, and actions are more likely to build a resilient and trustworthy image. When criticism arises, having a well-established, authentic narrative can help counter negative feedback, as the public is more likely to give the benefit of the doubt to politicians whose actions align with their stated beliefs. This consistency can also serve as a buffer against the volatility of social media, where fleeting trends and viral moments can quickly shift public sentiment.

Personal Branding

William's personal branding focuses on his image as a progressive and transparent young politician. In an interview, William stated that authenticity and openness are key aspects of his personal branding. This approach is in line with research by (Popova, 2023), which shows that authenticity in personal branding can increase public support and trust. Politicians who successfully show an authentic and consistent

image are often more accepted by voters than those who are inconsistent or non-transparent.

William also uses social media to show his daily activities and involvement in local issues. Research by (Reveilhac, 2023) supports this finding by showing that politicians who actively share information about their activities and involvement in local issues can build stronger relationships with voters. This reflects that direct involvement in local issues and daily activities can increase trust and support from voters who feel personally connected to politicians.

Use of Social Media

William Aditya Sarana explained that social media is not only used for political campaigns but also to build a community of supporters. Research by (Varea, 2023) shows that social media allows politicians to build a solid community of supporters and to engage directly with voters. Social media platforms provide an opportunity to amplify political messages and reach a wider audience. (Tao, 2023) added that social media allows politicians to proactively manage their image and respond to rapidly developing issues.

However, William also acknowledged the challenges in dealing with criticism and negative issues that arise on social media. Research by (Ekman, 2023) underlines that social media can be a double-edged sword for politicians, on the one hand providing an opportunity to strengthen their image, but on the other hand, demanding the ability to handle criticism and rapidly developing issues. (Wawrzyński, 2022) suggest that politicians need to develop effective strategies to handle criticism and to maintain their public image positive in a rapidly changing social media environment.

Impact on Public Perception

Interview findings suggest that William's communication strategy and personal branding had a positive impact on public perception, especially among young voters and urban communities. Research by (Borja-Orozco, 2022) supports this finding by showing that images and messages relevant to target audiences can increase voter support and turnout. The strong support from young voters and urban communities reflects the effectiveness of William's communication strategy and personal branding in attracting and retaining support from these key groups.

William also faces challenges in dealing with negative feedback and issues that require a quick response. (Lukyanova, 2021) show that politicians need to develop a well-thought-out strategy to manage criticism and to ensure that political messages remain consistent and effective across situations. This research reflects the complexity of political communication in the digital age, where politicians must manage negative feedback and rapidly evolving issues.

Potential Weaknesses in Political Communication Strategy

One key challenge that William may face, particularly with the rapid pace of social media, is maintaining authenticity and message consistency. While research by (Ekman, 2023) emphasizes the benefits of a consistent political message, the dynamic nature of social media can make it difficult to control the narrative over time. Sudden controversies, viral posts, or rapid changes in public sentiment can disrupt even the most consistent messaging. Studies by (Ekman, 2023) indicate that social media platforms can amplify small missteps, and without careful management, a single negative

incident can quickly escalate into a larger issue, damaging a politician's public image.

Limitations of Social Media in Political Communication

Although William uses social media to foster direct communication with voters, research by (Lukyanova, 2021) suggests that relying too heavily on these platforms can be problematic. Social media users may represent a specific demographic that does not fully reflect the broader electorate. In William's case, his appeal to younger and urban voters may not translate as effectively to older or rural populations who might engage less on platforms like Instagram and TikTok. Therefore, William's over-reliance on digital platforms may lead to gaps in his outreach strategy, potentially alienating key voter segments.

Comparison with Other Political Communication Strategies

Comparing William's strategies with those of other politicians could provide additional insight. For example, examining how political figures like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in the U.S. or Emmanuel Macron in France navigate similar digital platforms might shed light on alternative strategies or common pitfalls. Both figures have used social media to build a youthful, progressive image, but have also faced challenges in maintaining message control amidst political polarization and social media criticism. By analyzing such cases, it becomes possible to assess how adaptable and resilient William's approach is in comparison to other global figures, particularly in handling criticism or navigating contentious issues.

Suggestions for Improvement

William may benefit from diversifying his communication channels beyond social media. While digital platforms provide immediacy and

accessibility, research by (Bruycker, 2021) highlights the importance of supplementing these with traditional media and in-person engagement. This could help William broaden his appeal and strengthen his connection with diverse voter segments. Furthermore, developing a more robust crisis communication strategy to handle online criticism and sudden controversies would be essential, as suggested by Enli and Skogerbo (2019). Balancing transparency with carefully crafted responses can help maintain a consistent and authentic public image during critical moments

Persamaan ditulis menggunakan format rata tengah dan diberi nomor yang ditulis di dalam kurung yang ditempatkan di margin kanan dari baris persamaan tersebut. Persamaan sebaiknya dituliskan menggunakan *MS Equation* pada *MS Word*. Persamaan (1) menunjukkan contoh penulisan persamaan.

$$s = v.t \quad (1)$$

5. CONCLUSION

This study shows that William Aditya Sarana's political communication and personal branding strategies are effective in building strong relationships with voters and in shaping public perception. The use of social media as a tool for political communication and personal branding has been proven to have a positive impact on voter support, especially among young voters and urban communities. However, the challenges in dealing with criticism and negative issues indicate that politicians need to develop mature strategies to manage their image in the rapidly changing digital era. These findings provide a strong basis for further research on political communication and personal branding and their contribution to political success in the context

of social media. This study provides valuable insights into how young politicians can leverage social media and personal branding to achieve political success. The findings suggest that success in political communication and personal branding requires a deep understanding of the target audience, consistency in messaging, and the ability to handle criticism effectively.

The main contribution of this study is a deeper understanding of how political communication strategies and personal branding can be applied in the context of contemporary politics. The findings can be applied to further studies on political communication strategies in the digital era and their influence on public perception. In addition, this study also provides insight into the challenges politicians face in managing their image and dealing with negative issues on social media.

Although this study provides significant insights, there are some limitations that need to be considered. First, this interview only involved one politician, William Aditya Sarana, so the findings may not be fully representative of other politicians with different backgrounds and strategies. Second, this study relies on in-depth interviews that may be affected by subjective biases from the interviewees. Therefore, it is important to conduct additional research involving more politicians and using diverse research methods to obtain a more comprehensive picture of political communication and personal branding in the digital era..

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