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The Role of TikTok in Influencing Generation Z's Decision in the 2024 Election

Faturachman Arrizal*, Indah Wenerdha

Communication Studies Program, Ahmad Dahlan University, 55166, Indonesia
Corresponding author's email: faturachmanarrizal5@gmail.com

The 2024 general election in Indonesia has attracted the attention and enthusiasm of the public to participate in the democratic party process. As the next generation of the nation, Generation Z must actively contribute to politics. This generation was born in a technology-savvy era with the most active social media usage intensity in the world. The problem that occurs is that Generation Z is currently faced with a very complicated and dynamic political reality. The spread of hoax information and political identity are factors of concern for young people, who are vulnerable to being influenced. This research aims to find out the opinions of Generation Z as TikTok social media users about the political reality of young people, which is being discussed in Rian Fahardhi's TikTok video entitled Meta Prabowo-Gibran. It is important to know how Generation Z views political reality on social media in terms of voting decisions. Using a qualitative approach method that explains phenomena in depth, reception analysis is used to explore the awareness of sources in receiving and understanding objects. Data collection techniques use interviews, the internet, and literature studies to obtain a theoretical basis for the problem to be studied. Stuart Hall's encoding and decoding model was used to categorize the speakers into three groups: dominant position, oppositional position, and negotiated position. The results show that the majority of Generation Z is interested in discussing political issues. Branding on social media and presidential and vice presidential debate sessions are their main concerns in choosing. The violations that occurred at the Constitutional Court still generated a lot of controversy over the vice presidential nomination. This happened because of the source's partiality towards his choice. The track record of young people in achieving political positions today is still doubtful because many use popularity and family support.

1. Introduction

The generation born in the 2000s is commonly called Generation Z (Gen Z); they are the demographic group born after the Millennial Generation. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) in 2023, Gen Z is made up of children born from 1997 to 2012. Gen Z grew up in an environment heavily influenced by digital technology, the internet, and social media. They are the first generation to grow up with widespread access to technological devices such as smartphones and tablets and to be connected online from an early age.

Gen Z is currently faced with a very complicated and dynamic political reality. The spread of hoax information and identity politics is a factor of concern for young people today who are vulnerable to being influenced. If this is not properly filtered, the result is that young people will be very easily driven by buzzers in the media who often become divisive and cause polarization among young people. This can affect the quality of public discussions, reduce public trust in political institutions, and cause social tensions that have the potential to undermine democratic stability.

Currently on social media, there is a lot of talk about the pros and cons of the Prabowo-Gibran pairing, with political observers saying that Gibran violated the political code of ethics regarding the minimum age limit when he was announced as Prabowo's running mate. Researchers found one of the videos relevant to the issue in Rian Fahardhi's TikTok video discussing the pairing of presidential and vice presidential candidates Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka. "Hope and disappointment" is the quote clearly displayed in the video. Gen Z's reception of the political reality

of young people, especially through social media, is very important. Mellaz said that the voters in the 2024 elections come from Generation Z and Millennials (55%), so it is important to understand their perceptions of politics, political participation, and the influence of social media in shaping their political views (Komisi Pemiliha Umum, 2023).

The reception of youth politics is a major concern for political candidates seeking their votes in order to win the competition with their competitors. This is interestingly examined further with a theoretical framework as a basis for answering the issue of youth political reception. Therefore, it is necessary to review previous research. The first previous research was conducted by Ismaidar and Azfar Hairi Putra with the title "The Role of Students in Guarding the Constitution and Building Awareness and Optimism of Political Law in Indonesia." This research observes the specific role of students in the constitution and politics in Indonesia. The conclusion of this research is that guarding the constitution is not only the property of the Constitutional Court or a handful of people and special institutions, but also the duty of students. Therefore, students must play their role as guardians of the constitution, given their nature as young intellectuals. The second research came from Yusrin and Salpina, entitled "Millennial Generation Participation in Supervising the 2024 Election Stages." This research is to find out how important millennial political behavior and involvement are in influencing millennial political decisions in the 2024 general election. The result is that the participation of the millennial generation is very influential on the extent to which a candidate can be elected. The third research was conducted by Muhammad Ridha Iswardhana et al., entitled "Campaign to Use Voting Rights and Do Not Abstain in the 2024 Election for the Young Generation." This activity aims to provide education and an invitation for young people to participate in the upcoming elections as voters. The results found that the millennial generation was actually interested in participating in the 2024 election but did not understand the candidates chosen.

Of the three previous studies, there are differences in what the researchers did. The difference is in the object of research, where researchers use the TikTok video object Rian Fahardhi: Meta Prabowo-Gibran. Meanwhile, the focus of the research centered on how Gen Z sees and interprets the messages in the video based on their life experiences.

2. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach, which is research that explains phenomena in depth by describing factual situations and describing these phenomena (Kriyantono, 2007). Using the reception analysis method, which is an analysis based on the subject's awareness or way of receiving and understanding objects, Reception analysis can see why audiences use something differently, what factors influence these differences, and what social consequences arise (Susanti, 2014).

Data is collected in three ways, namely the first primary data obtained through semi-structured online interviews through WhatsApp (video call) and Zoom Meeting media. According to (Sugiyono, 2016), semi-structured interviews are interviews where the implementation is freer when compared to structured interviews. The purpose of this interview is to find problems more openly, where the interviewees are asked for their opinions and ideas. Second, secondary data is obtained from internet sources and other data sources to support research. Third, tertiary data using literature study data is a useful method for obtaining a theoretical basis for the problem to be studied. Thus, researchers can study various reference books as well as the results of similar previous studies. This can help researchers understand a deeper context for the topic to be studied (Sarwono, 2006).

Researchers took Gen Z informants who were determined based on a minimum age of 17 years who could already be involved as prospective voters and a maximum age of 27 years. The data was analyzed using Stuard Hall's encoding and decoding reception model with triangulation techniques that matched the interview data of one informant with another informant.

3. Result and Discussion

The results of the observations will be in the form of interview excerpts with six informants. To make it easier to understand, the researcher will change the names of the informants to initials. Abid (AD), Asmara (AM), Dila (DL), Deny (DN), Sofwan (SW), and Sukma (SM).

3.1. Reception about politics

When there is an election, the majority of Gen Z is interested in discussing political issues, and they are also adaptable to situations on social media. Daily life is filled with the habit of using social media; following the trends that are being debated becomes their challenge and adrenaline to enter the world of politics. Gen Z is looking deeper into the ideas and work programs of each election candidate on social media because of the growing political questions today. The quality of elections depends on the high level of participation, because from this participation it will be seen how much the community pays attention to the country's problems (Muhaling, 2014).

The habits of netizens when playing social media also affect how likely it is that similar content will appear on the homepages of people they have interacted with. Gen Z has to participate in situations that they sometimes do not want to, but they are already part of the current habits of young people by following information trends. However, it is not easy to create a movement while engaging in participatory surveillance with young people because election-related issues generally do not interest young people (Yusrin, 2023).

3.2. Factors that influence perception

Gen Z's perspective often involves their emotions and outlook in interpreting a message, changing information based on what they understand. Family and neighborhood no longer influence Gen Z's voting tendencies; conventional appeals no longer influence their decisions. Social media branding and work programs that focus on youth issues are now the most important parts of Gen Z's attention to the candidate they choose. As a result, each election participant aggressively promotes interesting and unique content on their social media.

Election debates are the most anticipated moment for Gen Z, where candidates are given the opportunity to present their vision and mission and debate each other's arguments and rhetorical skills. The majority of Gen Z currently makes their choices based on the results of the debates, tending to vote for those who can explain programs that are more beneficial to young people and the progress of the country. However, in this 2024 presidential debate, the essence that has taken root in the minds of Gen Z is a moment of shooting and insinuating each other. Debate is essentially an argument between individuals or groups of people with the aim of achieving victory for one party. In the debate, each person or group tries to bring down their opponent so that their side is in the right position (Ismawati, 2012).

In addition, Gen Z is more familiar with the candidate they will vote for through the social media they use. This trend is because Gen Z's life is now more intense in the internet world, and the more effective interaction approach process for them is through social media. The current approach pattern is like making a short video or short movie that is published on social media, then forming a virtual discussion forum or direct discussion (Indriani, 2024).

3.3. Interpretation of the message

The results of the interviewees' interpretation of Rian Fahardhi's video from TikTok discussing Meta Prabowo-Gibran are quite varied. There are several different opinions regarding the messages they interpret, based on their understanding according to what they see and experience in their daily lives.

At this point, the researcher found a common understanding among the interviewees that they agreed the main problem in the video was the violation that occurred at the Constitutional Court (MK). As a state of law, Indonesia regulates norms in order to realize order in society. The code of ethics is one of the ethical norms enforced to regulate certain groups. The enforcement of the code of ethics is still characterized by various irregularities. They regret the sudden change in regulations ahead of candidate registration, allowing Gibran's candidacy process to violate the code of ethics and the constitution. This moral ethics fosters ethical methods or norms that include value theories about the nature of what is good and what is bad and theories about behavior (conduct) about which actions are good and which are bad (Gandasubrata, 1998).

Overall, there were significant differences in the answers given by each interviewee. There were some people who questioned the ethics and morality of accepting the application of the age limit requirement because of the violation of the law. On the other hand, there were some people who were not concerned about the Constitution's violation and preferred not to care.

A track record determines whether someone is fit to lead. The age limit is not a big issue in this regard. However, if someone has enough experience to complete the task, it is acceptable. Many people still question Gibran's ability, as the data shows his very short career. His candidacy generated a lot of controversy, but many people still like him. Substantive representation is a representation that refers to the congruence between the actions of the representative and the interests of the represented (Winarti, 2019).

3.4. Presenting the Results

In reception research, (Hall, 1973) categorizes sources into three groups: dominant, oppositional, and negotiated. The researcher concluded that of all the 6 interviewees, each would be in one of the positions in the group of interviewees towards their reception of the political reality of young people in the Prabowo-Gibran Meta video.

Dominant Hegemonic Position

Research subjects in the dominant hegemonic position are subjects who immediately support or tolerate the wrongness of a message, person, or action that violates ethics under the applicable law. The researcher determined the informants DN and SM as dominant hegemonic position informants because they ignored the violations and laws that had been violated by certain couples. Fanaticism of support is excessive individual or group enthusiasm or belief in a theory, belief, or line of action that determines a very emotional attitude. This excessive fanaticism causes friction between groups (Mulyana, 2004).

Oppositional Position

In the category of oppositional position sources are those who clearly reject a message, person, or action that violates the ethics of the applicable law. In other words, this group has an alternative reference for interpreting messages based on applicable law. The informants in this category are AD, AM, and SW, who reject all forms of legal violations. Youth must be able to oversee the implementation of a fair political process in order to effectively act as agents of change and steer democracy in a better direction. Youth can increase their involvement in politics by becoming more active as organizers, participants, and supervisors of the political process (Lestari, 2019).

Negotiated Position

The negotiated position is also called the combination position. In the negotiated position, research subjects accept the messages conveyed, but they make exceptions to certain values based on certain experiences and conditions. The informant in this position is DL, who thinks that lawbreakers are indeed wrong, but there are other factors to consider so as not to immediately label them bad in total.

4. Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, the majority of Gen Z is quite interested in following the political issues of the 2024 elections on social media. According to the results of the study, Gen Z is more familiar with political actors through the social media they use. Popular trends carried out by people's representatives on social media are very important parameters in influencing a positive image in Gen Z's mind. The moment of the presidential and vice presidential debate is the benchmark for the majority of Gen Z in choosing the candidate they want through the vision and mission given. However, it is not the ideas that are remembered but the moments of mutual attacks between candidates that are considered detrimental to the community because the contents are personal attacks, not presidential ideas. Whereas in the 2024 general election, young people are the main object of the candidates. For this reason, it is necessary to improve the debate system and the capacity of political actors to be able to become good representatives of the people for the benefit of young people towards a golden Indonesia in 2045.

5. Acknowledgement

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