

ENHANCING RE-ELECTION INTENTION THROUGH VISUAL ACCENTUATION STRATEGY: A POLITICAL MARKETING STRATEGY APPROACH

Novita Putri Ardiana^{1*}, Naili Rahma Yuliani², Mohamad Rifqy Roosdhani³, Sisno
Riyoko⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Pascasarjana Manajemen, Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama, Jepara, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: magistermanajemen03@gmail.com

Abstract: This study examines the influence of visual accentuation on re-election intention among Generation Z, with visual appeal as mediating variables. Previous research by Ferdinand and Zuhroh (2022) investigated socio-aesthetic value accentuation (SAVA) in Indonesian SMEs with 178 respondents. Their results showed that accentuating the social and aesthetic value embedded in products could enhance market appeal and strengthen sales performance, indicating that effective aesthetic and social accentuation positively affects consumer behavior. Conversely, Dan and Arendt (2025) found that using visual elements as identity markers on social media was only effective for liberal audiences and did not significantly influence conservative groups, emphasizing that visual cues do not automatically produce the same effects across all audiences due to differences in political identity. This inconsistency highlights the need to examine mediating variables such as visual appeal to understand the psychological processes leading to re-election intention. Addressing this gap, the present study situates visual accentuation within Indonesia's 2024 Legislative Election, focusing on Jamaludin Malik's campaign, which employed Ultraman as a distinctive visual accentuation strategy in political communication. Using a quantitative approach and Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), data were collected from 400 Gen Z respondents in the Central Java II electoral district. The results indicate that visual accentuation significantly affects voters' intention to re-elect, with stronger effects observed when the relationship operates indirectly through the mediation of visual appeal and self-brand congruence rather than directly. This study is novel as it is the first to investigate the visual accentuation "Ultraman Jamaludin Malik" political communication strategy in influencing re-election intention among Generation Z in Indonesia.

Keywords: Visual Accentuation, Visual Appeal, Self-Brand Congruence, Re-election Intention, Political Marketing Strategy

1. Introduction

Political communication strategies in the digital era have undergone significant transformation, particularly in reaching Generation Z voters. This cohort, representing first-time young voters, demonstrates a strong preference for visually engaging and authentic content over conventional verbal messages (Alifatunnisa, Azzahra et al., 2024). This phenomenon presents opportunities for politicians to build their personal image through consistent and appealing visual content. Despite its potential, challenges remain in ensuring that political communication strategies not only capture attention but also establish emotional connections and trust with young voters. Jamaludin Malik, a legislative member for the 2024 to 2029 period representing Central Java II, employed an innovative political communication strategy by utilizing the fictional character Ultraman in his campaign. Although the use of fictional characters in political campaigns is not unprecedented globally, its application in Indonesia, particularly to engage Generation Z, remains rare. Previous studies have demonstrated that visually attractive and consistent content

can enhance engagement and trust among young voters toward legislative candidates (Sastro and Zulkarnain, 2025). However, no study has specifically examined the effectiveness of using fictional characters such as Ultraman in political communication strategies in the Indonesian context. This study is important to fill the literature gap and provide new insights into effective political communication strategies for Generation Z.

If the effectiveness of visual political communication strategies, such as those employed by Jamaludin Malik, is not studied and analyzed in depth, several negative consequences may arise. First, campaigns risk becoming mere gimmicks without a solid theoretical and empirical foundation, which may compromise candidate credibility if visuals are perceived as excessive or misaligned with candidate image or voter expectations. The journal *Visual Dramatization of Political Campaigns on Social Media* indicates that while visual dramatization can attract Instagram users, it must align with candidate identity to avoid alienating audiences (Ariadi, Razani et al., 2024). Second, reliance on viral content and visual appeal may obscure the substantive issues and policy discussions, as the study *The Role of Viral Video in Indonesian Politics* shows that viral videos can shape audience perception primarily through visual and viral elements rather than policy content (Utami, 2017). Third, from both academic and practical perspectives, without valid research on the mediating variable visual appeal, legislative candidates and campaign teams in districts such as Central Java II will struggle to develop effective strategies, particularly for critical and visually oriented Generation Z voters, leading to misdirected campaign decisions and wasted resources.

Previous research provides a foundation for understanding the roles of these variables and identifying gaps that remain unaddressed, positioning this study to fill a clear research void. Ferdinan and Zuhroh investigated socio-aesthetic value accentuation in Indonesian small and medium enterprises with 178 respondents (Ferdinand and Zuhroh, 2022). Their findings demonstrated that accentuating the aesthetic and social values embedded in products enhances market appeal and strengthens sales performance, indicating that effective accentuation positively affects consumer behavior. Conversely, Dan and Arendt found that using visual elements as identity markers on social media was effective only for liberal audiences and did not significantly affect conservative groups (Dan and Arendt, 2025). Their study emphasizes that visual cues do not produce uniform effects across all audiences due to differences in political identity. These findings suggest the need to examine mediating variables such as visual appeal to explain the psychological processes underlying re-election intention.

Comparison of these studies reveals inconsistencies. While one emphasizes the power of accentuation in influencing consumer behavior, the other shows that visual cues in political contexts do not always directly impact voter behavior. This inconsistency opens a space for further research. Consequently, this study is necessary as few studies have directly examined how visual accentuation strategies in political communication affect re-election intention among Generation Z, considering mediating variables such as visual appeal. This study is novel as it is the first to investigate the visual accentuation political communication strategy of Ultraman Jamaludin Malik in influencing re-election intention among Generation Z in Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

Political Communication Strategy

Political communication strategy refers to the deliberate approach used by political actors to craft messages, select communication channels, and influence public opinion during campaigns or public discourse (Karlsen and Enjolras, 2016). In the current hybrid media environment,

such strategies often combine traditional tactics with digital approaches, for instance by integrating mainstream news coverage with targeted social media postings, where effectiveness depends on the ability to synergize both domains (Roemmele, Gibson et al., 2020). Empirical research also shows that campaign styles in social media, such as candidate personalization, visual formats, and supporter networks, shape the reach and influence among specific voter segments. Therefore, the choice of strategy should take into account platform affordances and audience demographics (Karlsen and Enjolras, 2016).

Visual Accentuation

Visual accentuation in political communication can be understood as the deliberate emphasis on visual elements such as background cues, symbols, colors, or framing devices that make political messages or candidate attributes more recognizable and easier to evaluate (Dan and Arendt, 2021). Research titled Visual Cues to the Hidden Agenda demonstrates that subtle ideological cues embedded in politicians' background settings help citizens associate candidates with certain ideological leanings, and this is positively correlated with voting intention (Dan and Arendt, 2021). Another study on Visual Self-Presentation Strategies of Political Candidates shows that candidates employ different framing techniques across social media platforms to reinforce specific traits. This finding indicates that accentuated visuals function as signals of candidate identity that are equally important as verbal campaign messages (Steffan 2020).

Visual Appeal

Visual appeal describes the extent to which elements such as composition, aesthetics, color schemes, and typography are perceived as attractive or pleasing by audiences. Research in advertising consistently confirms that visually appealing content enhances attention and facilitates the processing of messages (Dagalp and Södergren, 2024). Experimental studies in cognitive psychology demonstrate that higher visual aesthetics improve the efficiency of visual search and increase the prominence of objects during initial attention. As a result, political messages that are visually appealing are more likely to be noticed and remembered by audiences (Wiecek, Wentzel et al., 2019). In the context of political marketing, visual appeal that is aligned with the values and narratives of a candidate strengthens positive evaluations of campaign content and activates emotional pathways that encourage voter support. This shows that visual design in campaigns is not merely decorative but serves as a strategic component (Shi, Huo et al., 2021).

Re-election Intention

Re-election intention is influenced by retrospective evaluations of performance, perceived motives and intentions, as well as communication strategies that shape voter perceptions (Liberini, Redoano et al., 2017). Experimental research shows that voters are guided not only by the results of policies but also by their perceptions of the sincerity and good intentions of incumbents when making decisions about re-election (Andrews and Bokemper, 2025). Previous literature on political persuasion emphasizes that communication strategies which include visual presentation and framing play an important role in shaping voter preferences. Campaign approaches that highlight positive intentions and project candidate images congruent with audience values can significantly enhance re-election prospects (Berk, 2025).

3. Method

This study employed a quantitative approach using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), a variance-based method suitable for predicting complex causal relationships and effective for small sample sizes and non-normal data distributions (Amin, Faisol et al., 2021). Data were collected between June and September 2025 through online questionnaires distributed via purposive sampling, targeting Generation Z individuals residing in Jepara, Demak, and Kudus. Population data obtained from official KPU announcements 2025 indicated a total of 574,754 Generation Z voters, with 216,861 in Jepara, 145,140 in Kudus, and 212,753 in Demak. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error, resulting in 400 valid responses, which is sufficient to represent the population for SEM-PLS analysis. The questionnaire measured four variables using a ten-point Likert scale, namely Visual Accentuation (X1), Visual Appeal (X2, mediator), and Re-election Intention (Y). Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS version 4.0, allowing for comprehensive testing of relationships among variables and assessing the influence of visual accentuation and its mediated effects on re-election intention among Generation Z voters.

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Aspect	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	259	64.7%
	Male	141	35.3%
Year of Birth	1997	12	3.0%
	1998	16	4.0%
	1999	52	13.0%
	2000	59	14.8%
	2001	83	20.7%
	2002	45	11.2%
	2003	21	5.3%
	2004	21	5.3%
	2005	12	3.0%
	2006	38	9.5%
	2007	41	10.2%
Total :		400	
Domicile	Jepara	386	96.5%
	Demak	7	1.8%
	Kudus	7	1.8%

Source: Data Processed (2025)

Based on Table 1, out of 400 respondents, the majority were female, accounting for 259 individuals or 64.7 percent, while males totaled 141 or 35.3 percent. Respondents were distributed across different birth years, with the largest group born in 2001 comprising 83 individuals or 20.7 percent, followed by those born in 2000 with 59 individuals or 14.8 percent, and 1999 with 52 individuals or 13.0 percent. The smallest groups were born in 1997 and 2005, each consisting of 12 individuals or 3.0 percent. Most respondents resided in Jepara, totaling

386 individuals or 96.5 percent, whereas only seven respondents each lived in Demak and Kudus, representing 1.8 percent. Regarding campaign exposure, the majority directly observed the campaign, totaling 372 individuals or 93.0 percent, while 28 respondents or 7.0 percent only heard about it.

The distribution shows that most participants came from Jepara, which raises the question of geographic clustering. Sampling bias literature warns that overrepresentation of a locale may threaten external validity (Morrison, Lee et al., 2015). However, representativeness can be defended when the research population is essentially localized or the theoretical interest is region specific (Reynolds, Simintiras et al. 2003). In contexts where the political milieu, campaign exposure, and electoral dynamics are predominantly local, a sample concentrated in Jepara can still yield meaningful insights (Reynolds, Simintiras et al., 2003). Geographic bias concerns tend to be more problematic when researchers generalize to broader regions without acknowledging localized contexts (Chen, Keglovits et al., 2022).

4. Result and Discussion

The Outer Loading Matrix test results show that most indicators meet the criteria for convergent validity, with Re-election Intention having very strong loadings between 0.906 and 0.968 and Visual Accentuation presents loadings from 0.757 to 0.874, while Visual Appeal records values between 0.604 and 0.877, with VP3 (0,604) slightly below the recommended threshold but still permissible. Outer loadings above 0.70 are considered ideal. However, values between 0.40 and 0.70 may still be acceptable if the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) exceeds 0.50 (Hair 2014). This supports the notion that convergent validity is established when the AVE meets the minimum threshold of 0.50 (Henseler, Ringle et al. 2015). Furthermore, the presence of a majority of indicators with loadings above 0.70 ensures construct reliability, even if a few indicators fall slightly below this threshold (Amora 2021). These findings indicate that the indicators in this study meet the validity requirements and support further structural analysis.

Table 2. R-Square Test Result

Variable	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Interpretasi
RI (Re-election Intention)	0,544	0,542	Moderate to Strong
VP (Visual Appeal)	0,746	0,746	Strong to Substantial

Source: SmartPLS Processed Data, 2025

Based on Table 2, the R-Square test results indicate that the model explains a substantial portion of variance for all examined variables. Re-election intention has an R-Square of 0.544 and an adjusted R-Square of 0.542, which is interpreted as Moderate to strong. Visual Appeal demonstrates the highest explanatory power with both R-Square and adjusted R-Square equal to 0.746, indicating a strong to substantial level of variance explanation. These results suggest that the model provides a robust explanation of the factors influencing the studied variables.

Table 3. Construct Validity And Reliability Test Result

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
REI	0,975	0,976	0,979	0,888
VA	0,855	0,870	0,901	0,696
VP	0,901	0,913	0,925	0,676

Source: SmartPLS Processed Data, 2025

Table 3 presents the results of construct validity and reliability tests. Cronbach's Alpha values indicate high internal consistency, with 0.975 for REI, 0.855 for VA, and 0.901 for VP. Reliability is further supported by rho_A values of 0.976 for REI, 0.870 for VA, and 0.913 for VP. Composite Reliability values are 0.979 for REI, 0.901 for VA, and 0.925 for VP, all above the 0.70 threshold, demonstrating satisfactory construct reliability. Average Variance Extracted values are 0.888 for REI, 0.696 for VA, and 0.676 for VP, exceeding the 0.50 criterion and confirming convergent validity. Overall, the results indicate that all constructs meet conventional standards for reliability and convergent validity and are suitable for further structural model analysis.

Table 4. Specific Indirect Effect Test Result

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Value
VA -> VP -> RI	0.632	0.632	0.061	10.357	0.000

Source: SmartPLS Processed Data, 2025

Table 4 presents the results of the specific indirect effect test. The mediation pathway from Visual Accentuation (VA) through Visual Appeal (VP) to Re-election Intention (RI) shows an original sample value of 0.632, with a sample mean of 0.632 and a standard deviation of 0.061. The T-statistic is 10.357 with a P Value of 0.000, indicating that the indirect effect is statistically significant. These results suggest that VP significantly mediates the relationship between VA and RI, highlighting the important role of visual appeal in translating visual accentuation into voters' re-election intention.

Table 5. Hypothesis Test Result

Hypothesis	Analysis
VA -> REI	Coefficient = 0.007 Sample Mean = 0.008 Standard Deviation = 0.070 T-Statistics = 0.098 P-Value = 0.922 T-Statistics < T-Critical → Not Significant
VA -> VP	Coefficient = 0.864 Sample Mean = 0.864 Standard Deviation = 0.021 T-Statistics = 41.902 P-Value = 0.000 T-Statistics > T-Critical → Significant

Hypothesis	Analysis
VP -> REI	Coefficient = 0.732 Sample Mean = 0.731 Standard Deviation = 0.066 T-Statistics = 11.103 P-Value = 0.000 T-Statistics > T-Critical → Significant

Source: SmartPLS Processed Data, 2025

Table 5 presents the results of the hypothesis testing. The direct path from VA to REI shows a coefficient of 0.007, a sample mean of 0.008, a standard deviation of 0.070, a T-statistic of 0.098, and a P Value of 0.922. These results indicate that the direct effect of VA on REI is not statistically significant, as the T-statistic is below the T-critical value. In contrast, the path from VA to VP has a coefficient of 0.864, a sample mean of 0.864, a standard deviation of 0.021, a T-statistic of 41.902, and a P Value of 0.000, showing a highly significant positive effect. Similarly, the path from VP to REI demonstrates a coefficient of 0.732, a sample mean of 0.731, a standard deviation of 0.066, a T-statistic of 11.103, and a P Value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant positive influence. Overall, these findings suggest that while VA does not have a significant direct effect on REI, it strongly affects REI indirectly through VP, highlighting the mediating role of visual appeal in translating visual accentuation into voters' re-election intention.

Hypothesis 1: The effect of Visual Accentuation (VA) on Re-election Intention (REI)

Indicates that the coefficient value (0.007) and T-statistics (0.098) < T-critical (1.650) and P Value (0.922) > 0.05, then H₀ is accepted and H_{a1} is rejected. This means that VA does not have a significant direct effect on REI.

Hypothesis 2: The effect of Visual Accentuation (VA) on Visual Appeal (VP)

Indicates that the coefficient value (0.864) and T-statistics (41.902) > T-critical (1.650) and P Value (0.000) < 0.05, then H₀ is rejected and H_{a2} is accepted. This means that VA has a positive and significant effect on VP.

Hypothesis 3: The effect of Visual Appeal (VP) on Re-election Intention (REI)

Indicates that the coefficient value (0.732) and T-statistics (11.103) > T-critical (1.650) and P Value (0.000) < 0.05, then H₀ is rejected and H_{a3} is accepted. This means that VP has a positive and significant effect on REI.

Hypothesis 4: The mediating effect of Visual Appeal (VP) on the relationship between Visual Accentuation (VA) and Re-election Intention (REI)

Indicates that the indirect effect coefficient (0.632) and T-statistics (10.357) > T-critical (1.650) and P Value (0.000) < 0.05, then H₀ is rejected and H_{a4} is accepted. This means that VP significantly mediates the effect of VA on REI.

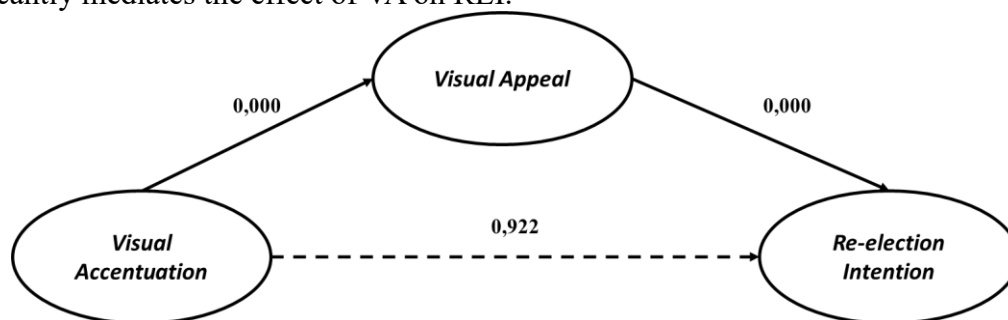


Figure 1: Result of structural model

Source: SmartPLS Processed Data, 2025

Figure 1 Result of Structural Model illustrates the outcomes of the hypothesis testing based on the P Value results. In the diagram, solid lines represent significant relationships between variables, while dashed lines indicate non significant relationships. The path from Visual Accentuation (VA) to Re-election Intention (REI) is depicted with a dashed line, as the effect is not statistically significant. In contrast, the paths from VA to Visual Appeal (VP) and from VP to REI are shown with solid lines, indicating strong and significant effects. Furthermore, the analysis confirms that the indirect relationship from VA to REI through VP is significant, highlighting the mediating role of VP in linking VA to REI.

5. Conclusions

This study concludes that visual accentuation strategies, exemplified by the use of Ultraman by Jamaludin Malik, significantly influence the re-election intention of Generation Z voters. Mediating variables including visual appeal, highlighting the psychological mechanisms behind voter decisions. Findings indicate that consistent visual content aligned with the candidate's identity can strengthen voters connection and improve campaign effectiveness. The study notes that research on digital political communication, particularly visual accentuation strategies using fictional characters such as Ultraman in Indonesia, is still emerging, resulting in a limited number of directly comparable studies. Nevertheless, these findings provide a valuable foundation for future research and the development of practical campaign strategies.

Acknowledgements

The author sincerely thanks mentors and colleagues for their guidance, constructive feedback, and support throughout this research. Appreciation is extended to the faculty and staff of the Postgraduate Program in Management, Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama, Jepara, Indonesia, for their assistance. Gratitude is expressed to all participants for their valuable time and insights. The author is deeply thankful to their parents for their unwavering encouragement and patience throughout the study.

References

- Alifatunnisa, H., et al. (2024). "Political Communication Strategies In The Digital Era For Generation Z Voters." *Edunity: Social and Educational Studies* 3(11): 1026-1036. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57096/edunity.v3i11.309>
- Amin, T., et al. (2021). "The use of partial least squares modeling in finance business partnering research." *Jurnal Ilmiah Kursor* 11(1): 43-52. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21107/kursor.v11i1.256>
- Amora, J. T. J. D. A. P. J. (2021). "Convergent validity assessment in PLS-SEM: A loadings-driven approach." 2(3): 1-6.
- Andrews, T. M. and S. E. J. T. J. o. P. Bokemper (2025). "The Road to Reelection Is Paved with Good Intentions: Experiments on the Role of Outcomes and Intentions in Voting Behavior." 87(1): 262-274. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1086/730720>
- Ariadi, S. D., et al. (2024). "Visual Dramatization of Political Campaigns on Social Media: Multimodal Analysis of Instagram Accounts of Presidential Candidates in the 2024 General Election." *Ekspresi dan persepsi: jurnal ilmu komunikasi* 7(3): 598-615. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33822/jep.v7i3.8960>

- Berk, N. J. P. B. (2025). "Attitude Manipulation and Voting Intentions." 1-23. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-025-10035-5>
- Chen, S.-W., et al. (2022). "Sociodemographic differences in respondent preferences for survey formats: Sampling bias and potential threats to external validity." 4(1): 100175. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.arrct.2021.100175>
- Dagalp, I. and J. J. J. o. A. Södergren (2024). "On ads as aesthetic objects: A thematic review of aesthetics in advertising research." 53(1): 126-147. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2023.2183286>
- Dan, V. and F. Arendt (2025). "Visuals as identity markers in political communication on social media: Evidence for effects of visual cues in liberals, but not in conservatives." Mass Communication and Society 28(4): 605-631. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15205436.2024.2333404>
- Dan, V. and F. J. T. I. J. o. P. P. Arendt (2021). "Visual cues to the hidden agenda: Investigating the effects of ideology-related visual subtle backdrop cues in political communication." 26(1): 22-45. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/194016122093659>
- Ferdinand, A. T. and S. Zuhroh (2022). "A study on socio-aesthetic value accentuation and marketing performance: an SDL perspective." International Journal of Innovation Science 14(2): 213-229. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIS-11-2020-0255>
- Hair, J. F. (2014). A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), sage.
- Henseler, J., et al. (2015). "A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling." 43(1): 115-135. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8>
- Karlsen, R. and B. J. T. I. J. o. p. p. Enjolras (2016). "Styles of social media campaigning and influence in a hybrid political communication system: Linking candidate survey data with Twitter data." 21(3): 338-357. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161216645335>
- Liberini, F., et al. (2017). "Happy voters." 146: 41-57. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpube.2016.11.013>
- Morrison, C., et al. (2015). "A critical assessment of bias in survey studies using location-based sampling to recruit patrons in bars." 50(11): 1427-1436. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3109/10826084.2015.1018540>
- Reynolds, N. L., et al. (2003). "Theoretical justification of sampling choices in international marketing research: Key issues and guidelines for researchers." 34(1): 80-89. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8400000>
- Roemmele, A., et al. (2020). "Scientific and subversive: The two faces of the fourth era of political campaigning." 22(4): 595-610. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444819893979>
- Sastro, A. K. and I. Zulkarnain (2025). "The Use of Instagram as a Political Communication Strategy by Rico Waas in Forming Personal Branding as a Candidate for Mayor of Medan." International Journal of Scientific Multidisciplinary Research 3(6): 851-862.
- Shi, A., et al. (2021). "Effects of design aesthetics on the perceived value of a product." 12: 670800. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.670800>
- Steffan, D. J. I. J. o. C. (2020). "Visual self-presentation strategies of political candidates on social media platforms: A comparative study." 14: 23.
- Utami, P. (2017). "The role of viral video in Indonesian politics." Jurnal Masyarakat dan Budaya 19(3): 327-338. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14203/jmb.v19i3.548>
- Wiecek, A., et al. (2019). "The aesthetic fidelity effect." 36(4): 542-557. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2019.03.002>