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A Bibliometric Analysis of Social Media Utilization in Election Campaign Strategies; Trends, Dynamics, and Impacts on Scopus Data from 2019 to 2024

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the literature on social media use in political campaigns using a bibliometric analysis approach, which enables the identification of trends, patterns, and collaboration networks in related research. Using data from 166 publications indexed in Scopus, this study analyzes the development of research on social media and politics. The bibliometric analysis method employed in this research includes data collection through the Scopus database with specific filters, data cleaning using the Open Refine application, and visualization of the research network using VOSviewer. The analysis results show that the research trends significantly increase, focusing mainly on social media, political communication, and elections. Countries such as Spain and Germany dominate publications on these topics. Furthermore, leading institutions such as Eötvös Loránd University and LMU Munich are essential in developing knowledge in this field. The research concludes that while social media opens great opportunities for political participation, these platforms also bring serious challenges, especially regarding disinformation and polarization. It also recommends the need for a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the impact of social media in political campaigns, as well as the importance of international collaboration and more inclusive research on gender issues and digital algorithms.

Keywords: *Digital Campaigns, Elections, Misinformation, Political Campaigns, Social Media*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis literatur tentang penggunaan media sosial dalam kampanye politik dengan pendekatan analisis bibliometrik, yang memungkinkan identifikasi tren, pola, dan jaringan kolaborasi dalam penelitian terkait. Dengan menggunakan data dari 166 publikasi yang terindeks di Scopus, penelitian ini menganalisis perkembangan penelitian tentang media sosial dan politik. Metode analisis bibliometrik yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini meliputi pengumpulan data melalui basis data Scopus dengan filter tertentu, pembersihan data menggunakan aplikasi Open Refine, serta visualisasi jaringan penelitian menggunakan VOSviewer. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa tren penelitian meningkat secara signifikan, dengan fokus utama pada media sosial, komunikasi politik, dan pemilu. Negara-negara seperti Spanyol dan Jerman mendominasi publikasi dalam topik ini. Sementara itu, institusi terkemuka



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seperti Universitas Eötvös Loránd dan LMU Munich memiliki peran penting dalam pengembangan pengetahuan di bidang ini. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa meskipun media sosial membuka peluang besar untuk partisipasi politik, platform ini juga membawa tantangan serius, terutama terkait disinformasi dan polarisasi. Penelitian ini juga merekomendasikan perlunya pendekatan multidisipliner untuk memahami dampak media sosial dalam kampanye politik, serta pentingnya kolaborasi internasional dan penelitian yang lebih inklusif tentang isu gender dan algoritma digital.

Kata kunci: *Kampanye Digital, Pemilu, Disinformasi, Kampanye Politik, Media Sosial*

INTRODUCTION

Elections are a core element of a democratic system that allows people to elect representatives and government leaders directly. Norris (2002) emphasizes that elections reflect the political process and symbolize citizen involvement in collective decision-making. Digital technology has accelerated the paradigm shift in the electoral process, particularly with the emergence of social media as one of the main communication mediums. Social media offers the advantages of broad reach, low cost, and the ability to create two-way communication between political candidates and the public (Loader et al., 2014).

The role of social media in elections has been widely studied from multiple perspectives, including its function in political mobilization, information dissemination, and shaping public opinion. Chadwick (2017) introduced the concept of the hybrid media system, which explains how social media interacts with traditional media in constructing political narratives. Meanwhile, Kreiss et al. (2018) explored how digital platforms influence campaign strategies and voter engagement. In the Indonesian context, active social media users reached 150 million in 2019, making it one of the countries with a high level of digital penetration (Ulfa et al., 2020). Candidates utilize social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to convey their vision, mission, and work programs. Widhiasthini (2020) states that social media has created a new campaign ecosystem based on the "sharing economy," where various actors collaborate to support candidates through digital platforms.

While social media offers a range of opportunities, it also presents significant challenges. One of these is the spread of false information or hoaxes that can manipulate public opinion and influence election outcomes (Bruns et al., 2021). Howard and Kollanyi (2016) found that in the context of the US and UK elections, automated bots played a significant role in amplifying political messages, which aligns with findings regarding partisan narratives on Twitter (Bruns et al., 2021). This issue is also prevalent in Indonesia, where social media algorithms tend to reinforce political polarization through the phenomenon of "echo chambers" and "filter bubbles" (Lim, 2017). Furthermore, Tucker et al. (2018) argued that social media's impact on democracy is complex, as

it can both enhance and undermine political participation depending on how digital campaigns are conducted.

Another challenge is the use of social media for micro-targeting, a data-driven campaign strategy designed to target specific groups of voters (Widhiasthini, 2020). This strategy often violates user privacy and raises digital ethics issues in the campaign process. Bennett and Segerberg (2012) discussed how political personalization through social media can create fragmented information environments. Sunstein (2018) explains that social media can potentially exacerbate social and political fragmentation, especially when partisan interests dominate the emerging narrative.

The study of social media and political campaigns has been the subject of extensive academic attention (Schillemans, 2014). The Hybrid Media System introduced the concept of how social media complements traditional media in shaping public opinion. On the other hand, Loader et al. (2014) highlighted how social media increases political participation, particularly among young voters. However, most of these studies tend to be descriptive or limited to specific cases, such as the analysis of Twitter campaign strategies in Australia (Bruns et al., 2021) or tribal nationalism in Indonesia (Lim, 2017). Additionally, Tucker et al. (2018) emphasized that while social media enhances citizen engagement, its effectiveness varies across different political contexts and electoral systems.

A bibliometric approach offers an opportunity to understand research trends and dynamics in this area more thoroughly. Donthu et al. (2021) explain that bibliometric analysis can help map publication patterns, key topics, and academic collaboration networks, thus providing deeper insights into the development of research related to social media utilization in political campaigns. Previous bibliometric studies on political communication, such as Puschmann (2019), have demonstrated how this method can reveal structural patterns in research production and citation networks, providing a macro-level perspective on scholarly contributions to the field.

Despite the extensive body of research on social media and political campaigns, there remains a lack of studies that systematically examine global research trends in this area through a bibliometric analysis. Existing studies predominantly focus on specific cases or theoretical discussions without offering a broader, data-driven perspective on how scholarly work has evolved in this field. By utilizing bibliometric analysis, this research comprehensively examines publication trends, key themes, and collaboration networks in studies on social media utilization in election campaigns.

Analyzing Scopus data from 2019 to 2024 allows for a structured evaluation of the academic discourse, identifying gaps, dominant themes, and emerging research trajectories. This study's findings contribute to a more thorough understanding of the academic landscape and inform future research on the role of social media in political communication. The insights gained can also support developing more effective, transparent, and responsible political campaign strategies in the digital era.

METHOD

Bibliometric analysis has emerged as a crucial method for understanding the dynamics of research fields by quantitatively assessing the volume, impact, and interconnections of scholarly publications. This approach is particularly valuable in the context of social media's influence on political communication and election campaigns. As highlighted by Garfield (2005), bibliometric analysis allows researchers to visualize the structural makeup of a research area, enabling a comprehensive understanding of how knowledge is disseminated and referenced within the academic community (Watrianthos et al., 2022).

The present study employs bibliometric techniques to analyze 166 publications retrieved from the Scopus database, focusing on the keywords "Social Media," "Political," and "Election Campaign." The initial step in conducting bibliometric analysis involves keyword selection, which is essential for narrowing down the scope of research. In this study, the keywords "Social Media," "Political," and "Election Campaign" were utilized to filter relevant publications.

The choice of these keywords reflects the growing interest in how social media platforms have transformed political communication strategies and electoral processes. By applying filters based on the Social Sciences subject area, open-access journal document type, and English language, the research ensures that the selected publications are relevant and accessible to a broader audience (Guo et al., 2022).

Following the selection of publications, data cleaning is a critical step to ensure the integrity and consistency of the dataset. The Open Refine application was employed to clean the bibliometric data, addressing issues such as duplicates, inconsistencies, and formatting errors. This process is vital for preparing the data for analysis and visualization, as it enhances the reliability of the findings. Once the data was cleaned, the VOSviewer application was utilized to conduct the bibliometric analysis, allowing for the visualization of significant trends and patterns in the literature related to social media's impact on political campaigns (Rosokhata et al., 2021a).

VOSviewer offers various visualization options, including network visualization, which provides insights into the relationships between different publications, authors, and keywords. This

visualization is instrumental in identifying research activity clusters and understanding the field's collaborative networks. By analyzing the number of publications, citation counts, and overall link strength between displayed objects, researchers can gain a clearer picture of the intellectual structure of the research area (Prado & Moraes, 2022).

The findings from the VOSviewer analysis reveal the most prolific authors and institutions and the key themes and topics that have emerged in the literature over time. Dewi et al. (2021) outline a five-step bibliometric analysis approach that serves as a framework for conducting this research. The steps include keyword selection, data collection, data cleaning, visualization, and interpretation of results. This structured approach ensures that the analysis is systematic and comprehensive, allowing researchers to draw meaningful conclusions from the data.

The first step, keyword selection, is particularly crucial as it lays the foundation for the entire analysis. By focusing on the specified keywords, the research effectively captures the essence of the intersection between social media and political campaigns (Bianchini et al., 2020). In the subsequent stages, the researchers utilized VOSviewer to create initial statistical images that grouped data based on various subject descriptions, such as publication year, country of origin, and institutional affiliation. This grouping facilitates a deeper understanding of the temporal and geographical trends in the research. For instance, analyzing the publication trends over the years can reveal how the discourse surrounding social media and political campaigns has evolved, particularly in response to significant political events or technological advancements (Assidik et al., 2022).

The interpretation of the data is the final stage of the bibliometric analysis, where researchers synthesize their findings into a coherent narrative. This narrative summarizes the key trends identified in the data but also contextualizes these trends within the broader landscape of political communication research. By evaluating the data through the lens of VOSviewer, researchers can articulate the implications of their findings for future research and practice in political communication (Kumar et al., 2021).

The bibliometric analysis conducted in this study contributes to the growing body of literature on social media's role in political campaigns. As the landscape of political communication continues to evolve, understanding the research patterns and trends can inform scholars and practitioners. The insights gained from this analysis can guide future research endeavours, helping to identify gaps in the literature and areas for further exploration (Mahindru, 2023).

Moreover, the use of bibliometric techniques underscores the importance of data-driven approaches in assessing the impact of social media on political processes. In conclusion, bibliometric analysis is a powerful tool for mapping the research landscape surrounding social media and political campaigns. Researchers can uncover significant trends and patterns in the literature by employing a systematic approach that includes keyword selection, data cleaning, visualization, and interpretation. The findings of this study not only enhance our understanding of the academic discourse on this topic but also provide valuable insights for future research and practice in political communication (Zainuddin, 2023).

As the influence of social media continues to grow, ongoing bibliometric analyses will be essential for tracking developments in this dynamic field.



Figure 1: Stages of the Bibliometric Method

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The number of documents and links from countries, institutions, journals, authors, and the co-occurrence of keywords visualized with VOSviewer, such as *Network Visualization* and *Overlay Visualization*, are all taken into consideration when presenting the results of bibliometric analysis in this study. The database taken from Scopus is 166 articles related to the keywords "Social Media," "Political," and "Election Campaign." The details based on the year and number of presentations are as follows.



Figure 2: Article distribution for the 2019-2024 period (Source: Scopus, 2024)

Based on the diagram above, the highest number of publications per year is in 2024, with 38 publications or 22.89%, and the lowest is in 2019, with 15 publications or 9.03%. Judging from the diagram, it can be concluded that the number of publications from 2019 to 2024 is dynamic, meaning that each year has increased except in 2022 and 2023, with the same number of publications. This data reflects that social media has become an increasingly relevant topic in the context of global politics, mainly because of its increasingly dominant role in the electoral process.

The increase in the number of publications until 2024 can be attributed to the development of social media technology that allows political campaigns to be more targeted, efficient, and interactive. Political candidates and parties can now utilize social media to deliver their messages directly to voters without relying on traditional media. In addition, significant global election momentum in 2024, such as presidential elections in the United States and Indonesia, is also driving the increase in publications.

However, this trend is only partially linear. The number of publications in 2022 and 2023 stagnated, which may reflect a shift in research interests. Scholars are starting to explore new, more specific themes, such as the ethics of using data in political campaigns or the role of algorithms in shaping public opinion. This suggests the need for more innovative approaches to maintain the relevance of research in this area. The research highlighted the evolution of the role of buzzers from product promotion to political campaign tools, indicating that digital communication strategies have adapted quickly to meet political needs (Felicia & Loisa, 2018). In this regard, the use of algorithms in sentiment analysis on social media has also become important. For example, the use of the *Long Short Term Memory* model to analyze public sentiment toward the 2024 election shows how technology can be used to understand and predict public opinion (Firdlous et al., 2023).

The selection of countries in this bibliometric study is based on the data retrieved from the Scopus database, which reflects the most influential research outputs related to the topic of social media and election campaigns. The inclusion of Germany, Hungary, the UK, Norway, Switzerland, Spain, Austria, the United States, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Portugal is not arbitrary but rather a result of a quantitative assessment of publication volume, citation impact, and scholarly collaborations within the research landscape.

Bibliometric analysis primarily relies on objective indicators, such as the number of publications, citation counts, and co-authorship networks, to determine which countries have made significant contributions to a particular research field (Garfield, 2005). The countries selected in this study are those which have produced a substantial number of publications or have strong

citation linkages in the research domain of social media and election campaigns. As Donthu et al. (2021) emphasize, bibliometric analysis is data-driven, meaning that the geographical distribution of research outputs is determined by existing publication patterns rather than researcher preference.

The presence of Germany, the UK, and the United States is expected, as these countries have well-established research institutions specializing in political communication, digital media, and electoral studies (Bruns et al., 2018). Similarly, countries such as Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland are included due to their strong engagement in political communication research and digital democracy studies, as reflected in their highly cited publications within the Scopus database (Tucker et al., 2018). Southern European countries such as Italy, Spain, and Portugal are emerging in the field due to increasing research efforts on digital political engagement and disinformation studies (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). The inclusion of Hungary and Austria is also significant, as these countries have been the focus of multiple studies on social media-driven political polarization and electoral strategies in Europe (Howard & Kollanyi, n.d.).

Additionally, co-authorship patterns and research collaborations influence the selection of countries. VOSviewer software allows for visualizing scholarly networks and country-level co-authorship linkages, highlighting regions that frequently collaborate in producing political communication research (Rosokhata et al., 2021b). A country with a strong citation linkage or co-authorship network is naturally reflected in the bibliometric analysis, reinforcing its inclusion in the study.

Therefore, the countries included in this study are those that have made notable contributions to the academic discourse on social media and election campaigns, as evidenced by their publication output, citation impact, and collaborative research networks. This approach ensures that the bibliometric analysis provides an accurate and comprehensive mapping of the research landscape rather than an arbitrary selection of geographical locations.

a. Analysis by Most Influential Country

Scopus-indexed documents related to "*Social Media*," "*Political*," and "*Election Campaign*" were published in various countries. There are 12 countries with more than five documents and more than one citation, shown below:

Table 1. Article Distribution by Country

No	Country	Document	Citation	Total Link Strength
1	Germany	28	564	18
2	Hungary	10	132	14
3	UK	30	463	11
4	Norway	10	45	10
5	Switzerland	5	160	6
6	Spain	40	280	5
7	Austria	5	28	5
8	United States	13	271	3
9	Italy	11	92	3
10	Netherlands	12	159	2
11	Sweden	6	27	2
12	Portugal	6	18	1

Data Source: Author's Analysis

Based on Table 1 above, Germany leads with 28 published documents, gaining a total of 564 citations. This indicates that the research conducted in this country is productive and significantly influences the global scientific scene. With a total *link strength* of 18, there is a strong collaboration network between the authors, which may have contributed to this situation. This is followed by the UK, which has 30 documents and 463 citations, which also has a solid performance, and Spain, which leads the number of publications with a total of 40 documents, albeit with a lower citation count of 280. This suggests that while Spain is active in publishing, the quality or recognition of citations may still need to be improved.

Interestingly, despite having fewer publications (10 documents each), Hungary and Norway achieved 132 and 45 citations, respectively. This shows that publications from these two countries are of high quality and recognized in the scientific community, even though their total contributions are less than other countries. The performance of a large country like the United States is also noteworthy. With 13 documents and 271 citations, the United States is a significant contributor despite having a low volume of publications in this context. On the other hand, countries such as Portugal and Switzerland show lower numbers, with only 6 and 5 documents, respectively, and limited citations. Notably, with a total link strength of 1, Portugal indicates a need for collaborative networks in broader research.

Furthermore, the pattern of cooperation between countries that can be seen from the results of VOSviewer assistance is as follows:

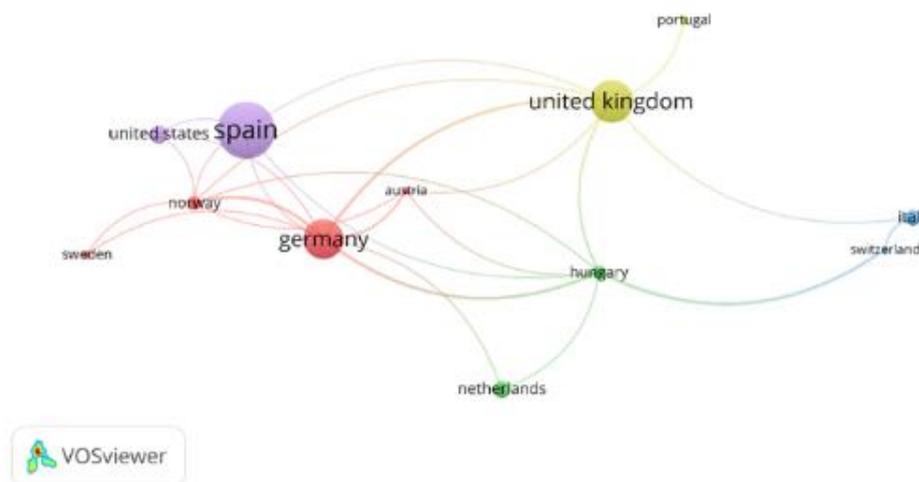


Figure 3. *Country Cooperation Patterns*

Based on Figure 3, Spain, Germany, and the United Kingdom have the most significant nodes, indicating a high level of research collaboration compared to other countries. These three nations play an important role in academic discussions on keywords “social media”; “political”; and “election campaigns”. Among them, Germany emerges as the most influential country in terms of research impact, as it collaborates with 11 other countries, including Spain. Meanwhile, Spain leads in the number of published documents on this topic, highlighting its substantial academic contributions.

This extensive cross-country collaboration underscores the global nature of research on social media in political campaigns, where scholars from diverse cultural and political backgrounds work together to explore its implications. Such cooperative efforts are essential for understanding how social media influences political campaigns across different regions, considering variations in political structures, electoral processes, and digital engagement trends.

b. Analysis by Most Influential Institutions

Institutions or universities published Scopus-indexed documents related to "Social Media," "Political," and "Election Campaign." The following figure shows ten institutions or universities with a minimum number of documents of one document followed by an average number of citations of at least one.

Table 2. Most Influential Institutions/Universities

No	Organization / University	Document	Citation	Total Link Strength
1	eötvös loránd university, hungary	2	7	11
2	lmu munich, Germany	2	7	11
3	norwegian university of science and technology, norway	3	32	11
4	babeş-bolyai university, Romania	1	1	8
5	ournemouth university, united kingdom	3	33	8
6	centre for social sciences, hungary	1	1	8
7	johannes gutenber university of mainz, Germany	1	1	8
8	university of innsbruck, Austria	1	1	8
9	university of wrocław, Poland	1	1	8
10	university of oslo, Norway	2	10	3

Data Source: Author's Analysis

Based on Table 2, it can be observed that the trend of institutions or universities with the highest number of citations regarding "*Social Media*," "*Political*," and "*Election Campaign*" publications is reflective of their influence and connectedness in the research. The following institutions stand out in this study: Eötvös Loránd University in Hungary and LMU Munich in Germany; each published two documents and got seven citations, resulting in a total link strength of eleven. This shows that both institutions have equal influence in the scientific community.

Meanwhile, despite publishing only three documents, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Norway stood out with thirty-two citations, which also reached a total link strength of eleven. This shows that their publications are highly valued and widely referenced by other researchers, emphasizing their position in their field of research. On the other hand, institutions such as Babeş-Bolyai University from Romania, the Center for Social Sciences in Hungary, and Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz in Germany, which all have a total link strength of eight, show that even though they have a small number of citations, they also have a high link strength of eight. Documents and citations still make an important contribution to research, although they may not be as well-known as larger institutions.

Bournemouth University from the UK also performed well with three documents and thirty-three citations, like Norwegian University in terms of academic influence. It is important to note that other institutions, such as the University of Innsbruck in Austria and the University of Wrocław in Poland, have only one document and one citation each, confirming that they may still be in the early stages of research development or inactive in publications.

Finally, the University of Oslo in Norway showed diversity in its results with two documents and ten citations, resulting in a total link strength of three. This indicates that while its citation count is good, the institution may need to increase its publication count.

These results show that European institutions, particularly those focusing on social sciences and communication, dominate research in this area. The high number of citations indicates that publications from these institutions are considered relevant and contribute significantly to the development of science. Although European institutions dominate, it is important to note that some universities in developing countries are also starting to contribute to this topic. With increased access to technology and research resources, institutions in developing countries have great potential to provide new and more contextualized perspectives on the use of social media in political campaigns.

c. Analysis by Most Influential Author

Scopus-indexed documents on the keywords "*Social Media*,"; "*Political*," and "*Election Campaign*" were published in various journals. Documents with more than 50 citations are presented in the following figure.

Table 3. Most Influential Authors

No	Author	Document	Citation	Total Link Strength
1	Keller, Stier	3	195	0
2	keller, franziska b.	1	193	0
3	schoch, david	1	193	0
4	yang, junghwan	1	193	0
5	klinger, ulrike	2	152	3
6	keller, tobias r.	1	128	0
7	ohme, jakob	5	114	0
8	bene, márton	5	98	1
9	gibson, rachel	1	58	1
10	roemmele, andrea	1	58	1

Data Source: Author's Analysis

Based on the table above, the document with the most citations is research conducted by Keller with the title *Political Astroturfing on Twitter: How to Coordinate a Disinformation Campaign*, published in 2020, which has been cited 195 times. This research discusses political astroturfing, a manipulative practice in which individuals pretend to be ordinary citizens speaking independently to influence public opinion,

especially in the context of elections. While this practice can potentially have a significant impact, it is difficult to assess its effectiveness without accurate information regarding the identity of the perpetrators (Keller et al., 2020).

Keller's study investigated the disinformation campaign conducted by South Korea's National Information Service (NIS) during the 2012 presidential election. Keller analyzed the list of involved accounts obtained from the court proceedings. The results showed that traces of coordination among astroturfing actors can be used to distinguish these accounts from regular users on social media. Furthermore, they developed a methodology to identify additional astroturfing accounts and validated our detection results by analyzing messages and current account status. However, their analysis showed that the identified NIS accounts had a limited impact on political discussions on social media platforms.

This document illustrates key issues of concern to researchers, such as data accuracy, hate speech, and the influence of social media on public opinion. These trends show that while social media offers many benefits, it also brings significant challenges that must be addressed.

d. Analysis Based on Most Influential Keywords

In this analysis, researchers try to identify keywords or keywords that are most often used in articles; this can provide an overview of the most researched topics. From 166 articles processed using the VOSviewer application with a minimum occurrence rate of 5, 20 interconnected keywords were obtained by forming a network. The network is also divided into 4 clusters: cluster 1 has seven keywords, with the most occurrence of the keyword "Social Media" at 71; cluster 2 has five keywords, with the most occurrence of the keyword "Political Communication" at 42; cluster 3 has five keywords, with the most occurrence of the keyword "elections" at 19; cluster 4 has three keywords, with the most occurrence of the keyword "Twitter" at 27. The detail can be seen in the distribution figure below:

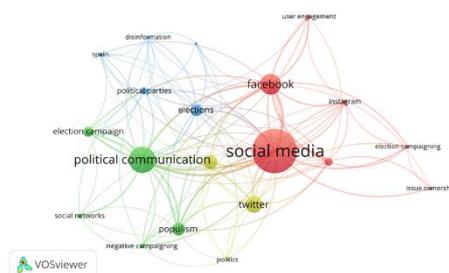


Figure 4. Network Visualization of Co-occurrence of Keywords

Based on the figure above, which shows the network visualization of shared keywords (at least 5), social media emerges as the most dominant keyword in this study, with 71 occurrences and a total link strength of 115. This shows that these platforms are not only a communication medium but also a significant arena for political interaction. Among the platforms analyzed, Facebook and Twitter have strong links to political themes, with 33 and 27 occurrences, respectively. Their high total link strength (76 and 43) confirms that these two platforms are highly relevant in the constellation of election campaigns and political discussions. Election campaigns are also an important focus in this data, with keywords such as *election campaigns* and *elections* showing 22 and 19 occurrences, respectively. The total *link strength* achieved, 37 and 32, reflects that these topics are frequently discussed and considered to impact how voters participate in elections significantly.

Political communication, recorded 42 times with the highest total *link strength* (84), indicates that the study of how information is conveyed and received in a political context significantly affects political outcomes. In addition, the keyword *populism*, with 20 occurrences and a total link strength of 38, indicates increased attention to political movements based on populist approaches. This signifies the relevance and urgency of researching this phenomenon, especially in the context of content disseminated through social media.

However, while some keywords, such as *disinformation* and *negative campaigning*, had relatively lower occurrences of 5 times each, this still demonstrates their importance in the broader context of influence on voter behavior and political dynamics. With a low total *link strength*, this may suggest that despite the importance of this topic, further discussion and exploration are still needed to understand its impact fully. Overall, this data highlights the keywords and topics that dominate the research and provides a detailed picture of how social media serves as a primary means of political communication. In an increasingly digitally connected world, a deeper understanding of these dynamics will be crucial to explaining and responding to the emerging challenges of disinformation and political campaigns that might influence voters' decisions.

The results of the network visualization in Figure 4 show that there are 4 clusters with 20 items regarding "*Social Media*," "*Political*," and "*Election Campaign*." namely, Cluster 1 (colored red) consists of 5 items, Cluster 2 (colored green) consists of 5 items, Cluster 3 (colored blue) consists of 4 items, and Cluster 4 (colored yellow) consists of 3 items. This shows that the research focus is related to the keywords "*Social media*,"

"Political," and "Election campaign," which means that there are four research focuses. The first research focus is the keyword with the largest circle, "Social Media." The second research focus is the keyword with the largest circle, "Political Communication"; the third research focus is the keyword with the largest circle in cluster 3, namely "elections," and the fourth research focus is the keyword with the largest circle in cluster 4, "Twitter."

The four research focuses above can be used as a reference for future researchers to determine the theme of their subsequent research.

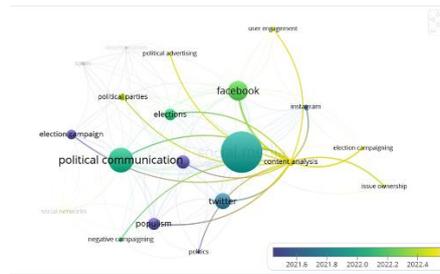


Figure 5. *Overlay Network of co-occurrence of keywords based on Year of Publication*

The figure above shows three different colors: the yellow color shows that the keywords are shared around 2021 to 2024, while the blue color shows the shared use of keywords around 2021, and the green color around 2022 to yellow in mid-2022. This indicates a change in terms over some time. Keywords that became new themes were "content analysis" and "user engagement."

The results of this Overlay Visualization show a change in research focus from year to year. Keywords such as "content analysis" and "user engagement" have started appearing recently, especially since 2021. This shows that research is starting to direct attention to issues that are more relevant to contemporary socio-political dynamics. This shift in focus reflects researchers' adaptation to the needs of the times, where inclusivity and direct interaction between political candidates and voters are becoming increasingly important. It also suggests that future research needs to focus more on new aspects of social media, such as how big data and algorithms are used to influence voter behavior and how these platforms can be used to promote transparency and participation in the democratic process.

CONCLUSION

This bibliometric study has mapped key trends in research on social media's role in election campaigns from 2019 to 2024. The findings indicate that social media has transitioned from a supplementary tool to a central component of political communication, influencing voter

engagement and campaign strategies. The analysis highlights an increasing reliance on digital platforms for targeted messaging, real-time interaction, and participatory political discourse. However, ethical concerns such as misinformation, algorithmic bias, and digital polarization remain critical issues requiring further exploration.

As social media continues to redefine political communication, researchers must address the evolving challenges and opportunities it presents. Expanding research to include gender dynamics and algorithmic influences, fostering international collaboration, and adopting a multidisciplinary approach are essential in advancing this field of study. By tackling these critical areas, future research can contribute to a deeper understanding of social media's role in elections and support policy frameworks that uphold democratic integrity in the digital era.

Future studies should explore underrepresented aspects, such as gender dynamics in digital campaigning and the influence of social media algorithms on voter behaviour. Addressing these gaps can provide a more comprehensive understanding of social media's political impact. Gender roles in digital political communication remain underexplored, particularly in the context of developing nations where societal and cultural factors influence engagement. Additionally, research should investigate how social media platforms amplify or diminish the voices of particular demographic groups, including marginalized communities and female candidates.

Furthermore, international collaboration should be encouraged to provide a broader perspective on the role of social media in both developed and developing nations. Expanding research collaborations to include scholars from various geopolitical backgrounds will enhance the depth and applicability of findings. Cross-national comparisons can also help identify best practices in regulating political communication on social media and mitigating digital misinformation. Policymakers should leverage multidisciplinary research to create more effective regulations ensuring transparency and ethical social media use in election campaigns. By involving experts from multiple fields, governments and regulatory bodies can craft policies that safeguard electoral integrity while preserving the participatory potential of social media.

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