

**POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND POP CULTURE: THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE COMMUNICATION STYLE OF POLITICAL CANDIDATES**

**KOMUNIKASI POLITIK DAN BUDAYA POP: PENGARUH MEDIA SOSIAL TERHADAP GAYA KOMUNIKASI KANDIDAT POLITIK**

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**ABSTRACT**

Social media has transformed the contemporary political communication landscape, making it a key arena for candidates to build rapport with the public. In Indonesia, with over 70% of the population using social media and the dominance of platforms like TikTok and Instagram, social media serves not only as a space for entertainment but also as a political battleground. This phenomenon has given rise to the integration of popular culture—memes, viral music, slang, and even fashion—into candidates' communication styles, particularly to appeal to the younger generation, who make up the majority of users. This study uses a narrative review approach to literature from 2010–2025 from Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The analysis highlights themes of mediatization, personalization, populism, and cultural hybridity. Findings show that social media encourages candidates to appear more personal, casual, and relatable through humor, storytelling, and popular culture symbols. This strategy is effective in increasing engagement, but risks diminishing credibility if the substantive message is ignored.

**Keywords:** political communication, social media, popular culture, political candidates

**ABSTRAK**

Media sosial telah mengubah lanskap komunikasi politik kontemporer, menjadikannya arena utama bagi kandidat untuk membangun kedekatan dengan publik. Di Indonesia, dengan penetrasi pengguna lebih dari 70% populasi dan dominasi platform seperti TikTok dan Instagram, media sosial tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai ruang hiburan, tetapi juga sebagai medan pertarungan politik. Fenomena ini memunculkan integrasi budaya populer—meme, musik viral, bahasa gaul, hingga fashion—dalam gaya komunikasi kandidat, khususnya untuk menarik perhatian generasi muda yang menjadi mayoritas pengguna. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan narrative review terhadap literatur 2010–2025 dari Scopus, Web of Science, dan Google Scholar. Analisis menyoroti tema mediatization, personalization, populism, dan cultural hybridity. Temuan menunjukkan media sosial mendorong kandidat tampil lebih personal, kasual, dan relatable melalui humor, storytelling, serta simbol budaya populer. Strategi ini efektif meningkatkan engagement, namun berisiko menurunkan kredibilitas bila pesan substantif diabaikan.

**Kata Kunci:** komunikasi politik, media sosial, budaya populer, kandidat politik

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The development of social media has made it a major arena in contemporary political communication. In Indonesia, approximately 72.7% of the total population or equivalent to 207 million people will have used social media by 2025 (Goodstats, 2025). This figure confirms that social media is a strategic communication channel for political candidates in reaching constituents. Furthermore, the survey shows that 57% of Indonesian people use social media as a general news source, and 40% of them make social media their main source of news (The Jakarta Post, 2025). This shows that social media is no longer just a space for entertainment, but has also transformed into a space for political discourse.

One important dimension of this development is the emergence of pop culture in digital political communication. Indonesia has become a country with a high number of

users. The most TikTok in the world, namely 157.6 million active users as of July 2024 (Kompas Tekno, 2024). TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter have now become primary platforms for the dissemination of popular culture elements, such as memes, music, slang, fashion, and other entertainment trends, which are then integrated into political communication. A Katadata Insight Center survey also shows that 71.6% of the younger generation (Gen Z and Millennials) access the profiles of presidential and vice-presidential candidates via online media, while 66.9% via social media (Katadata Insight Center, 2024). This fact confirms that popular culture circulating on social media has a significant influence on the formation of political perceptions, especially among young voters.

This phenomenon has also encouraged political candidates to adopt a populist, casual, and popular culture-based communication style to connect with voters. Pop culture using memes, popular music, or TikTok trends can make candidates appear more relatable and connected to everyday life. However, this strategy has also sparked debate: whether integrating popular culture strengthens political credibility or diminishes the seriousness of the political message.

**Table 1.**  
**Statistics on Social Media Usage and Popular Culture in Indonesia**

| Aspect                                             | Statistical Data / Figures                            | Year & Source                  |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Social media penetration                           | 72.7% of Indonesia's population (207 million people)  | Goodstats (2025)               |
| Social media as a news source                      | 57% as a general news source; 40% as a primary source | The Jakarta Post (2025)        |
| TikTok active users                                | 157.6 million (largest in the world)                  | Kompas Techno (2024)           |
| Increase in TikTok users since the pandemic        | 17% (2020) → 30% (2021) → 40% (2022)                  | Katadata (2022)                |
| Access candidate information (Gen Z & Millennials) | 71.6% via online media; 66.9% via social media        | Katadata Insight Center (2024) |

Source: From Several References

The data in Table 1 shows how social media, particularly TikTok, has become a dominant platform for political communication and popular culture in Indonesia. With a penetration of over 70% of the population, social media is not only a communication channel but also a political battleground influenced by popular culture. The integration of pop culture elements into political candidate communications is inevitable, especially to attract the attention of young voters who predominantly access political information through online and social media.

Studies on political communication have been dominated by discussions of issue framing, campaign strategies, and candidate personalization. While these studies provide important insights into how political messages are constructed, packaged, and disseminated to audiences, this focus tends to emphasize political dynamics within institutional and elite frameworks, while the cultural dimensions inherent in political communication practices are often treated as secondary elements.

In the context of the development of social media, emerging phenomena actually demonstrate that politics is increasingly difficult to separate from popular culture. Political candidates are now required not only to convey their vision, mission, or work programs, but also to present themselves in a format that aligns with the popular cultural language that

dominates the digital space. Memes, viral music, slang, and even TikTok trends are no longer simply entertainment but have become crucial instruments in shaping political imagery and connecting candidates with young voters. However, research explicitly examining how elements of popular culture are integrated into political candidates' communication styles remains very limited.

Additionally, there is a gap in studies linking perspectives mediatization of politics with a frame cultural studies. Mediatization highlights how media logic influences political behavior, while cultural studies emphasize how popular cultural practices shape identities, meanings, and power relations. Unfortunately, there is little research that bridges these two perspectives to understand how social media, as a cultural and political space, shapes candidates' communication strategies. This is the research gap that needs to be filled: a deeper examination of how popular culture integrates into digital political communication, particularly in candidates' communication styles on social media.

This research aims to explain how social media shapes the integration of popular culture into the communication styles of political candidates. This focus is important because it allows for a more comprehensive analysis of shifting political communication patterns in the digital era, where politics is no longer formal, rigid, and bureaucratic, but rather blended with more casual, popular cultural expressions that are readily accepted by the wider public.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of political communication science by enriching understanding of the relationship between politics and popular culture. This study lies at the intersection of political communication and cultural studies, thus opening up new conceptual space for understanding the dynamics of digital politics. Thus, this research not only broadens theoretical horizons but can also help formulate new analytical models that integrate media logic, popular cultural practices, and political candidates' communication strategies.

Practically, this research offers insights for political candidates and their campaigns in designing more effective digital communication strategies. By understanding how elements of popular culture shape public perception, candidates can adapt their communication styles to better engage voters, particularly the younger generation, who are highly active on social media. This is relevant not only in the context of electoral campaigns but also in building long-term political communication that is more participatory, interactive, and oriented towards public needs.

Based on the research gaps that have been described, this research is formulated through the following main questions: **RQ: How does social media shape the integration of popular culture elements into the communication style of political candidates?** This main question seeks to explore the processes, forms, and implications of the use of popular culture in digital political communication. With this focus, the research is expected to provide a deeper explanation of how the interaction between politics, social media, and popular culture occurs, and how this influences candidate communication strategies in the contemporary era.

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1. Research Approach

This research uses an approach/narrative review which aims to map relevant literature, explore conceptual debates, and analyze theoretical and empirical trends in the study of social media-based political communication. A narrative review was chosen because it allows researchers to connect various findings scattered throughout the literature, establish patterns, and identify underexplored research gaps. This approach is also more flexible in examining interdisciplinary issues, particularly at the intersection of political communication and popular culture, compared to the more rigid systematic review approach.

## **2.2. Data source**

The literature reviewed was sourced from internationally renowned academic databases, namely Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. These three databases were selected based on their broad publication coverage, academic quality, and relevance in the fields of communication science, political science, and cultural studies. To strengthen relevance to the research topic, a literature search was conducted using keywords including: political communication, social media, popular culture, mediatization, And candidate communication style. This combination of keywords allows researchers to access literature that focuses not only on political communication in general, but also on the integration of popular culture elements into candidates' communication styles on social media.

## **2.3. Literature Criteria**

To ensure the research focus remains intact, the literature selected is determined based on certain criteria. First, articles published within the last ten to fifteen years (2010–2025) are selected, considering that this period represents the growth of social media as a primary arena for political communication. Second, the selected literature discusses the communication practices of political candidates on social media, with major platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook. Third, prioritized articles are publications highlighting the integration of popular culture into communication strategies, whether in the form of memes, music, slang, fashion, or other digital trends. With these criteria, the literature obtained is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the phenomenon being studied.

## **2.4. Analysis Stages**

The analysis was conducted through several systematic stages. The first stage was the identification of the main themes that emerged in the literature, such as mediatization, personalization, populism, and cultural hybridity. These themes are seen as a conceptual framework that can explain how social media and popular culture shape the communication styles of political candidates. The second stage is narrative synthesis, which is the process of connecting theory, case studies, and empirical phenomena to develop a more integrative understanding. Narrative synthesis not only describes existing findings but also emphasizes how elements of popular culture are articulated in political communication practices and their implications for political communication theory and digital campaign strategies.

# **3. RESULTS**

## **3.1. Social Media as a Space for Political Representation**

Social media has transformed the landscape of political communication, becoming a vital space for political representation. The literature indicates that this transformation has facilitated political candidates in constructing and negotiating their public images more effectively compared to traditional media. Candidates utilize social media to foster emotional closeness with their audiences through interactive communication that is personal and direct, diverging from the formal, hierarchical, and predominantly one-way communication patterns present in traditional political discourse (Stromer-Galley et al., 2020; Grow & Ward, 2013; Luebke & Engelmann, 2022).

Research demonstrates that the strategic use of social media enables candidates to portray their daily lives and share personal anecdotes, creating a relatable and humanized public persona. Through platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, candidates engage their followers in a manner reminiscent of familial ties or friendship, fostering a sense of closeness and accessibility (Rossini et al., 2018; Rossini et al., 2020; . These narratives allow voters to perceive candidates not merely as distant political figures but as familiar allies, enhancing the candidates' perceived authenticity (Klinger & Svensson, 2014; Luebke & Steffan, 2023). This

nuanced portrayal contrasts with the conventional expectations of political representation, wherein candidates are often seen through a formal and detached lens.

However, the use of social media for political representation raises concerns about the potential for incivility and polarization. Studies indicate that social media amplifies instances of incivility, as evidenced during the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election when candidates like Donald Trump employed mockery and direct attacks against opponents, resulting in heightened polarization among voters (Rossini et al., 2020; Tucker et al., 2018). This dual nature of social media—as a platform for authentic engagement and as a breeding ground for divisive rhetoric—complicates the landscape of political communication and representation.

The mechanisms at play involve a careful balance between mobilizing voters through emotional and engaging content and navigating the pitfalls of incivility that can arise from direct interaction. Research highlights that while effective political campaigns on social media may prioritize voter mobilization, there exists a risk of alienating parts of the electorate if discourse devolves into hostility (Ohme, 2019; Zhang et al., 2025). Thus, candidates must strategically manage their online personas and communications, keenly aware of how they might be interpreted in the broader context of public political discourse.

As social media continues to evolve, its impact on political representation will deepen, making it imperative for political candidates to innovate in their approaches to engagement through these platforms. The shift towards a more informal, accessible mode of communication presents both opportunities for candidates to enhance public engagement and challenges regarding the management of public discourse (Feezell, 2017; Zebib, 2022).

### **3.2. Integration of Popular Culture in Political Communication**

The integration of popular culture into political communication strategies has become a significant phenomenon, reflecting a shift in how candidates engage with the electorate, particularly in age-dominant spheres such as social media. One prevalent mechanism involves the adoption of humor as a communication tool, which serves to entertain and simplify complex political issues, fostering greater engagement among voters. Political humor has been shown to captivate audiences and transform political discourse into a more palatable format that can encourage participation and mobilization (Gulevich & Kalashnik, 2023). Through humor, political messages can gain traction, highlighting the importance of making political narratives accessible to broader demographics, particularly younger audiences who often use social media as their primary information source (Birthisel et al., 2022).

Employing storytelling techniques is another essential strategy within popular culture-infused political communication. Campaigns like that of Australia's GetUp! have successfully utilized narrative structures to foster emotional connections with their constituents. By framing political issues within compelling stories, candidates can invoke empathy and moral urgency, effectively motivating collective action and community engagement (Chang, 2025). This aligns with findings suggesting that storytelling facilitates emotional resonance and cognitive processing of political messages, allowing for an easier understanding of complex themes (Vromen & Coleman, 2013; Omoyajowo et al., 2024). Moreover, digital platforms have amplified this effect, enabling the rapid spread of politically charged narratives often underpinned by popular cultural references (Thorbjørnsrud, 2024).

Candidates increasingly incorporate elements of popular culture such as music and fashion to project a relatable image, thereby broadening their appeal. There is a growing trend of using contemporary clothing styles that resonate with youth culture, aiming to symbolize authenticity and alignment with voters' values. This form of representation cultivates a sense of belonging among specific demographic groups and reflects a nuanced approach to political identity formation (Yan et al., 2024; Genova, 2020). By tapping into the aesthetics of global fandoms—whether it be K-pop or comic book franchises—politicians leverage familiar

touchpoints to establish a connection with diverse groups within the electorate (Terang et al., 2023; Кондратенко, 2019).

Furthermore, the specificity of political humor and its impact can vary across different cultural contexts, enriching the landscape of political communication. Research indicates that humor in political discourse can serve as a double-edged sword, both empowering and challenging existing power structures, as observed in various countries' political landscapes (Özdil, 2024; Narongrach, 2025). This underscores the versatility of humor as a communicative strategy and its ability to engage critically with societal norms and expectations.

In conclusion, the integration of popular culture into political communication is not merely an adjunct practice but a transformative approach that aligns political messaging with contemporary cultural touchstones. Through emotions conveyed via humor and storytelling, along with the deployment of symbols familiar to diverse communities, candidates can craft narratives that resonate deeply with the electorate, ultimately enhancing engagement and participation in the political process.

### **3.3. Influence on Engagement and Public Perception**

The integration of popular culture into political messaging significantly affects public engagement and perceptions, especially among younger voters. Research indicates that political content incorporating elements of popular culture garners more interactions—such as likes, shares, and comments—compared to traditional political messaging. This trend is particularly pronounced among younger demographics, who tend to be more adept at navigating the digital landscape and aligning their political preferences with cultural identities that resonate with their interests (Zúñiga et al., 2014; Poorrezaei et al., 2023; . The blending of politics with entertainment can lead to elevated engagement levels, as younger voters often evaluate political candidates through enjoyable and culturally relevant communication experiences (Poorrezaei et al., 2023; Chang & Wu, 2022).

However, this approach to political engagement has ambivalent implications. While entertainment-focused strategies can broaden political outreach and deepen engagement among younger voters, they also risk trivializing important issues, creating a perception that politics is merely a form of entertainment rather than a serious endeavor requiring civic responsibility (Rojas et al., 2016). As Zúñiga and Valenzuela highlight, the nature of social media and the informal tone of online discourse can exacerbate attitudes towards political leaders and issues, leading to a divide between engagement and the meaningfulness of the discourse (Zúñiga et al., 2014; Zúñiga & Valenzuela, 2010). The challenge lies in ensuring these messages retain substantive qualities, avoiding the potential pitfalls of oversimplification and commodification of essential political matters (Zúñiga et al., 2014; Sohal & Kaur, 2018).

Moreover, digital engagement strategies, such as relationship marketing utilized in political contexts, present both opportunities and challenges. Political parties must manage the delicate balance of engaging the electorate through social media platforms while preserving the integrity of their messages (Parsons & Rowling, 2015). The effectiveness of these strategies can significantly vary based on the perceived personal impact of political issues, which further emphasizes the complexities of modern political communication (Poorrezaei et al., 2023; Muzakkir & Bailusy, 2023). Thus, while integrating popular culture into political messaging can enhance public engagement and broaden reach, it is crucial to ensure that it does not dilute the seriousness of political discourse or mislead voters regarding the substantive issues at stake.

### **3.4. Differences Between Context and Platform**

The integration of popular culture into political communication on social media platforms reveals significant differences in context and usage. Each platform offers unique features and cultural dynamics that influence how political content is presented and received.

For instance, TikTok stands out for its emphasis on humor-based political content, viral trends, and accessible challenges. This platform leverages a short-form video format that allows political candidates to utilize visual elements and audio to rapidly engage users, fostering an entertaining and relaxed environment where political messages can be delivered effectively. The format's inherent appeal encourages a participatory culture, enabling users to contribute content and engage with political discourse through formats that resonate with younger audiences (Davis et al., 2018; Abdelbagi, 2023). Research indicates that the humorous and light-hearted nature of TikTok can enhance users' engagement with political content, making it more approachable for those who might be reluctant to engage with conventional political narratives (Heiss, 2022; .

Conversely, Instagram serves as a platform focused on visual branding, where candidates often curate an aspirational image through high-quality photos, reels, and stories. The visual-centric nature of Instagram enables candidates to portray aspects of their personality, lifestyle, and fashion, reinforcing their public image and relatability (Mohamed, 2019; Lalancette & Raynauld, 2017). Such a strategy is particularly effective in establishing an emotional connection with voters, as aesthetic presentation can enhance brand equity and personal branding, which is crucial in a highly visual and competitive electoral landscape (Samatan et al., 2024; Park & Namkung, 2022). The interaction on Instagram tends to be more mediated through carefully composed visuals, implying that political messages are strategically crafted to evoke specific sentiments and responses from the audience (Wibisono, 2023).

In contrast, Twitter (or X) is primarily characterized as a platform for real-time discussions, political debates, and the dissemination of information, including memes that often carry significant political messages. Its text-based format allows candidates to engage in serious discourse, although humor remains a popular tactic to reach users (Heiss & Matthes, 2019; Dimitrova & Matthes, 2018). Twitter's features for immediate feedback and interaction create a dynamic environment where political candidates can react to ongoing events and engage in direct conversations with constituents. Studies suggest that humor, even in more serious political discussions, can reduce barriers to participation and stimulate engagement with complex political issues (Heiss, 2022; Филимонов et al., 2016).

These platform-specific characteristics necessitate tailored communication strategies by political candidates. They must adapt their use of language, cultural symbols, and presentation styles to align with the preferences and expectations of users on each platform. This is evident in how candidates optimize their content for distinct audience demographics and engagement principles across TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter (Setijanto et al., 2023; Farkas & Bene, 2020). The successful navigation of these diverse contexts greatly influences voter perceptions and can significantly impact electoral outcomes.

In conclusion, the stark contrasts in how popular culture is integrated into TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter highlight the necessity for political candidates to strategically tailor their communication styles to fit the unique dynamics of each platform. As social media continues to evolve as a vehicle for political expression and engagement, understanding these differences becomes paramount to effective political campaigning.

## **4. DISCUSSIONS**

### **4.1 Interpretation of Findings with Theory**

The integration of popular culture into political communication on social media can be examined through various theoretical frameworks that elucidate the shifting dynamics in political discourse resulting from media influence.

Firstly, the mediatization of politics perspective offers a critical lens to understand changes in political communication. This framework posits that the logic of media, particularly social media, has redefined how political candidates engage with the electorate. Social media platforms enforce specific rules, such as the prioritization of entertaining and visually appealing

content, which compels candidates to adapt their communication strategies accordingly. Tareen and Adnan assert that social media functions not only as a channel for distributing political messages but also necessitates modifications in how those messages are crafted, promoting a "lighter" and more engaging style that resonates with audience expectations (Tareen & Adnan, 2021). Similarly, Adamik-Szysiak highlights how contemporary political campaigns increasingly rely on communication strategies adapted to media logic, demonstrating the evolving expectations surrounding political discourse in the digital age (Adamik-Szysiak, 2019).

From a cultural studies viewpoint, particularly through the lens of Stuart Hall's theories on representation, popular culture can be examined as a significant medium for constructing political identity. The expression of political identity has transitioned from purely ideological bases to include a greater focus on symbols, aesthetic choices, and cultural references utilized by candidates (Literat & Kligler-Vilenchik, 2021). As noted by Kaal, historical interactions between political figures and popular culture have consistently shaped how political identities are constructed and received by the public (Kaal, 2018). This cultural framing underscores the performative nature of political identity, suggesting a synergy between cultural practices and political communication whereby politics itself is transformed into a cultural performance consumed and negotiated within public forums (Dean, 2020).

Moreover, the concept of political personalization is evident in candidates' engagements on social media, where they adopt a more personal and relatable persona to foster connections with voters. Research demonstrates that candidates leveraging social media platforms tend to share more intimate glimpses into their lives, utilizing informal language and current popular trends to establish familiarity (Wood et al., 2016). This notion is supported by findings from Paatelainen et al., who observed that although the personalization of political content is becoming more prevalent, research on how this manifests in social media compared to traditional media is still limited (Paatelainen et al., 2024).

In conclusion, the integration of popular culture into political communication on social media illustrates a complex interplay between evolving media logics, cultural representation, and political personalization. This transformation reflects broader societal trends in which informal, entertaining elements are becoming crucial for political engagement, thus indicating a cultural shift in how politics is experienced and understood in contemporary society.

#### **4.2. Academic Implications**

From an academic perspective, this research contributes by offering a new analytical framework that emphasizes the importance of integrating popular culture into digital political communication. Previous literature has focused largely on issue framing, campaign strategies, or the role of traditional media in shaping public opinion. This research broadens the scope by positioning popular culture as a central, indispensable element in contemporary political communication.

Furthermore, this study adds to the literature on political communication in the social media era by highlighting non-Western contexts, particularly Indonesia. To date, studies of popular culture-based political communication have focused primarily on Western experiences, while countries with different political and cultural dynamics remain underexplored. Therefore, this study can provide an alternative perspective on how popular culture is integrated into political communication strategies in a pluralistic, diverse society with a predominantly young voter base.

#### **4.3. Practical Implications**

The research findings also have important practical implications for political candidates and their campaigns. First, candidates need to understand the dynamics of popular culture and digital trends to build stronger connections with voters, especially younger generations. By

leveraging memes, viral music, slang, or TikTok trends, candidates can increase engagement and broaden the reach of their political messages.

However, there are risks that need to be considered. Over-reliance on popular culture has the potential to undermine perceived credibility, especially among more conservative voters or those who expect political communication to prioritize substance and seriousness. Candidates who engage too much in popular culture may be labeled shallow, opportunistic, or simply "entertaining" without offering a clear political vision. Therefore, a popular culture-based communication strategy needs to be balanced with substantive political messaging to maintain legitimacy in the eyes of the wider public.

#### **4.4. Review Limitations**

Several limitations of this study must be acknowledged. First, the literature used is primarily from English and Indonesian-language publications, so the potential for perspectives from other cultural contexts has not been fully explored. Second, there is limited longitudinal research specifically examining the long-term impact of the use of popular culture in political communication. This makes it difficult to assess whether pop culture-based strategies have a lasting influence on voter loyalty or merely provide short-term effects in the form of increased engagement on social media. These limitations open up space for further research to expand the database by engaging with literature across languages and contexts, as well as developing longitudinal studies to understand the political consequences of popular culture integration in greater depth.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that social media has become a major driving force for political candidates to integrate elements of popular culture into their communication styles. This integration is not simply a trend, but rather a deliberate strategy to achieve several crucial goals: building emotional connection with voters, providing entertaining content, and significantly increasing public engagement. Thus, social media has transformed the political communication landscape from formal and rigid to more casual and accessible, especially for the younger generation.

Conceptually, this study makes an important contribution by enriching political communication theory. By placing popular culture as a central dimension, this research opens up new opportunities to understand the increasingly complex dynamics of digital politics, where the boundaries between politics and entertainment are increasingly blurred. Practically, these findings offer valuable guidance for political candidates and their campaigns. Understanding how popular culture shapes public perception and increases engagement can help them design more effective digital communication strategies, enabling them to better connect with constituents, particularly young voters who are dominant on digital platforms.

Nonetheless, this research also identifies several directions for future research. More in-depth empirical studies are essential to quantitatively measure the effectiveness of popular culture integration in increasing candidate electability. Furthermore, comparative analyses across countries, candidates, and social media platforms would provide a richer understanding of how cultural and technological contexts influence this strategy. Finally, more detailed audience studies are needed to understand how voters from different demographics interpret and respond to political messages presented through the lens of popular culture, thus providing a more holistic picture of the impact of this phenomenon.

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