
The Negative Impact of Social Media on Generation Z in Election Activities in 2024

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ABSTRACT: Social media has become the main platform for Generation Z to obtain political information and participate in the political process. However, in this context, social media can also bring a number of negative impacts that can affect Generation Z's ability to make rational choices. This research investigates the negative impact of social media on Generation Z in the process of making rational choices in the 2024 general election with the aim of improving the quality of Generation Z's thinking and expanding their rationalisation in making choices and determining leaders who will be influential in the future. The method used in this research is a qualitative method with the nature of a normative juridical approach, which is carried out by examining library materials or secondary data. The results showed that the negative impact of the role of social media on Generation Z greatly influenced Generation Z's rational choice of Presidential and legislative elections in 2024. This is because Generation Z's quality of thinking is vulnerable to the negative impact of social media, making it difficult for Generation Z to make rational choices in elections. This finding has significant implications for the democratic process, given that Generation Z is an important future voter.

Keywords: Election, Generation Z, Social Media, Politics, Internet.



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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the countries that adheres to the democratic system. A system of government organised from the people, by the people and for the people. Democracy is reflected in the organisation of general elections. (Purnamawati, 2020). The people have the right and obligation to make their choices to elect leaders who will determine the future of the Indonesian nation. In (modern) political literature, several main characteristics of a democratic political system are mentioned: Firstly, the existence of broad and autonomous political participation; democracy first of all requires and requires the existence of freedom for anyone - both individuals and groups - autonomously. Without the expansion of autonomous political participation, democracy will cease

to be mere political jargon. Second, the realisation of healthy and fair political competition. In the context of liberal democracy, all political forces (political parties) or social forces (interest groups and pressure groups) are recognised and given the freedom to compete fairly as the mouthpiece of society, whether in general elections or in other socio-political competitions. Third, there is a succession or circulation of power that is periodic, managed, and maintained cleanly and transparently, especially through the electoral process. Fourth, effective monitoring, control and supervision of power (executive, legislative, judicial, bureaucratic and military), as well as the realisation of checks and balances mechanisms between State institutions. And fifth, the existence of agreed (shared) manners, values, norms in society, state and nation. (Fridiyanti, 2022) The entry of Generation Z in this period will certainly greatly affect the results of this year's election. The rational choice of Generation Z is certainly awaited by the entire community. The development of insights and thoughts possessed by Generation Z is the foundation of the Indonesian people in achieving a better future for the State of Indonesia.

Generation Z is a generation that has been interacting with technological advances since birth. Various methods of parenting are even aided by technology and the internet. Generation Z was born between 1995 and 2012, so it can be said that they did not have time to experience life without technology and the internet. The existence of technology and the internet is an important element of life and daily life. For Generation Z, technology and the internet are something that must exist, not an innovation like the views of other generations. (Hastini, Fahmi, & Lukito, 2020) The social media that accompanies Generation Z's day today certainly contributes to influencing the choices that Generation Z will make. Generation Z is certainly required to express the rational reasons they have in making choices. Indonesia is listed as the seventh most populous country with the highest internet access in the world with the intrusion rate of Indonesian internet subscribers reaching 196.7 million users or around 73.7 per cent, up 64.8 per cent from 2018. Regarding the allocation of the most internet customers, it is absorbed in the form of social media at 92 per cent with a level of use to obtain information and communicate, namely 90 per cent. (Yusran & Sapar, 2022)

The various excesses that occurred during the national political contestation became so interesting because it involved layers of society with different generational backgrounds at one time, where the young voter group more familiarly referred to as Generation Z became a group unit that received considerable attention, both for politicians and academics. This is at least based on four reasons: (1) First, there is a fundamental shift in the preferences of political actors in carrying out their communication activities since social media has been used as a medium for political communication; (2) Second, Generation Z is a generation that actively uses social media, especially Instagram; (3) Third, Generation Z is a beginner voter (swing voters), where their number also makes them included in potential voters; (4) Fourth, Generation Z has unique characteristics in digesting and responding to various actual and contemporary information and issues, especially those related to politics. (El Qudsi & Syamtar, 2020)

The 2024 election is a pivotal moment for Generation Z in determining the political direction and future of the country. However, the negative impact of social media has become a major concern in this context. Generation Z is a generation that grew up with the development of information technology, including social media, which has a great influence in shaping opinions and behaviour.

Social media is an online medium where users can easily participate, share and create content including blogs, social networks, wikis, forums and virtual worlds. Blogs, social networks and wikis are the most common forms of social media used by people around the world. Another opinion says that social media is online media that supports social interaction and social media uses web-based technology that turns communication into interactive dialogue. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideology and technology of Web 2.0, and that enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content". Social networks are sites where anyone can create a personal web page, then connect with friends to share information and communicate. The biggest social networks include Facebook, Myspace, and Twitter. While traditional media uses print and broadcast media, social media uses the internet. Social media invites anyone who is interested to participate by contributing and giving feedback openly, commenting, and sharing information in a fast and unlimited time. (A., 2020)

The 2024 general election poses a challenge for Generation Z in filtering information received from social media, as well as maintaining maturity in making their political choices. Therefore, it is important to understand the negative impact of social media on Generation Z in the context of elections, as a step towards taking the necessary measures to ensure healthy and responsible political participation from Generation Z.

Social media has become part of Generation Z's life, but its impact on the electoral process is not always positive. While social media provides easy access to political information, it is often a source of disinformation and polarisation. Generation Z tends to believe what they are told, increasing the risk of spreading inaccurate narratives. In addition, social media platforms are often a means for unscrupulous parties to influence young people's political opinions, leading to a superficial or unbalanced understanding of important electoral issues. As a result, the negative impact of social media on Generation Z's electoral choices could result in a less informed electorate that is vulnerable to manipulation, threatening the integrity of the democratic process as a whole.

Not only does social media have a negative impact, it also has a lot of negative impacts, including brainwashing the public with hoaxes or the spread of fake news, in this case news about the general election. Many platforms are used as a means of fighting against one camp or another, creating chaos, strengthening political polarisation, manipulating people to hate some candidates whose reasons are not necessarily true. As a result, the quality of broadcasted political debates will be undermined, and voters may become uninformed and swayed by false narratives, threatening the integrity of the democratic process as a whole.

In addition, social media can also be a platform that reinforces confirmation bias, where users tend to be exposed to content that reinforces their own beliefs and ignore information that contradicts them. This can lead to users being less open to different viewpoints or opposing arguments, hampering the ability to holistically understand complex political issues. As a result, social media can reduce the capacity of voters to make informed and comprehensive decisions, and reduce the ability to participate in healthy and productive political discussions.

Based on several studies conducted by Al Musa Karim, Adi Wibawa, and Puguh Toko Arisanto in 2018 in his journal entitled *Beginner Political Participation in Social Media (Descriptive Study of the Level and Pattern of Participatory Politics of Gen-Z Yogyakarta City Through the Utilisation*

of Instagram Application in 2019) states that Gen-Z in Yogyakarta City in 2019 has a low level of participatory politics which is marked by participatory political patterns that are limited to responses to content and *voluntary* awareness to follow political content but not yet at the stage of sharing political content. In addition, Gen-Z political participation patterns have a temporary nature, namely using social media only to find out or follow political activities at election moments. There is no further action post-election, even though political participation is not only judged by how far to follow electoral activities, but participation also requires direct participation in evaluating government policies and performance. (Wibawa, Arisanto, & Karim, 2020)

Based on the background above, the problem identification in this study is that first, there is the role of social media for generation Z in participating in the 2024 elections, second, the negative impact of social media on generation Z's choices in the 2024 elections, then the last is the efforts made by Generation Z in improving the quality of thinking in making choices in the 2024 elections rationally.

The purpose of this research is to improve the quality of thinking of Generation Z, because seen from the McKinsey Study (2018) which states that Generation Z is a generation that seeks truth. Generation Z are people who are open, inclusive, talk, interact, and dialogue. They are also realistic, analytical, critical, independent, creative, and innovative. It is interesting to ask what are the conditions, potentials, and dominant features that characterise philosophical thinking in Generation Z. (Maliki, Susanti, Syarifudin, & Fauzi, 2024), so that the quality of Generation Z thinking is expected to be high. It is expected that the quality of thinking of Generation Z will increase and later affect the rationalisation of Generation Z in making choices in the Presidential and legislative elections that will produce something positive in the future. This research can also be used to get to know and learn more about political education through the influence of social media to avoid negative impacts that can arise to influence Generation Z's rational choices in future elections.

METHOD

The method in this research uses a qualitative method where the method is descriptive and tends to use analysis with a theoretical basis that is used as a guide to match the facts in the field. The reference search for this research uses an approach with a normative juridical nature which is a type of document review and soft data from various journals obtained from google scholar using the keywords "Negative Impact of Social Media on Generation Z in the Presidential and Legislative Elections". The method used is by systematically describing the facts about the negative impact of social media on Generation Z in the 2024 elections, which are conveyed factually and carried out carefully.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The role of social media for generation Z in participating in the 2024 elections

Generation Z has always been identified as a generation or group of "*digital natives*" who are accustomed to technological developments, quickly adapt and feel comfortable using all kinds of digital tools. Social media is also very loved by Gen Z people in sharing various forms of expression, conversations, experiences and activities (Kadir, 2022). Based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), this young generation group accounts for 37.7% of the total electorate with an additional 12.7% included in the category of first-time voters. Therefore, voters in this group account for half of the total electorate. In fact, this trend is predicted to continue to increase in the 2024 elections, especially if we consider the demographic bonus that is happening in Indonesia. Social media has unpredictable algorithms and has a high level of fluctuation. Various trends or popular culture spread on social media are increasingly diverse in form and content. Likewise, political information that is spread seems to present a new algorithm in the democratic party. Political content is presented in the form of videos, infographics, podcasts, and so on where generation Z can freely access the content. This causes generation Z to get *over information* related to political content which affects the perspective of gen Z in participating in the democratic party (Pakpahan et al., 2024).

The 2024 elections are projected to be characterised by the growing influence of Generation Z. Generation Z, a group born between 1997 and 2012, has grown up in an era of technology and digitalisation. With their dominant use of social media, online platforms and emerging technologies, this generation is seen as a significant force in determining electoral dynamics. Compared to previous generations, Generation Z tends to be more open to different views, have strong digital skills, and understand how to use social media as a tool to voice their political opinions. With a growing number of Generation Z voters, candidates and political parties are likely to adjust their campaign strategies to pay more attention to values, issues and platforms that are specifically relevant to this generation. Generation Z's intense daily use of digital technologies and strong relationships impact their behaviours and attitudes, including shorter attention spans, a quest for immediate gratification, and a preference for interactive and visual content. Generation Z is more likely to cooperate and share information online as they have grown up in a highly democratic society (Pakpahan et al., 2024).

Social media is the best space to disseminate information widely to gen Z. Especially in this election in 2024, social media is often used as a campaign medium for every political practitioner to get public votes, especially in the generation Z group as novice voters. In the 2024 election, the General Election Commission (KPU) noted that 56.45% of the votes came from the technology-savvy generation, namely the millennial generation and gen Z. This certainly strengthens the function of social media in the election. This certainly strengthens the function of social media in the campaigns of Indonesian political practitioners.

Social media used as political communication is a major factor in influencing and influencing people's perceptions and perspectives on elections. Everyone's opinion in politics can be expressed through social media content. Even according to Tabroni, the effectiveness of the internet both from below and above and vice versa in delivering political messages makes it important in the

political communication process. Pierre Levy provides New Media Theory which explains that New media is technology-based online media, has a customisable and interactive nature, is useful for public and private with the use of an internet connection TikTok as a New Media platform can have implications in the context of political information. (Ain, Sari, & Candrasari, 2023)

Considering the influence of social media on Generation Z, it is difficult to control social media due to the easy process of publishing content, whether it is based on facts or not, which will lead public opinion in various directions. So the importance of literacy in politics is a very important provision in order to improve the quality of thinking in making choices rationally without being influenced by *hoax* information or *hate speech* originating from social media.

The negative impact of social media on Generation Z's choice in the 2024 election

Social media has a pivotal impact on people's lives as it provides the possibility of rapid connectivity and communication, enables instant access to information, and plays a role in shaping opinions and attitudes. It is a space for building digital identities, introducing creativity and influencing mental health. Despite its benefits, social media can also amplify polarisation of opinions and conflict, presenting new challenges in understanding social dynamics and human well-being in the digital age.

Social media now not only plays a role in providing information about daily life, but has also become a very effective tool for presidential and legislative candidates to introduce themselves and launch their campaigns. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others provide a unique opportunity for presidential and vice presidential candidates and legislative candidates to communicate directly with voters. Candidates can share their personal background, vision and mission through posts, photos and videos that can be easily accessed by potential voters. In addition, features such as live streaming allow candidates to interact in real-time with voters, answer questions, and provide clarification on their positions. Social media also provides room for more creative and innovative campaigns, with candidates able to use visual content and engaging stories to convey their messages more effectively. But in addition to the positive impacts, social media campaigning can also be very risky, and can even derail candidates. (Faculty, 2020)

Overall, social media gives Generation Z the power to become more involved in the political process and increase their political awareness. However, challenges around the accuracy of information and the possibility of exposure to polarised viewpoints also need to be considered when analysing how social media affects the way Generation Z participates in elections. Here are examples of some of the negative impacts social media may have on Generation Z in the 2024 elections:

1. Spreading hoaxes or fake news

Hoaxes are excessive and often unfiltered information that can lead to the spread of various information content with unknown truths. Hoaxes are considered a serious problem in the digital era. (Raharjo & Winarko, 2021) Hoaxes can take the form of articles or simple posts that can circulate quickly. In the period leading up to the election, hoaxes are spread using social media to push the public towards a candidate.

According to Kominfo's calculations, over the past three years there have been 800,000 hoax findings, which means the public receives 2,250 per day or 93 fake news per hour. From this data, we can conclude that there are still many unscrupulous producers and distributors of hoaxes as a hot ball whose rotation has not found a stopping point. In 2021, Kominfo blocked 565,449 hoax content and news on social media and the internet. (Amaliah et al., 2023) The most hoaxes are about political issues as much as 916 hoax content, which coincides with the momentum of the Presidential Election (Pilpres) and Legislative Election (Pileg). Not only that, in the 2019 General Election (Pemilu), Kominfo also found as many as 3,356 hoaxes spread from August 2018 to 30 September 2019. (Insani, Alisya Zahwa Khuzaimah, Zia Devita Maryadi, & Alya Hafizha, 2023)

Ahead of the 2024 General Election, the Ministry of Communication and Information (Kemenkominfo) found 160 election hoax issues between 17 July 2023 and 6 January 2024. These hoax issues were spread across 2,623 social media contents. Minister of Communication and Information Budi Arie Setiadi said that hoaxes, slander, and hate speech have a serious impact on society. "Hoaxes not only disrupt the election process, but can also ignite horizontal conflicts in society," Budi said in a press release received by Kompas. From his words, Budi considered that elections are a crucial moment in the democratic life of a country. At that moment, people can use their voting rights to determine the leaders and representatives of the people. Therefore, the integrity and quality of elections must be well maintained. However, the negative impact caused by the emergence of hoaxes is one of the main threats that can divide the nation, exacerbate identity politics, and reduce the quality of democracy itself. (Adminkesbangpol, 2024)

2. Coordinated smear campaign

Black campaigning is an attempt to damage or question someone's reputation, by issuing negative propaganda. It can be applied to individuals or groups. The people targeted are generally politicians, public officials, activists and of course other political candidates. The term smear campaign is also often used in other, more general instances such as in job competition. Black campaigns arise due to heated competition in campaigns. Another term states that black campaigning is the use of destructive methods of seduction, innuendo or rumours about a candidate being spread to the public/ potential voters. This is launched in order to create a negative perception / which is considered unethical, especially in terms of public policy. (Fatimah, 2018)

Black campaigning, unlike negative campaigning, is prohibited because it tends towards slander and spreading false news about certain candidates. Black campaigns still occur frequently due to the difficulty of prosecuting these activities. According to Wirdyaningsih, S.H., M.H., the difficulty in dealing with black campaigns lies in the regulation in Law No. 8/2012 on General Elections, article 249 paragraph (4) that new campaign violations can be dealt with if there is a complaint or report in advance to Bawaslu regarding alleged violations or omissions in the implementation of elections. The existence of such a fast expiration date, which is only 7 (seven) days from the knowledge and/or discovery of an election violation, makes it difficult to take action against the violation, because it is usually only reported to Bawaslu after the expiration date. In addition, the use of electronic media in black campaign activities has not been fully and adequately regulated by the Law and regulations related to

general elections, so the thinking of law enforcers has not yet reached violations committed through these media and methods.

Based on this, there are some law enforcers who think that a safe and controlled condition can be achieved if reports of election violations are not followed up so that they do not appear in the community, so there is no need to follow up on these violations. This shows that there are some law enforcers who are not brave enough to take action against black campaign violations committed by parties, especially large parties. (Wirdyaningsih, 2023)

3. Buzzer or anonymous

A buzzer is an individual or group that actively spreads messages or information on social media or other online platforms with the aim of influencing public opinion. Buzzers often have a specific agenda, such as supporting a political candidate, promoting an ideology, or influencing perceptions of an issue. They can operate independently or can be employed by certain parties, such as political parties, candidates, or interest groups. (Wulandari, 2023) The use of buzzers in the context of politics is almost done in all parts of the world. As many as 89% of the 70 countries that were the subject of his research used buzzers to attack their political opponents. In Indonesia itself, buzzers are used by politicians and political parties in building public opinion and support for a prospective leader. The tendency of Indonesian buzzers is to build topics using fake accounts controlled by both humans and robots in large numbers to create mini-information and disinformation content. (Sugiono, 2020)

In Indonesia itself, there have been several regulations governing the criminal act of political buzzers, but in practice these regulations are considered ineffective. This is because the identity of the perpetrator is difficult to find, the burden of proof is very difficult and there is no strict regulation in regulating political buzzers in Indonesia. A dilemma that must be faced, where there are no regulations that strictly regulate political buzzers in Indonesia. This situation has caused violations in the elections to drag on until now. In addition, the phenomenon of political buzzers can threaten freedom of speech in order to achieve the political goals of the ordering party. The presence of political buzzers creates a threat to the death of democracy in the public sphere. They create noise on social media in accordance with orders that result in the closure of the public's true opinion in opinion. (Fawwaz Ihza Mahenda Daeni, Fitri Aliva Rachmarani, & Rhiza, 2023)

4. Influencers who mislead public opinion

In the digital and social media era, influencers have a significant influence in shaping public opinion. Unfortunately, there are a number of influencers who choose the controversial path of creating negative content aimed at bringing down their chosen opponents in the context of elections. This practice involves creating content that may not only be critical of political opponents, but may also include personal attacks, spreading disinformation, or provoking rhetoric. Such influencers are often driven by personal or group political interests, which can be detrimental to the integrity of the democratic process. This negative content not only influences public opinion, but can also create polarisation and muddy the overall political atmosphere. It is important for people to improve their digital literacy and criticality of the

content they consume, and to recognise the role of influencers in shaping political perceptions. (Nuraliza et al., 2024)

Barack Obama was one of the first politicians to utilise the power of social media and influencers effectively. He used popular celebrities and influencers such as Oprah Winfrey, who has great influence among the US electorate, to reach young and demographically diverse voters. Jokowi did the same during his campaign.

Most recently, presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto joined forces with famous influencers, such as Raffi Ahmad, Rachel Vennya, Ria Ricis, Nagita Slavina, Deddy Corbuzier, and Atta Halilintar during the inauguration of the Gedung Utama of the military academy (Akml) in Magelang, Central Java.

The risks of influencers' involvement in politics include:

a. Accuracy and bias

In the context of politics, issues of trust and fact verification become even more crucial, as false or misleading information can spread quickly through influencers. Some findings in Germany show that while influencers have the power to mobilise support, they can also spread propaganda or biased information, whether intentional or not, which can influence first-time voters. Influencers can have their own agenda. They often work with teams that help craft their messages and strategies, which may not be fully transparent. Based on the findings of Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW), influencers are even used as tools by the government to convey certain messages or agendas.

This can be seen from the government's budget for digital activities, which is based on the keyword "influencer" or "key opinion leader", which in the 2017-2020 period has 40 packages with a value of IDR 90.45 billion.

Of the 40 packages, the largest number is in the Ministry of Tourism with 22 packages. This was followed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education with 12 packages, the Ministry of Communication and Information with 4 packages, and the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Youth and Sports with 1 package each. This raises questions about the integrity of the message being delivered.

b. Halo Effect

The halo effect is when positive perceptions of a person in one area (for example, popularity or expertise in a particular field) can influence our perceptions of them in other areas (such as politics).

If influencers or celebrities are perceived to have high credibility, their endorsement of a candidate can increase the positive perception of the candidate. Ultimately, they serve as a magnet to garner as many votes or support as possible.

In social psychology, there is a distinction between influence that is explicit, such as openly supporting a candidate, and influence that is implicit, such as meeting or complimenting a candidate without expressing direct support. This implicit influence is often more effective and easier for audiences to accept, as it does not feel like direct persuasion.

People often process information indirectly through social observation. Seeing an influencer they admire meet or praise a candidate can indirectly shape positive perceptions of that candidate, even in the absence of an explicit verbal endorsement.

This phenomenon is called a soft endorsement strategy, which is when influencers do not openly support a particular candidate, but their actions create a positive perception or open the door for their followers to support that candidate.

c. Issue Diversion

The use of influencers also risks shifting the focus of campaigns from substantive issues to popularity and entertainment. This can detract from serious discussions about policy and important issues, replacing them with narratives that focus more on image and personality. Relying on influencers in politics could also have long-term implications on the quality of democratic discussion. It may lead to a reduction in serious, issue-based political engagement, replacing it with a popularity-orientated approach. (Wawan, n.d.)

5. Increased political polarisation

Polarisation refers to a process or state in which differences or disagreements between two or more groups become increasingly sharp or extreme. In the context of politics, political polarisation reflects the spread and narrowing of political views or attitudes among people, which makes the gap between groups or individuals wider. In other words, political polarisation creates camps that have sharply conflicting political opinions and views. It refers to a phenomenon in which differences in political views and ideologies between groups or individuals are increasingly sharp and extreme. (Wahyu Wiji Utomo S.Sos, 2023) In a situation of high polarisation, society is divided into camps with deeply conflicting views, making constructive dialogue and the search for agreement difficult. Political polarity often creates tension between groups, increases political conflict, and can hinder the government's ability to make decisions in favour of the common good.

A genuine example of increased political polarisation can be seen in the 2024 general election. Candidates and political parties engage in highly polarising campaigns, utilising social media to strengthen their support base while attacking political opponents. Voters are polarised by the information they consume on social media, shaping their opinions in ways that are often extreme and lack dialogue. Public discussions on online platforms have become increasingly divisive, with groups blaming each other and reinforcing their beliefs without considering other points of view. This situation creates a tense political atmosphere and can affect broader social dynamics, creating deep divisions between communities.

The influence of social media on electoral processes has significant negative impacts on many levels. The result of these negative impacts is a decline in public trust in the electoral process and political institutions. Voters may find it difficult to distinguish between true and false information, questioning the integrity of elections. Political polarisation can create tension and conflict between groups of people, hampering their ability to work together towards common goals. In addition, an online atmosphere filled with aggressive rhetoric can make discussion spaces not conducive to a healthy and constructive exchange of ideas. Overall, the negative impact of social media on elections can create serious challenges in building a society that engages and participates positively in the democratic process.

Efforts made by Generation Z in improving the quality of thinking in making choices in the 2024 elections rationally

Presidential and legislative elections are at the core of democratic systems in many countries, where the elected candidates will become the leaders and representatives of the Indonesian people. Through these elections, citizens have the opportunity to directly influence the formation of state policies and elect leaders who represent their values and interests. This is one of the most important ways in which people participate in the political process and strengthen the foundations of democracy. Therefore, political education in the era of distribution for generation Z is an educational essence that must receive special attention. Introducing politics to generation Z can no longer use conventional methods such as campaigns, billboards on the side of the road, TV shows and socialisation that are usually done, this will not appeal to generation Z. Political education for generation Z must utilise various kinds of technology to build a self-image, especially with the existence of social media which is the daily life of generation Z. (Setiyowati, Alfiandra, & Nurdiansyah, 2022)

One of the approaches taken by presidential and legislative candidates in interacting with the public is a rational approach. They seek to demonstrate that they have the competence and ability to lead or represent the community by taking into account the real interests and needs that exist. This rational approach allows people to make more informed political decisions, choosing leaders who have a strong track record and clear plans for a better future. (Hasriani, Madani, & Handam, 2015). Therefore, political education needs to be increasingly promoted, given the importance of political knowledge for the community, especially the younger generation. The younger generation should be more aware of politics because politics affects their daily lives as citizens (subjects and objects of development) which are the result of political products (Fatma Sjoraida & Sjoraida, 2015). (Fatma Sjoraida & Ruchiat Nugraha, 2023).. Political education greatly influences the quality of thinking so that Generation Z citizens can elect presidents and legislators with a rational mind because political decisions have a considerable impact on society and the country as a whole, which in turn can bring progress to society and the country as a whole.

According to Olivia Lewi Pramesti, M.A., Lecturer of FISIP UAJY, a smart voter is a voter who understands the rights and obligations as a citizen. In addition, being critical is also important to filter incoming information so that it is not merely accepted and has a negative impact on voters. Digital literacy must also be improved so that each voter can determine the right information and be free from hoaxes. "Digital literacy is important, how we are critical, how we can evaluate. We

must be critical because there are so many hoaxes in this election. Election hoaxes lead to SARA, hatred, and others," he explained. According to him, novice voters are rather dangerous if not followed by sufficient digital literacy. Moreover, it is known that voters are mostly dominated by young people. "They (young people) are exposed to everything from the internet, internet ethics sometimes do not fit in Indonesia," he said, explaining the importance of digital literacy in welcoming the 2024 elections. (*The Importance of Digital Literacy for the 2024 Election, to Realise Smart Voters*, 2023).

Rational voters have a high orientation to 'policy-problem-solving' and a low orientation to ideological factors. Voters in this case prioritise the ability of political parties or contestant candidates in their work programmes. The party's 'Platform' work program can be analysed in two ways:

- 1) party performance in the past (back ward looking), which is a search into the past or history of the organisation to determine the factors that play an important role in the current situation.
- 2) Offering programmes to solve existing national problems (forward-looking), is an approach that emphasises proactive and future-oriented solutions to problems faced by a country. It involves developing policies that not only respond to current problems, but also consider the challenges and opportunities that will arise in the future.

Both of these influence voters. They not only look at the party's future-oriented work programme/'platform', but also analyse what the party has done in the past. The party's performance or the contestant's method is usually manifested in the reputation and 'image' developed in the community. In this context, what is more important for political parties and contestants is to find ways for them to build a reputation in front of the public by putting forward policies to overcome national problems. Moreover, social media makes it easier for people, especially Generation Z, to review the history or experience of presidential and legislative candidates.(Edy Sahputra Sitepu and & Faulina, 2020)

From the party's performance or the contestants' efforts to build a good reputation and image through social media, Generation Z is considered capable of understanding the characteristics of each user base as well as the nature of digital media platforms such as Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitter, and Youtube, which are different from one another, allowing for *double crosscheck* or *factcheck* on an issue being discussed. So that personal aspects such as the background of political candidates can be put aside in discussions and focus on the track records and programmes launched by politicians and parties. From this basic assumption, Generation Z is expected to be able to bring a positive flow so that discussions and debates can be carried out in a healthy and productive manner. (Fathurochman & Tutiasri, 2023)

CONCLUSION

Based on data from the central statistics agency, Generation Z dominates as voters in the 2024 election activities. Growing up in the era of technology and digitalisation, generation z has a close relationship with social media and technology. with this fact, of course, the political campaign strategy will change, the use of social media will be the main focus of political campaigns for legislative candidates to attract generation z votes. Political content must follow the trends that are popular among generation z, which can be presented in the form of short videos or attractive posters. Social media can have a significant negative impact on Generation Z's choices in the 2024 elections. These negative impacts include a decline in public trust in the electoral process and political institutions, creating tension and conflict between community groups, the rapid spread of unverified false information, and losing focus on substantial issues because they tend to prioritise content that invites emotion and controversy. Generation Z, as a generation present in the era of technological sophistication such as social media, must be able to have a good quality of thinking in political education so that they can choose the president and legislators based on the perspective of rationality. Some efforts to improve the quality of thinking carried out by generation Z in the election of presidents and legislators, based on the perspective of rationality, can be done by looking at the vision and mission of presidential or legislative candidates, checking their track records, verifying data, thinking long term for the future, and understanding how each candidate addresses important issues that have a significant impact on society and the country.

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