



POLITICAL MESSAGES ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND GEN Z'S CHOICE IN THE 2024 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION (Phenomenological Study of Gen Z In Jakarta)

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Abstract

According to the KPU, Gen Z first-time voters contributed 46,800,161 votes or 22.85% of the total number of voters in the 2024 Election. This figure has a significant influence on the success of the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Candidates in gaining votes. Voters who are voting for the first time in the 2024 Presidential Election are an experience that is greeted with enthusiasm and also confusion. Related to this enthusiasm, Presidential and Vice-Presidential Candidates must understand the psychology and motivations of these voters, which will later provide insight to Gen Z in actualizing their enthusiasm in their participation in the political arena. Gen Z voters tend to support candidates who prioritize attention to their interests such as values on issues such as environmental protection, social justice, and an emphasis on sustainability and ethical considerations that extend to political preferences. Gen Z is known for their mastery of technology, so the process of searching for information is often done through the use of gadgets. However, to embrace Gen Z voters, there is a challenge because Gen Z is wisely involved in the election process by considering the candidate's platform and policies before voting. The purpose of this study is to describe the experiences of Gen Z in Jakarta in carrying out their roles as first-time voters in the 2024 Presidential Election. This study uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. The informants who were interviewed in depth consisted of 10 people who lived in Jakarta. The results of the study show that informants tend to have motivation to use their voting rights, although there are Gen Z who participate at the encouragement of their parents. Gen Z's expectations of leaders are that they can answer problems during previous leadership, have responsibility, track records, experience and vision and mission that can be trusted, and have the soul of a leader. Sources of information accessed are Twitter, television, and parents. The message that sticks is a more specific message that is in accordance with the interests of Gen Z who have a character that is closely related to technology

Keywords: Phenomenology, Gen Z, Social Media, Political Messages, 2024 Presidential Election

INTRODUCTION

The 2024 Presidential Election (Pilpres) in Indonesia was contributed by votes from millennials and Gen Z who contributed 56.45 votes.(Dian, 2023). The Gen Z vote is a voter who comes from 17-year-old 2nd grade High School (SMU) students, to final semester students and 21-year-old workers. This generation is partly confused but enthusiastic about participating in the 2024 Presidential Election(Suwarna & Setianingsih, 2024).

For Gen Z first-time voters, it is necessary to emphasize the existence of targeted educational campaigns to mobilize them, in this generation there is also the possibility of abstaining.(Masripah & Yusuf, 2024). According toKwon et al (2022)Gen Z's interests are influenced by the interaction of technology, social, and individuals in their tendencies towards elections. Therefore, the concept of a hyperreality campaign will have an impact on this generation.(Daherman & Taufiq, 2024). In addition, career decisions also have an impact on involvement in politics.(Bhore & Tapas, 2023)

This generation is a careful generation in making decisions, such as in purchasing products, including in the election process by considering the candidate's platform and policies before they cast their vote.(Liu et al., 2023), tech-savvy, socially aware, and change-oriented give rise to interest in social issues which also include politics, other things related to contributing to change by being active in various activities for the purpose of change, and understanding the motives of Gen Z can reveal insight into their enthusiasm for the election.(Collisson et al., 2023).

In Gen Z according to researchFitri et al (2023), it is important to understand how educational interventions can influence their perceptions of political candidates and the decision-making process during elections.(Fitri et al., 2023). Pueschel et al (2020) emphasizes the complexity of topics in politics and elections, so that educational strategies are needed that are in accordance with Gen Z's learning style in order to effectively improve their understanding. In line with Pueschel,(Herlina & Syahchari, 2022) also emphasizes the complexity of electoral decision-making, so that it requires development of soft skills such as critical thinking, communication, and leadership skills in order to empower Gen Z individuals to actively participate in the political process, including elections, and equip them with the tools needed to navigate the complexity of electoral decision-making. This study aims to describe the experiences of Gen Z first-time voters in carrying out their roles in participating in the 2024 presidential election, with election conditions that have three candidate pairs. The first pair is Anies-Muhaimin who carries change, the second pair is Prabowo Gibran who carries continuity known as ok gas and goyang gemoy, the Ganjar-Mahfud MD pair does not yet have a communication style that is known to the public.Monalisa (2023)This research is expected to provide an overview of Gen Z's experience in participating in the 2024 presidential election based on their characteristics that are closely related to technology.

Kahlthau Information Retrieval Model

Given the potential complexity and uncertainty surrounding the election, the Information Search Model's emphasis on the emotional and cognitive aspects of

information seeking is particularly relevant. The model helps explore how Gen Z navigates the amount of information available, manages uncertainty, and forms judgments about source credibility. The model is useful for exploring the information seeking experience.(Kuhlthau, 1991)

Kuhlthau's Information Seeking Process describes the affective and cognitive stages that information seekers go through: 1) Initiation: characterized by feelings of anxiety and uncertainty about the information. Individuals recognize the need for information but lack a clear focus or direction; 2) Selection: As they explore, individuals begin to develop specific aspects of focus. This stage involves selecting a specific question or area of focus; 3) Exploration: Involves gathering information and exploring. Feelings of confusion, frustration, and doubt resurface when encountering conflicting information. This is the stage of critical evaluation and analysis of sources; 4) Formulation: Individuals begin to synthesize information and formulate understanding. This stage involves developing key statements or arguments; 5) Collection: Individuals systematically gather information that supports a perspective. Individuals look for evidence and examples to support their arguments; 7) Presentation: Involves organizing and presenting information. Individuals share their findings(Kuhlthau, 1991).

Generation Z (Gen Z)

Generation Z, individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, have unique characteristics. They grew up in the digital age. This influences the way they interact with the world. Generation Z is known to be highly connected, highly skilled in technology, and more open to diversity and social issues.(Gultom, 2022).Gen Z is also known to be careful in making decisions. They will consider the platforms and policies of Gen Z candidates who are tech-savvy, socially conscious, change-oriented, and have an interest in social issues including politics. When it comes to change, understanding Gen Z's motives can reveal their enthusiasm for the election.(Collisson et al., 2023). Gen Z connects with political issues through digital platforms, which allow them to interact directly with political candidates and campaigns.(Palupi & Tutiasri, 2023). Social media is not only used as a communication tool, but also as a means of disseminating information and forming political awareness.

Care about Gen Z's interests

One of Gen Z's interests is career choices, fulfilling their needs can encourage them to vote in elections.(Waworuntu et al., 2022). They demonstrate a broader commitment to social responsibility and sustainability.(Robichaud & Yu, 2022).Gen Z supports candidates who have their best interests at heart. Values on issues like environmental protection, and social justice, sustainability, and ethics will drive them to support such candidates.(Kara & Min, 2024).

Active/inactive political participation includes actions that directly involve or do not involve the political process, such as participating/not participating in elections, participating/not participating in political parties, participating/not participating in

demonstrations, or participating/not participating in political campaigns.(Ohme et al., 2020)

2024 Presidential Election

Presidential elections in Indonesia are held every five years. The 2024 election will be an event for voters to determine the direction of the country's leadership. According to the General Election Commission Regulation (PKPU) Number 3 of 2022, the election stages have begun since June 14, 2022, and various election activities, including the election of Governors and Regents, have taken place(Sitorus & Sitorus, 2023). The 2024 Presidential Election (Pilpres) in Indonesia, has three candidates from the first candidate Anies Baswedan - Muhaimin Iskandar who carries the slogan 'Change', the second candidate Prabowo Subianto - Gibran Rakabuming Raka who carries the slogan of continuity known as the slogan 'Ok Gas' and 'Goyang Gemoy', the third candidate Ganjar Pranowo - Mahfud MD, is a candidate who does not have a communication style that is known to the public(Monalisa, 2023).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study seeks to uncover the involvement of Gen Z in the 2024 election by exploring their representation and experiences in their participation in the 2024 Presidential Election in Indonesia. This study involved 190 participants, with Gen Z with high school education ranging from 17 to 21 years old, male and female, domiciled in Jakarta. Informants were obtained by visiting schools and universities in the Jakarta area to obtain informants who are currently studying at both high school and university levels. Data collection was carried out through in-depth, semi-structured interviews.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data were obtained from a total of 5 areas in Jakarta, with informants spread across five areas in Jakarta consisting of, aged 17-18 years, high school education totaling 5 informants. Aged 19-21 years, 5 informants were students. Informants who participated in the election and used their voting rights were 8 people, and 2 people did not use their voting rights.

Motivation to Participate

Most informants who exercised their right to vote argued that the presidential election was a form of obligation (Informant Nan, Nov), Nov also exercised his right so that it would not be misused. Nov was worried about the misuse of his right to vote "yes, I'm worried that if I don't vote, my vote will be used to vote for a candidate who is not my choice, therefore I have to do it myself (vote_ed).

Like Nov, Tia also participated in the presidential election because she did not want to be led by the wrong person. Likewise, Tan chose to determine the future of the nation. Agn, who is still in high school, was motivated to feel the sensation of voting in the presidential election. Likewise, Put voted because he wanted to see the atmosphere of the Polling Station (TPS).

Pri stated that he voted because of his first experience and his parents told him to vote. Meanwhile, the informants who did not use their voting rights were Fel, a high school student and Fal, a college student. They did not vote according to Fel, he came to the TPS but did not vote because Fel, although still in high school, was disappointed with the election process and finally he concluded that he did not vote because it was not an obligation, while Fal, a student at a college in West Jakarta, did not determine his vote at the TPS because he was still confused.

Ideal Leader

In choosing a leader, even though they did not participate in the 2024 Presidential Election, Fel and Fal have their own leaders in their hearts, that according to Fel, they want a firm leader, while according to Fal, they want a leader who listens to the aspirations of the people. Regarding the leader that Gen Z hopes for, they have different expectations. Agn emphasized that democracy must be upheld, according to him, he experienced democracy that did not match his expectations, Agn hopes that the leader he dreams of is a leader who is rarely hit by negative issues.

Like Fal, Agn also dreams of a leader who listens to the aspirations of the people, and has previous leadership experience so that according to Agn "we are not led by inexperienced people, so that in deciding issues it is based on their experience as previous leaders". Regarding the leaders they hope for, Pri, Tia, Tan, and Put said that they want a quality leader, who dares to do real work, is responsible for all areas concerning the country, and does not make many promises. Regarding Tan's statement, he does not want a leader who does not know, so there is no statement "yeah I don't know why ask me" according to him such a statement should not come from the mouth of a leader, "even on social media, netizens say yntkts which is an abbreviation of that statement" he said. Like Tan, Put also wants a leader who does not make many promises that cannot be kept. "We expect a leader who is responsible in terms of his speech, so he doesn't make promises," he said.

Ara hopes for a competent, visionary, and leader-like leader. However, Ara did not explain further about what kind of leader is, but according to her, a leader is responsible, Ara smiled when asked if her statement referred to "yntkts". But she hopes for a leader who can be an example to the community. Meanwhile, Nan emphasized the problem of poverty that has not been resolved, she hopes that the leader she dreams of is a leader who has a vision like Ara's ideal leader.

Social Media Information Sources

Most informants who were asked about sources of information tended to answer that they accessed social media as a source of information. However, as Gen Z who are close to technology, there are still informants who watch presidential debates on television to increase their knowledge. Put is a Gen Z who still accesses television, according to him he enjoys watching presidential debates with his parents and family. From the presidential debates he watched on television, Put understood the issues discussed in the presidential debates. "If you watch from a YouTube channel, watching it alone, it's not fun," he said.

The media tendencies accessed by Gen Z are x, instagram, youtube. Most of Gen Z in this study access X (twitter) namely Nov, Tan, Put, Ara. Agn did not mention the social media he accessed, but according to him he accessed information about the vision, mission and background of each presidential candidate pair. Likewise, Fel and Pri did not mention what media they accessed. However, according to Pri, apart from social media, he also got information from his parents. Meanwhile, Nan got information about the presidential and vice presidential candidates only from her parents and not from social media. According to her, her parents forbade her from discussing political issues with those who were not her immediate family:

So I only talked about it with my parents, older siblings, and younger siblings, and was forbidden to talk about it with other people. Maybe because the presidential election in Indonesia was very divided, so my parents didn't want me to have problems with other people, such as getting involved in debates, so they suggested talking about it at home. (Informant 10_Nan)

In addition to Twitter, television, and information from parents, only Nov stated that he accessed Instagram and YouTube, while three informants Agn, Fel, and Pri did not explain the types of social media they accessed. One of the informants, Tia, was not even interested in politics, according to her, she was not interested in political discussions when accessing social media.

Social Media Messages That Stick With Gen Z

Campaign messages on social media that stick in the informant's memory include messages of change and gemoy. While other messages are messages that are in accordance with the character of Gen Z who are closely related to technology, including having interests that are in accordance with their interests, such as messages that make sense and are logical according to Nov are messages that he can remember, "If it doesn't make sense, of course I won't believe it and I won't care," he said. Agn emphasizes more on his interests in education and democracy, he sees that the government is not concerned about education, even though according to him, by prioritizing education, democracy in Indonesia will improve. Fel feels that the message "gemoy" is a message that moves him because it is interesting.

On the other hand, Pri realized that her chosen candidate did not bring a "gimmick" message that would attract Gen Z. This is contrary to the character of Gen Z, which should have many references from their approach to technology that should not be consumed by "gimmicks". However, according to Pri, she realized that Gen Z in her circle was consumed by "gimmicks".

Tia, who is not interested in politics, according to her, was exposed to the "message of change." According to her, she knew the message of change even though she did not access social media about politics. "Even I, who don't really care, know about the message of change," she said. Other informants such as Fal, Tan, Put, and Ara highlighted more specific messages. Fal highlighted public transportation and the work programs of the presidential and vice presidential candidates, all of which he still doubted. Tan highlighted the track record of the candidate pair and their achievements. Meanwhile, Put caught messages from the candidate pair that were difficult to fulfill.

Like Fal, Ara also highlighted the work programs of the candidate pair, according to her, only one pair supported students and residents of Bayam Village who were encouraged by the candidate to move forward together to leave behind their slump.

CONCLUSION

In a study involving 10 Gen Z groups consisting of 5 informants from the General High School (SMU) level and 5 people from college students in five areas of DKI Jakarta, there was no difference between the range of high school and college students in their opinions regarding the presidential candidate pairs in the 2024 presidential election.

The tendency of the ten informants to have motivation to participate in the 2024 Presidential Election and use their voting rights, although among them there were informants who participated at the encouragement of their parents.

Gen Z's expectations for future leaders are those who can answer the problems of the previous leadership, who are also expected to have responsibility, track records, experience and vision and mission that can be trusted, and have the soul of a leader. The sources of information accessed are social media Twitter, television, and parents.

The inherent message that can be described by Gen Z in this study is a more specific message that is in accordance with the interests of Gen Z who have a character that is closely related to technology, even though "gimmick" is something that is contrary to the character of Gen Z who acts wisely in making choices, when the "gimmick" is not something that represents a wise choice.

As a generation that is very close to technology, Gen Z has wide access to information so that it can easily confirm information that is doubtful. However, there is a "gimmick" message that should be traced through technology for its intent and purpose. In-depth research is needed on the character of Gen Z who is close to technology and has wise decisions based on the attachment of this generation to technology and biased information that they should be able to distinguish like "gimmicks".

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