



## TikTok as Digital Literacy Media for the 2024 Election in Indonesia

Woro Harkandi Kencana<sup>1\*</sup>, Ilona Vicenovie Oisina Situmeang<sup>1</sup>, Meisyanti<sup>1</sup>, Khina Januar Rahmawati<sup>1</sup>, Herlin Setio Nugroho<sup>1</sup>, Velantin Valiant<sup>1</sup>, Sularso Budilaksono<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Persada Indonesia Y.A.I, Indonesia

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### Abstract

Elections are a situation where the flow of political information increases; this acceleration increases in line with the development of digital technology. We must be wary of the widespread flow of information ahead of the 2024 elections because false information (hoaxes) can easily spread via social media. The voting age configuration for the 2024 election is dominated by young voters who are also social media users. Digital literacy is important in the 2024 elections as a form of digital democracy. As social media, TikTok encourages users to actively form a safe digital space and take control of the information they receive. This research wants to know the form of Digital Literacy carried out by TikTok in the 2024 Election. The approach in this research is a qualitative descriptive approach. Data collection techniques include observations on the TikTok application and through literature study. As a result of this research, TikTok created a digital literacy program by connecting access to credible and authoritative information about elections, which is supported by state institutions such as The General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia (KPU RI) and the Election Supervisory Body of the Republic of Indonesia (Bawaslu RI). TikTok also collaborates with MAFINDO and Perludem to educate the public through digital content as a form of prebunking. As well as labelling content across platforms and enforcing TikTok policies in the 2024 elections.

**Keywords** *Digital Literacy, Tiktok, Election 2024, Social Media*

### INTRODUCTION

General Elections (Pemilu) in Indonesia are a means of exercising popular sovereignty to elect Members of the People's Representative Council, Members of the Regional Representative Council, President and Vice President, and Members of the Regional People's Representative Council, which are carried out directly, publicly, freely, confidentially, honestly, and fair in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia.

Elections are a situation where the flow of political information increases; this acceleration increases in line with the development of digital technology. We need to be wary of the widespread flow of information ahead of the 2024 elections because false information (hoaxes) can easily spread via social media. This false information can influence people's views and the political situation. Based on Press Release No. 422/HM/KOMINFO/10/2023, With the voting scheduled for February 14 2023, the Ministry of Communication and Information has identified a total of 101 hoax issues circulating regarding the election from January 2023 to October 26 2023 ([Kominfo, 2023](#)).

Social media and online platforms have become important sources of information for many people, but they are also often places where hoaxes are spread. The high number of cases of fake news (hoaxes) with political themes has the potential to threaten the quality of democracy in Indonesia; fake news (hoaxes) will not only damage the common sense of voters in elections but could also delegitimize the process of holding elections, and can even damage the values of social

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Corresponding author's email: woro.harkandi@upi-yai.ac.id

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harmony, which will lead to the disintegration of the nation (Insani et al., 2023).

Digital literacy is important in the 2024 elections as a form of digital democracy. Election digital literacy is an individual's ability to understand, evaluate, and use information related to elections online wisely and responsibly. This is important in the context of elections in Indonesia and other countries, considering the increasingly large role of technology and social media in the political process. Governments, NGOs, and educational institutions can play a role in increasing election digital literacy by providing training, resources, and outreach campaigns to the public. This is important to ensure that elections are fair, transparent, and democratic, as well as to protect the public from information manipulation and cyber attacks. At a more basic level, people lacking digital literacy may be unable to defend themselves against clickbait, misleading advertisements, and spam (Guess & Munger, 2023).

The We Are Social report shows that the number of active social media users in Indonesia will be 167 million people in January 2023. This number is equivalent to 60.4% of the population in the country (DataIndonesia.id, 2023). Data published in the ad planning tools of top social media platforms indicates that there were 153.7 million users aged 18 and above using social media in Indonesia at the start of 2023, which was equivalent to 79.5% of the total population aged 18 and above at that time (Kemp, 2023).

Young voters dominate the voting age configuration for the 2024 election. The scope of young voters referred to in this case is voters under 40. From voter data that the KPU has determined, it can be seen that the total number of voters under 40 years of age is 48.07%. The number of voters aged 31-40 years is 20.70%. The number of voters aged 17-30 years is as many as 63,953,031 people or 31.23%, so the votes of young voters are almost 52% combined (CNN, 2023). From this data, election digital literacy has an important role in the 2024 General Election because the number of young voters is in line with the high number of digital platform users.

One of the digital platforms in the form of social media that is currently in demand by the public is TikTok. The video-sharing app TikTok has seen a sharp increase in popularity since its launch in 2016. The Chinese business ByteDance first launched TikTok under the name "Douyin" (as it is currently called in China). It was not until 2018 that TikTok merged with Musical.ly, another Chinese social media platform, that it was made available globally. TikTok is a video-sharing platform that lets users make lip-sync and music videos. TikTok is a dynamic and ever-evolving platform where new features are frequently introduced and updated, frequently quickly (Bhandari & Bimo, 2022).

According to the Indonesian Political Indicator poll, TikTok has 125 million users in Indonesia and has become the second most used source of political information in the country after television. TikTok is the platform favoured by the three pairs of presidential and vice-presidential candidates to reach millions of young voters in Indonesia ahead of the February 14 voting (VOA Indonesia, 2024). As a form of digital literacy, TikTok launched the Election Guide on November 28, 2023, coinciding with the 75-day election campaign period. Firry Wahid, Head of Public Policy and Government Relations, TikTok Indonesia, emphasized the importance of community involvement in fighting the spread of misinformation. The #SalingJaga campaign encourages users to actively form a safe digital space and take control of the information they receive. This research wants to find out what form of Digital Literacy is carried out by TikTok in the 2024 Election.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Digital Literacy**

Digital literacy is an individual's awareness, attitude, and ability to use digital tools and facilities appropriately to identify, access, manage, integrate, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize digital resources, build knowledge, create media expressions, and communicate with others in the

context of specific life situations to enable constructive social action and reflect on this process (Herlina, 2019).

Digital literacy has an important meaning in communication life for three reasons. First, the increasingly intense use of digital media, especially the internet and social media, in everyday life. Second, people's dependence on search engine sites (Google, Yahoo, or Bing) and social media platforms to search for information. The internet seems to have become a new media that offers solutions to all people's information searches. Third, individuals need specific skills or abilities to select information from the many available sources. With the availability of various information types, special skills supported by digital literacy are needed. By having these skills, individuals will have more control over the message interpretation process to select certain information/content that is accurate (Sabrina, 2019).

## RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the research approach used is qualitative. Where this research method is based on the philosophy of postpositivism or interpretive or constructive, used to research the conditions of natural objects, where the researcher is the key instrument, data collection techniques are carried out by triangulation (a combination of observation, interviews, documentation), the data obtained tends to be qualitative, data analysis is inductive or qualitative, and the results of qualitative research can be potential and problem findings, uniqueness of objects, meaning of an event, processes and social interactions, certainty of data truth, phenomenon construction, and hypothesis findings (Sugiyono & Lestari, 2021). This research also uses descriptive research, which makes systematic, factual, and accurate descriptions of the facts and characteristics of certain populations or objects. This type of research describes the reality without explaining the relationship between variables (Kriyantono, 2012).

For data collection techniques, this research uses library research and observation techniques. Library research is not obtained from the field but from libraries or other places that store references and documents containing data whose validity has been tested (Sugiyono & Lestari, 2021). Researchers carry out library techniques by collecting and analyzing research journals and articles related to the research topic. According to Sugiyono and Lestari (2021), observation is a complex process composed of various biological and psychological processes, two of the most important of which are observation and memory. Researchers made observations on TikTok social media, which focused on information about the 2024 Indonesian election.

According to Sarwono (2022), the qualitative analysis procedure consists of five steps. First, organize the collected data carefully. Second, create categories and determine themes and patterns. Third, test the hypothesis using information generated from existing data. Fourth, look for a rational explanation of the data based on the correct logic of meaning. Fifth, write reports using the right words, phrases, and sentences (Dianna, 2020; Kencana & Meisyanti, 2020).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

TikTok is fully committed to protecting the integrity of its platform, especially in the context of the General Election (Pemilu) in 2024. This commitment is a form of digital literacy carried out by this digital platform. The dominant generation of participants in the 2024 election is the younger generation, which is a high user of social media, so the participation of digital platforms is needed to carry out digital literacy as an information medium.

While not the only antidote to society's vulnerability to misinformation, young people identify digital literacy as part of a holistic response to fake news, albeit from a perspective that is not solely about individual responsibility for the presence, distribution, and use of fake news. Digital platforms are a means to increase digital literacy in users' understanding of social media

platform business models, compared to digital literacy, which is just teaching (Diepeveen & Pinet, 2022). One of the main concerns of cyber security is the detection of hoaxes on social media. Hoaxers spread these messages to mislead users and encourage violence (Tchakounté et al., 2022).

It is hoped that TikTok's commitment to digital literacy for the 2024 Election will unite the community with creative and entertaining content and will continue to work hard to protect the platform from dangerous misinformation and other policy violations. TikTok Indonesia has created a 2024 Election Guide Center and a #SalingJaga campaign, part of a proactive initiative undertaken to protect the integrity of the elections and the TikTok community in Indonesia. The forms of digital literacy carried out by TikTok Indonesia include:

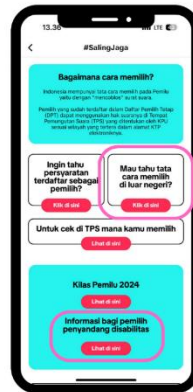
### Connecting TikTok Users with Credible and Authoritative Information

The 2024 Election Guide Center provides access to credible and authoritative information about elections, which is supported by state institutions such as the General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia (KPU RI) and the Election Supervisory Body of the Republic of Indonesia (Bawaslu RI). This guide provides users with comprehensive information about elections, from voting requirements and procedures, the countdown to the election date to information about Polling Places (TPS). The center will also direct users to access information through the KPU website.



**Figure 1.** Screenshot of the 2024 Election Guide Center by TikTok

Apart from providing credible and authoritative information about the election, the 2024 Election Guide Center also presents important information regarding the implementation of the 2024 Election in the '2024 Election Overview' section, which contains a summary of important moments, key decisions, and election principles in Indonesia that shape the 2024 Election. Presented is an inclusive feature to support voters who are abroad and people with disabilities to exercise their voting rights. TikTok's dedication to inclusivity is an important step towards a more accessible and participatory experience of democracy.



**Figure 2.** Screenshot of TikTok's Inclusive Features

In collaboration with the Indonesian KPU and the Indonesian Bawaslu, TikTok helps ensure that users can access credible and authoritative electoral information to fight misinformation ahead of the 2024 elections. Apart from that, TikTok also provides a special channel for the Indonesian Bawaslu to report content containing misinformation about the elections. TikTok also collaborates with local security partners, including the Indonesian Anti-Defamation Society (MAFINDO) and the Association for Elections and Democracy (Perludem), to not only help provide credible information to the Election Guidance Center within the TikTok application and flag misinformation on the platform, but also educate the public through their uploaded content on TikTok as part of prebunking efforts. Prebunking is an action to prevent and anticipate the circulation of misinformation or disinformation. The aim is to reduce the potential for spreading hoaxes (Lewandowsky & van der Linden, 2021).

### Content Labeling Across Platforms and Enforcing TikTok Policies

Elections are important moments for society, which prioritize people's ability to communicate openly. TikTok provides a space for discussion around current topics while remaining a platform that embraces everyone and avoids division. Policies to regulate election disinformation must balance the tension between limiting free speech and encouraging voters to engage in political participation through the free flow of information (Judge & Korhani, 2020).

To ensure the 2024 Election Guide Center is easy to access, TikTok added labels for content related to the 2024 Election. Users can access the 2024 Election Guide Center through these labels and get information about the election. TikTok provides access to popular election hashtags, such as #SalingJagaPemilu and #Pemilu2024, so users can easily search for election-themed content.

TikTok users can access trustworthy information, discover original content, and interact with authentic people. This is an important foundation for building a trustworthy and accountable community both within TikTok and off the platform. This is why TikTok enforces its in-app policies strictly and holistically to help maintain election integrity.

TikTok does not allow misinformation about the electoral process or the state, regardless of intent. This includes misinformation about how to vote, registering to vote, candidate eligibility requirements, the process for counting votes and certifying elections, and the final results of elections. TikTok works with fact-checkers who help identify and limit the spread of misinformation on the platform. It currently has 17 fact-checking partners supporting 50 languages and more than 100 countries worldwide. All fact-checking partners are accredited by the International Fact-Checking Network as verified signatories to the International Fact-Checking Network's code of principles. Therefore, if a piece of content contains unverified information,

TikTok will notify users that the content is unfounded and restrict it from the content lineup for its users. To help prevent the spread of potentially misleading information, the platform encourages the TikTok community to reconsider before sharing unverified information. Content that contains unverified election result claims cannot be eligible to appear in the content lineup. Users can also use the complaint tool contained in the application to make it easier for them to report misleading content directly.



Figure 3. Screenshot of TikTok #SalingJaga

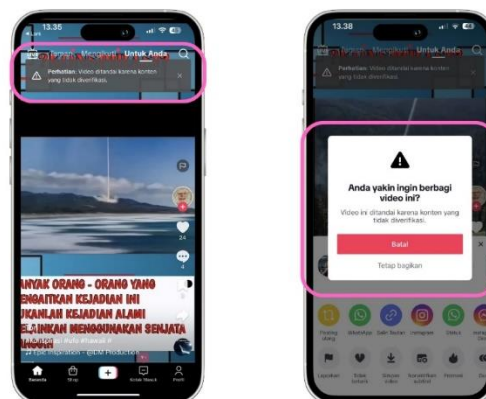


Figure 4. Screenshot of Unverified Content Information

Additionally, TikTok does not allow paid political promotions, political advertising, or fundraising by politicians and political parties (for themselves or others). The political advertising policy covers traditional paid advertising and creators who receive compensation for supporting or opposing candidates running for office. TikTok rules Government, Politician, and Political Party Accounts (GPPPA) to prevent misuse of TikTok.

### **#SalingJaga to Build a Safe Digital Environment**

At the launch of the Election Guidance Center on November 28, 2023, which coincided with the start of the 75-day election campaign period, Firry Wahid, Head of Public Policy and Government Relations, TikTok Indonesia, emphasized the importance of community involvement in fighting the spread of misinformation. The #SalingJaga campaign encourages users to actively shape safe digital spaces and take control of the information they receive. "Everyone has a role and responsibility in protecting not only themselves but also #SalingJaga from misinformation. Therefore, we "invite users to access the 2024 Election Guide Center to obtain credible and authoritative information regarding the implementation of the 2024 Election," said Firry ([newsroom. Tiktok, 2023](#)).

RI KPU Commissioner Betty Epsilon Idroos and RI Bawaslu Commissioner Lolly Suhenty appreciate TikTok's ongoing efforts to provide political education that is easy to digest and access, which is very important for the younger generation, especially for first-time voters. Apart from providing access for users and communities to get credible information about the 2024 Election in the application, TikTok also invites communities and users in Indonesia to share creative ways to keep the dissemination of information safe through the hashtag challenge entitled #SalingJaga which will take place starting from November 28 until December 31, 2023.

In addition, TikTok is also holding a series of LIVE sessions to raise awareness among the user, host, and creator community of the dangers of misinformation, provide education to voters, and encourage responsible content creation within the TikTok community featuring creators such as @coach.ellaaa, @lendra.cikicow, @liannanathania, @komorickyreal, and experts from the Indonesian Journalist Alliance (AJI), ECPAT Indonesia, and elude.

The frequency and amount of time spent on social media do not automatically guarantee youth involvement in society. Competence and attitude within the umbrella of digital literacy are very important ([Moon & Bai, 2020](#)). This fake news can create information that people consume unconsciously due to a lack of literacy culture ([Anwar, 2021](#)). The digital literacy program carried out by TikTok as a medium for election information and the spread of misinformation can protect the integrity of the 2024 Election.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Strengthening digital literacy is an urgency in the 2024 Election in Indonesia. TikTok is a digital information medium among the masses, especially the younger generation, who will be the largest number of voters in 2024. TikTok is creating a digital literacy program by connecting access to credible and authoritative information about the election, which is supported by state institutions such as The General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia (KPU RI) and the Election Supervisory Body of the Republic of Indonesia (Bawaslu RI). TikTok also collaborates with MAFINDO and Perludem to educate the public through digital content as a form of prebunking, as well as labelling content across platforms and enforcing TikTok policies in the 2024 elections.

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