

Analysis of Student Political Behavior in Serang City

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ABSTRACT - Students are often considered as agents of change who have great hopes to improve the conditions of society. Through political involvement, students can provide input and demands to the government so that the policies produced are for the benefit of the wider community. However, the implementation of this political action is greatly influenced by students' perceptions of basic concepts and existing political realities, which further shape their political attitudes or behaviors. This research offers a novelty that focuses on the political behavior of students through their perception and participation in ongoing political dynamics. This research was conducted on students from various universities in Serang City, Banten Province, using qualitative methods. Data collection was carried out through literature studies and interviews, with descriptive and analytical data analysis. The results of the study show that political participation among students in Serang City is influenced by the resources and access to knowledge they have, both in the campus environment and in the academic network. In addition, students also have time to study, discuss, and advocate for policies that are perceived to be detrimental to society. However, even though they have this awareness and opportunity, students in Serang City tend not to show the desire to be actively involved in influencing political decisions, the public policy-making process, and leadership succession. This can be seen from their participation in the general election which is still procedural and has not reached a substantial level.

Keywords: political behavior; Student; political participation

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Introduction

The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education defines students as individuals registered in higher education institutions that provide academic programs. This definition includes all levels of higher education, ranging from diploma to doctoral programs. Within this context, students are not only positioned as learners but also as integral members of the academic community who carry social and intellectual responsibilities (Sutiyoso et al., 2022; Yafet Enjel Damopolii, Adi Tirto Koesoemo, 2023).

The role of students in politics, especially at the local level, is crucial, especially related to their ideal role as agents of change and a voice connector for the community to the government (Beaumont et al., 2006; Dewantara et al., 2022). Students have the capacity to criticize public policy and advocate for the interests of underrepresented communities. Students in their role function not only as students living in ivory towers, but also as activists who contribute to the democratic process through various forms of participation, such as demonstrations, public discussions, and general elections (Trenggono, 2025). Students are often actively engaged in youth and community organizations that address social and political issues relevant to their local environment. Their increasing awareness and involvement in these activities significantly contribute to strengthening the legitimacy and improving the quality of democracy at the local level.

A concrete example of the role of students in local politics can be seen in the student movement in Serang City which demands transparency in the management of the regional budget. In 2021, a group of students in Serang City held a protest that highlighted the inefficiency of the management of the Serang City APBD which was considered redundant, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Then the protest that criticized the policies of the Banten Provincial Government which were considered not friendly to people with disabilities. Then in 2025 students also held a demonstration criticizing the official travel budget of members of the Serang City DPRD which was considered not in accordance with the poverty problems faced by the people of Serang City. These actions not only show the courage of students in voicing their opinions, but also the real impact they can have on local policies. With various examples of these movements, students show a high level of solidarity in an effort to fight for common interests (Al-Ra'zie, 2025b).

Furthermore, the role of students in local politics also includes political education for the community. Through seminars, discussions and training, students can help increase public understanding of the importance of participation in the political process. Through appropriate and consistent political education, political awareness in the wider community will increase (Alexander et al., 2024)

Based on this, the importance of the role of students in local politics cannot be ignored. They not only function as supervisors and critics, but also act as educators and mobilizers of society to participate in the political process. This can be done by students through community service activities (Al-Ra'zie, Syarkawi, et al., 2025) Thus, the role of students in local politics in Serang City has become very significant in shaping better political dynamics.

As the capital of Banten Province, Serang City has a unique and dynamic political context. Since its inauguration as a city in 2007, Serang has undergone various changes in the governance structure and political dynamics. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2022, the population of Serang City reached around 720,362 people, with some of the population

being the younger generation who are the main voter base in the general election. This creates opportunities for students to influence the direction of local politics.

One of the main challenges in the political context of Serang City is the level of corruption and public dissatisfaction with public services. In the Monitoring Center for Prevention (MCP) activity by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in 2023, the city of Serang received an assessment score of 70 which is still included in the vulnerability to corruption (ppid.serangkota.go.id, 2024) This causes students to feel the need to be actively involved in local politics to encourage change and transparency in government.

In addition, the dynamics of local politics in Serang City are also influenced by the existence of diverse political parties. These parties often compete for support from voters, including students. Existing research indicates that students generally show a preference for political parties whose vision and mission align with their specific interests, such as education, health, and environmental issues (Djumadin, 2021) these interests include education, health, and the environment. This shows that students have a strategic role in determining the direction of local politics.

Serang City also faces complex social issues, such as unemployment and poverty. According to data from the Banten Provincial BPS, the unemployment rate in the city of Serang will reach 7.45% in 2023 and 7.12% in 2024. Although the lift has decreased slightly, this is still an important problem to prioritize handling health issues like these are the main concern of students who often advocate for more pro-people policies in order to reduce social injustice. In this context, students in Serang City have a responsibility to not only participate in politics, but also to become agents of change who are able to overcome various challenges faced by the community. By understanding the local political context, students can be more effective in formulating relevant strategies and actions to drive improvement in government and society.

In the theory of political participation, it is explained how individuals and groups are involved in the political process, as well as the factors that affect the level of participation. One of the theories that is often used is the theory of political participation by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, which identifies three main factors that influence participation: resources, motivation, and opportunity (Verba et al., 1995) The resources in question in this case include education, time and access to information. In the context of students in Serang City, these three factors can be seen in their various forms of involvement in local politics.

Students, as educated individuals, have an advantage in terms of knowledge of political issues and public policy. Students who are active in campus organizations tend to have a better understanding of local political dynamics and are more involved in political activities. This shows that higher education can serve as a tool to increase political participation.

In addition, motivation also plays an important role in encouraging students to get involved in local politics. Students who have high social awareness are more likely to easily participate in political activities, such as campaigns and elections. This awareness is often triggered by personal experiences or influences from their social environment, including family, friends, and organizations.

Furthermore, the opportunity to participate is also a key factor in this theory of political participation. In the context of Serang City, students have various channels to get involved in politics. These channels can be through student organizations, political parties, or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Al-Ra'zie, Maulana, et al., 2025) Students who are active in

student organizations have a greater opportunity to engage in political discussions and actions in the field. This creates space for them to be better able to voice their opinions and advocate for change.

In general, the theory of political participation Verba, Scholzman, and Brady (1995) provides a useful framework to understand student involvement in local politics in Serang City. Based on this, the researcher is interested in conducting research on the political behavior of students in Serang City, Banten Province. The political behavior of the students was analyzed more specifically, namely by questioning how students in Serang City perceive politics, as well as what kind of political participation students in Serang City want and have done as a form of their responsibility and contribution to regional development.

Method

In this study, a qualitative approach was used. According to Moleong, this approach aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects such as perceptions, actions, behaviors, motivations and others that are captured thoroughly (Noor, 2020). This research prioritizes the aspect of data depth of the phenomenon being studied to gain a deeper understanding of the social world being studied (Tawakkal & Rohman, 2022). Thus, qualitative research is considered the most appropriate approach to the theme of this study on dynamic political phenomena (Al-Ra'zie, 2025a).

This research took place in Serang City, Banten Province, with 50 students from a number of universities in Serang City, including Pamulang University Serang City Campus (UNPAM), Sultan Maulana Hasanudin State Islamic University (UIN SMH Banten), Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University (UNTIRTA), Serang Raya University (UNSERA), and Bina Bangsa University (UNIBA). The primary data collection used a written interview technique over a period of ten days, from December 10 to December 15, 2023. As for secondary data, it is collected from books, journals, print and online media documentation, both local and national.

Qualitative data analysis techniques have a number of important stages, including: (1) collecting data, (2) condensing or reducing relevant data, (3) displaying the selected data, (4) explaining the data from the analysis (Sarosa, 2021). The analysis process in this study is carried out by interpreting the relationship between the phenomenon being studied and the theory used as an analysis tool, and then formulating conclusions as a result of the analysis (Nurfaisal, 2024).

Result and Discussion

Perceptions of Students in Serang City about Politics

The analysis of students' political perceptions in Serang City is based on three key questions posed to respondents by the researcher, namely: (1) What comes to your mind when you hear the term politics? How would you describe politics?, (2) Do you actively seek information related to politics, whether through print media such as newspapers, television, online platforms, or social media? If yes, what motivates you to do so? If not, what are your reasons?, and (3) Do you enjoy discussing political topics with your peers or others within your community? The responses to these questions are illustrated in the following chart.

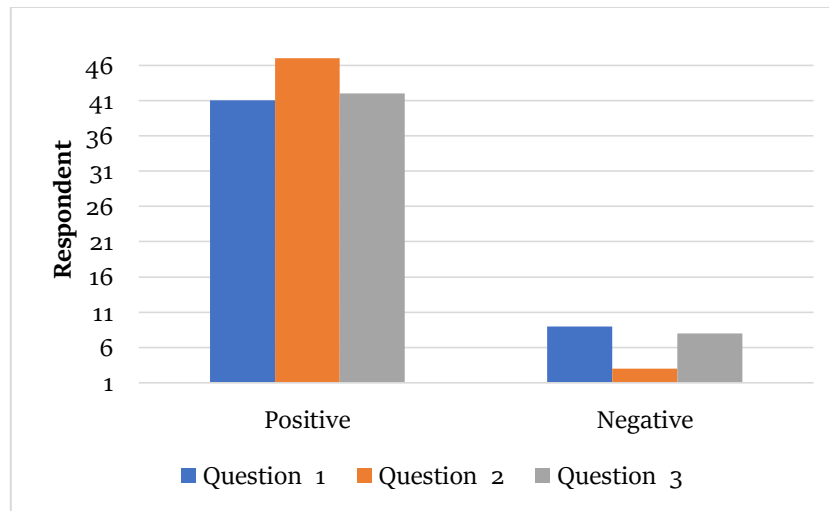


Figure 1. Perceptions of Students in Serang City about Politics

Source : processed by author

Based on the results of interviews with respondents, in the first question about the image that appeared in their minds when hearing the term politics, it was revealed that students in Serang City tend to have a positive perception of politics. They view politics as a process and system that aims to fulfill the interests of society. In their view, the power that operates in politics involves various interests directed at organizing society towards a better life, especially through policymaking. For students in Serang City, politics is not only an arena for elites to compete in gaining and utilizing power, but also a forum for the community to actively participate in the process.

The political situation in Serang City reflects a dynamic and complex reality that students are increasingly aware of. They understand that politics is not static, but filled with competing interests and debates that influence public policy outcomes. Students recognize that the policymaking process carried out by political actors and institutions extends beyond formal procedures, requiring careful consideration of public voices, which are often overlooked. Their awareness places them not merely as passive observers but as active participants in the political arena. On several occasions, students in Serang City have expressed their concerns and aspirations to local authorities, particularly regarding issues that directly affect them, such as tuition costs and access to public services. Through these engagements, students come to realize that politics is closely tied to their daily lives and significantly shapes various aspects of their well-being (Nielsen, 2016; Sabbagh & Vanhuysse, 2006; Sandahl, 2019). They also develop the understanding that politicians who are committed to serving the public must be willing to listen to and accommodate the aspirations of society. Students hold the expectation that political leaders should not only prioritize personal or group interests but should also be responsive to the broader needs of the community.

The awareness of students in Serang City towards politics can be said to come from the resources they have, such as intellectual circles in universities, lectures in the classroom, visits to the library, group discussions in the campus environment, and external institutions on campus. This shows that they not only want to be passive participants, but also want to be agents of change that are influential in society. In addition, in the midst of the rapid development of technology

today, students can access political information with just one touch of a finger, through social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), TikTok, and other digital platforms. According to students, information about politics often comes by itself, without them having to work hard to find it. Thus, students do not face significant obstacles in seeking and obtaining information or learning about politics. For example, at political moments such as the 2024 Regional Elections which are in line with the momentum of the election of presidents, vice presidents, and members of the House of Representatives. In this era, information about politics flows rapidly, filling every time, place, and even digital space. This attracts the attention of students in Serang City, especially for those who will exercise their right to vote as citizens for the first time. Their enthusiasm is very high, because for the first time their vote will have a significant impact on the nation's development in the future.

Based on the analysis of responses given by student respondents in Serang City, it can be concluded that they tend to have a positive view of politics as a concept and theory. This shows that there is a growing awareness among the younger generation about the importance of political understanding in daily life. Students as one of the important elements in society realize that they cannot be separated from the influence of various political aspects around them. In this context, politics is not only seen as a matter of government or public policy, but also as part of the social dynamics that affect the lives of individuals and society as a whole.

In this positive view, there is a recognition that political understanding can provide significant benefits, considering that their lives are inseparable from various political aspects. For example, students who actively follow political developments tend to be more critical and able to analyze existing situations. They can see the relationship between government policies and their impact on society, such as in terms of education, health, and the economy.

However, despite the awareness of the importance of political understanding, it is undeniable that there is still a negative tendency among some respondents. Some college students view politics with skepticism, which can be caused by personal experiences or negative information they receive. For example, corruption cases that are rampant among political elites often become in the media spotlight and create a negative image of the political world. When students see the news about corruption scandals, they may feel that politics is a dirty arena full of dishonesty. This creates a gap between ideal political theory and real practice, which is often out of line.

This negative perception is also strengthened by the presence of social media which is the main source of information for many students. In this digital era, information can be easily disseminated, but not all information circulating can be accounted for its truth (Cooke, 2017; Hermida, 2012; Meel & Vishwakarma, 2020). For example, cases of spreading hoax or disinformation news carried out by political buzzers often cause confusion among the public. Students who do not have a strong political education background may find it difficult to distinguish between accurate information and what is not. Therefore, they tend to feel the need to conduct more in-depth verification before trusting the political information received. As a result of the buzzer action, some students in Serang City felt that the political information circulating was not necessarily accurate. They realize that much of the information presented is incomplete or even deliberately distorted for certain interests. For example, in the context of a general election, some buzzers may try to build a positive image for a particular candidate while damaging the reputation of his or her political opponent in an unethical way. This raises doubts in the minds of

students about the authenticity of the information they receive. In situations like this, students are expected to be more critical and selective in consuming information, and able to analyze existing sources.

This tendency is also influenced by their experience in interacting directly with the social environment. For example, interactions at home, campus, circle of friends, and in everyday life provide a broader context for students to understand politics. Discussions that take place among peers are often a means to form more critical political views. When students share their experiences and perspectives, they can influence each other and broaden their perspectives on political issues.

Student Political Participation and Behavior in Serang City

The political participation of students in Serang City shows interesting and complex dynamics. This high level of participation can be seen from several indicators that reflect their involvement in the political arena. One of the main indicators is the interest of students in discussing political issues and government policies. In today's information age, students have wider access to news and political analysis through various media platforms. They not only follow the news through television or newspapers, but also actively seek information on the internet, including social media. For example, many students engage in discussions in online forums or social media groups that discuss current issues.

This activity shows that students are not only consumers of information, but also producers of opinions. They often express their views on government policies that are considered inadequate or detrimental to society. This shows that they have high political awareness and have the courage to speak up to fight for the interests of the community.

In addition, the involvement of students in voting in elections is also an important indicator of their political participation (Jemna & Curelaru, 2009; Saha & Print, 2010; Utari et al., 2023). Despite the tendency that decisions taken are not always based on ideal considerations, participation in elections remains an important step in the democratic process. Students are often strategic voters, although they are sometimes influenced by external factors such as aggressive political campaigns or unrealistic promises from would-be leaders. For example, in the last general election, many students voted based on the popularity of candidates or peer influence, rather than on a clear track record or vision and mission.

However, it is important to analyze more deeply why students' decisions in choosing are often not based on ideal considerations. One of the contributing factors is the lack of adequate political education among students. Many of them do not get a sufficient understanding of the importance of choosing based on accurate information and in-depth analysis. This shows the need to improve political education on campuses, so that students are not only active voters, but also intelligent and critical voters.

Viewed from a broader perspective, the political participation of students in Serang City is also influenced by the existing social and cultural context. For example, in societies that have a strong tradition of organizing, students tend to be more active in political activities. They are often involved in student organizations that focus not only on academic issues, but also on social and political issues. These organizations are a forum for students to discuss, formulate strategies, and carry out real actions in voicing their opinions. In this case, collaboration between student organizations can also strengthen their voices in the political realm.

Political participation of students in Serang City was analyzed from respondents' answers to the following three questions: (1) Are you interested in participating in the election (DPRD, DPD, DPR RI, Regent, Mayor, Governor, President) such as voting as a voter, a successful team or others? What are the reasons, (2) If there is a government policy that you do not approve of or is considered difficult for the community, what actions do you usually take?, (3) What do you think students should do in responding to political life in Indonesia in general, in Banten and Serang City in particular?

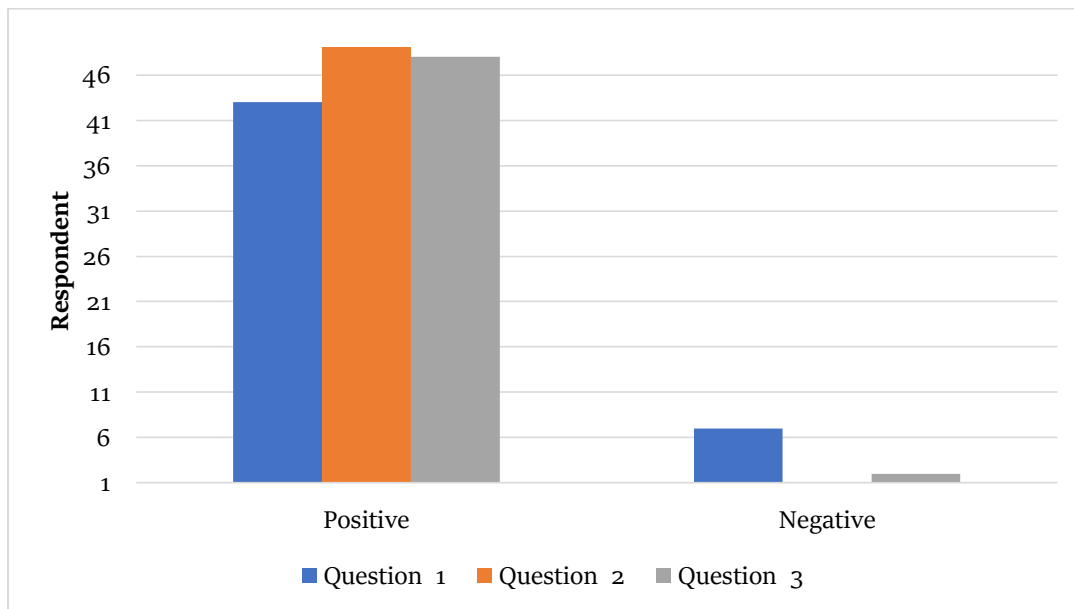


Figure 2. Student Political Participation and Behavior in Serang City

Source: processed by author

Based on the results of student respondents' answers in Serang City regarding direct involvement in the political process, it is known that student respondents in Serang City show significant interest in being involved in political activities, especially in the context of general elections. This interest is not only limited to the role of a voter, but also extends to various other aspects such as being part of the winning team, being involved in organizing general elections, and even running as a participant in the general election itself. This phenomenon shows that students in Serang City do not only see politics as something far from their lives, but as an arena where they can contribute and take an active part in the democratic process.

One of the main motivations that encourage students to participate in political activities is the desire to contribute to the country. In this context, such contributions can be in the form of votes they cast in elections, which is considered their rights and obligations as citizens. For example, when a student chooses to vote, they are not only expressing personal preferences, but also contributing to the formation of a government that reflects the wishes of the community. This is the same as the findings of Alfuruqi's (2025) research on the political behavior of Central Java students in the 2024 Central Java Governor election, which explains that the motivation of students to participate in general elections is to contribute to the future of the region (Alfuruqi,

2025, p. 451). This is an important step in the democratic process, where every vote carries equal weight and has the potential to influence the direction of public policy.

In addition, students' involvement in political activities also reflects their awareness of the importance of choosing good leaders. In many cases, students are a group that has better access to information and education, so they can be more critical in assessing potential leaders. They don't just look at campaign ads or listen to political promises, but also conduct in-depth research on the candidate's track record, vision, and mission. For example, a student might conduct an analysis of the programs offered by a prospective leader, compare them with each other, and consider the long-term impact of the proposed policy. In this way, students not only become passive voters, but also active actors in determining the future of the nation.

Voicing opinions in democracy is also one of the strong reasons for students to get involved in politics. In many forums, students are often critical and courageous voices in expressing their opinions. They do not hesitate to express their views, whether through public debates, discussions on campus, or through social media. Social media has become an integral and familiar instrument within student political movements, serving not only as a platform for disseminating information and mobilizing support but also as a space for expressing opinions, building networks, and coordinating collective actions in a more efficient, accessible, and wide-reaching manner (Huda et al., 2024). For example, many students use digital platforms to voice social and political issues that they consider important. This shows that they care not only about themselves, but also about the broader issues affecting society.

The first experience in participating in the general election is also an attractive factor for students. For many of them, it was a moment full of emotions and valuable experiences. They felt enthusiasm when they went to the polling station, saw the election process, and finally cast their votes. This moment is often considered a rite of passage that marks their transition from adolescence to responsible adulthood. In this context, elections are not just a political event, but also a social experience that strengthens a sense of identity and togetherness among them.

The interest of students to participate in politics in Serang City can also be seen from the increasing number of student organizations engaged in politics. These organizations often hold seminars, workshops, and discussions aimed at raising political awareness among students. They also act as a bridge between students and the wider political world, providing opportunities for students to interact with political leaders, activists, and experts. Through these activities, students not only gain knowledge, but also build networks that can benefit their political careers in the future.

While students' interest in participating in politics is very positive, there are also challenges that need to be faced. One of them is the political apathy that still exists among some students. Although many are active, there are also those who are skeptical of the political system and feel that their votes will have no effect. This can be caused by a variety of factors, such as a bad experience with previous politics, a lack of information, or dissatisfaction with the options at hand. Therefore, it is important for relevant parties, such as universities and student organizations, to continue to encourage active participation and provide adequate political education.

Then, students in Serang City have a high awareness of the importance of taking action if there are government policies that are considered inappropriate or even detrimental to the community. This awareness is not just an emotional reaction, but a reflection of a deep

understanding of their role as agents of change in society. In this context, the actions that can be taken by students are very diverse, ranging from studies with experts, actions in the field, to demonstrations. Each of these actions has a different goal and method, but they all aim to encourage positive and constructive change.

One of the first actions that can be taken is to conduct a study with a specialist. In this case, students can invite academics, practitioners, or even experts in the field of law and public policy to provide a deeper understanding of the policy in question. For example, if there is a policy that regulates the environment, students can hold a panel discussion that brings together environmental experts, activists, and government representatives to discuss the impact of the policy comprehensively. By conducting this study, students not only get accurate information, but also build strong arguments for or against the policy.

Furthermore, actions in the field are concrete steps that can be taken by students. This action can be in the form of awareness campaigns, collecting signatures for petitions, or social activities that educate the public about the impact of existing policies. For example, if there is a policy that raises taxes that impacts small communities, students can organize solidarity actions by visiting affected communities and providing an understanding of how those policies affect their daily lives. In this way, students not only play the role of observers, but also as movers who are able to gather support from the wider community.

Demonstrations are also a form of action that is often carried out by students in response to government policies. These demonstrations can be a means to voice dissatisfaction publicly and attract media attention. For example, in recent years, we have seen massive demonstrations by students in various countries as a form of protest against education policies that are considered detrimental. These demonstrations not only involve students, but also the general public, thus creating greater solidarity in voicing collective aspirations. However, it is important to remember that demonstrations must be conducted in a peaceful and organized manner so that the message you want to convey does not get lost.

If the policy in question is in the form of a law, students have the option to conduct a judicial review to the Constitutional Court (MK). This is a very strategic legal step and shows that students are not only relying on street action, but also using legal channels to challenge policies that are considered unconstitutional. In this process, students can work with lawyers or legal organizations to craft a strong argument and support their claims. For example, if there is a law that is considered to violate human rights, students can collect evidence and testimonies from affected communities to strengthen their position in court.

In addition, providing analysis and discussion about existing policies is also an important step that students can take. In this case, students can hold seminars, workshops, or group discussions involving various parties, including the government, academics, and the community. In this way, students not only express their opinions, but also create space for constructive dialogue. For example, a seminar on education policy can discuss a variety of perspectives, from the perspective of students, parents, to educators, resulting in more comprehensive and inclusive recommendations.

Social media is also a very effective tool to express opinions and build awareness among the public. Students' political awareness is influenced by social media (Pradana, 2017). Students can leverage platforms like Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook to spread information, organize actions, and rally support. With its broad reach and ability to interact directly with audiences,

social media allows college students to reach more people and create buzz about the issues they raise. For example, social media campaigns that raise environmental issues can attract public attention and encourage greater collective action.

In analyzing every aspect of the actions taken by students, it is important to look at the impact that is produced. Expert study actions can lead to deeper understanding and strong arguments, while field actions and demonstrations can create broader public awareness. Judicial review provides space for students to engage in legal processes and uphold constitutional principles, while analysis and discussion encourage constructive dialogue. Social media, on the other hand, is becoming a tool that amplifies all of these actions by expanding reach and increasing participation.

Then, related to the active role that students should play in responding to political life in Indonesia in general and in Banten and Serang City in particular, students in Serang City argue that they must maximize their role as critical, systematic, and environmentally caring individuals. In this context, students not only function as recipients of information, but also as agents of change who are able to analyze and provide solutions to various existing issues.

One concrete example of the active role of students is through demonstrations. This demonstration is often the choice of students as a form of criticism of policies that are considered not in accordance with public expectations. For example, when local governments issue policies that have the potential to harm the environment, students can organize protests. In the action, they not only voiced their dissatisfaction, but also included an in-depth study that showed the negative impact of the policy. Thus, demonstrations are not just an expression of emotions, but a form of participation that is planned and based on valid data. This shows the level of maturity and seriousness of students in responding to existing political issues.

In addition to demonstrations, students also have another alternative to contribute to political life, namely by being involved in organizations that focus on community empowerment. In Banten, many organizations work in various fields, such as social, economic, educational, and legal. Students who join these organizations can play an active role in designing programs that aim to improve the quality of life of the community, especially in areas that are less paid attention by the government. For example, they can hold skills training for people in remote areas, so that people can have a better source of income. In this way, students not only contribute directly, but also build collective awareness in society about the importance of participation in the political process.

Furthermore, in the context of Banten, students feel the need to have critical awareness, especially related to the local political context that is still familiar with political dynasties. Political dynasties in Banten are still considered to be a barrier to the emergence of new and innovative practices and ideas in government. Students must be able to analyze and criticize this system, as well as find alternative solutions that can support a healthier democracy. For example, they can conduct research on the impact of political dynasties on regional development and disseminate the results of the research to the wider community. In this way, students act as agents of change who seek to create a more transparent and accountable political system.

Not only that, students must also utilize information technology to disseminate information and increase political awareness. In today's digital era, social media has become a very effective tool to convey political messages. Students can use these platforms to discuss current issues, share information, and organize politically related activities. By utilizing

technology, students can reach a wider audience and build networks with various parties who share the same vision and mission. This can also strengthen solidarity between students and the community in fighting for common interests.

Thus, the views expressed by the student speakers, if analyzed through the theory of political participation described by Verba, Scholzman, and Brady (1995), show that political participation is influenced by three main factors, namely the resources owned, motivation, and available opportunities. Students in Serang City have resources in the form of access to higher education that some other individuals do not have. Although Serang City is the capital of Banten province, its status can still be said to be lagging behind other cities such as South Tangerang and Tangerang City, especially in terms of community welfare and regional development. This certainly has an impact on the education aspect and the opportunity to continue studying at universities for the local community. As students studying in Serang City, they have a good opportunity to access knowledge from the campus environment and existing academic networks, such as the academic community, student organizations, and so on. In addition, students also have a lot of time and opportunity to learn, discuss, and develop action plans and advocate for policies that are considered ineffective or detrimental to society.

Furthermore, students in Serang City generally have high motivation to be involved in political activities. This participation is not only limited to the conventional space, but also extends to the digital space. For example, students can protest politically or criticize policies through their social media, either through writing, memes, videos, music, or other creative works. This can be a more active and effective movement, especially if the criticism goes viral and attracts wider attention. Moreover, there is currently an understanding in society that a problem will receive serious attention and a solution will be sought immediately if the problem has gone viral. The term often used for this phenomenon is "viral-based policy". Through viral concepts on social media, issues that are objectively small can have a big impact on society. On the other hand, issues that are objectively big problems can be considered trivial due to the lack of attention from the public in the digital space.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the political behavior of students in Serang City, it was found that they tend to behave as a category of subjects or *kaula* in politics. Despite having a good understanding of political issues, students feel that their active participation in influencing political decisions has not been a priority. Their involvement in the elections is still limited to procedural aspects and does not yet include the deeper dimension of democracy.

As agents of change, students need to have a strong political awareness and not be antipathetic to it, because every aspect of people's lives is related to politics. They also play an important role as a bridge between the community and the government. In an academic environment, students have a responsibility to enlighten society and convey their hopes and aspirations, regardless of the field of study taken. In addition, the role of students is clearly very important in building a deeper political awareness and encouraging active participation in the democratic process, which should be not only procedural but also substantial. This is crucial so that students can make an effective contribution in creating positive changes for society and the country.

Even so, the influence of the development of internet technology also opens up new space for student political participation and behavior. Based on the findings of the research, it is known that students' political understanding and attitudes tend to be influenced by information from social media. This new tool is able to shape and manage political issues more practically, both in a positive and constructive context and vice versa. Therefore, some kind of mechanism or arrangement or other form is needed that allows and is able to ensure that political information that enters social media and reaches students is really useful for future political development.

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