



## Generation Z Voter Behavior

(Case Study of Generation Z Voter Behavior Ahead of the 2024 Surabaya  
City Regional Head Election)

Muhtar Wahyudi, Bonaventura Ngarawula, and Budhy Prianto

University of Merdeka Malang

Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

*This article reveals the political behavior of Generation Z in the city of Surabaya ahead of the Regional Head Election which elects the 2024 Mayor and Deputy Mayor which will be held in October 2024. The political behavior that is the focus of the study is Generation Z's decision to use their right to vote or not to use their right to vote. Generation Z's voting behavior is categorized based on rational voters, traditional voters and critical voters. The research approach uses a qualitative approach, with a naturalistic or field research method. Data was obtained from informants who were divided into two categories, namely generation Z informants who had decided to use their right to vote, and informants from generation Z who had decided not to use their right to vote. The differentiation of informants is intended to explore factors supporting participation and factors inhibiting participation. An important research result is that in general the voting behavior of generation Z in the city of Surabaya is rational voters. This dissertation's in-depth focus is on Supporting Factors which can be differentiated from a Sociological perspective and a Psychological perspective. The Sociological perspective refers to the findings of how informants interact with their social environment, while the Psychological perspective refers to how psychological symptoms occur in generation Z. Inhibiting factors are also seen from a Sociological and Psychological perspective. Sociological factors that support generation Z's participation in the Surabaya Mayoral Election include: the role of the Surabaya KPU, the role of the Surabaya City Bawaslu, the Surabaya city government, peer groups, and the role of props. Meanwhile, psychological perspectives that support participation include; personal assessment, empathy, positive image, and social atmosphere. Meanwhile, factors inhibiting participation from a sociological perspective found; distance between domiciles, family factors, hoaxes or fake news. Psychological inhibiting factors include; disappointment with circumstances, and alienation.*

**Keywords:** Generation Z, Driving Factors, Inhibiting Factors, Political Participation, Surabaya Election.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

General Election (Pemilu) is a forum for the people to sharpen their political awareness, thus they can determine their political choices based on their aspirations and awareness. Regional Head Election (Pilkada) has been implemented since 2005 based on Law No. 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government, that the election of regional heads and deputy regional heads is directly elected by the community.

The regional head elections held since 2005 were the beginning of direct democracy in the regions. Organizing a direct, honest and fair general election process requires commitment from all stakeholders to hold elections in a transparent and accountable manner. This commitment must be demonstrated by all stakeholders involved, such as election organizers such as the KPU and its ranks, Panwaslu, political parties that support candidate pairs, candidate pairs, campaign teams, campaign teams, election monitoring organizations, observer institutions and support from the community (Lumolos Jhony, 2010).

One of the things that influences the selection of regional head candidates in regional elections is voter behavior. A person's political behavior in responding to regional elections can differ from one another. Theoretically, voter behavior based on Affan Gaffar's theory (1992) consists of three approaches, namely, a sociological approach, a psychological approach and a rational approach.

The General Election also cannot be separated from the involvement of millennial voters in making the election a success, the millennial voters in question are voters from the generation born in the 90s who are identical with brave, innovative, creative, and modern characters.

The millennial generation is a modern generation that actively works, researches, and thinks innovatively about organizations, has a sense of optimism and a willingness to work competitively, openly, and flexibly and still has a spirit of nationalism and understands right and wrong politics. Millennial voters in Indonesia are able to make a major contribution to Indonesian politics. This has made many political parties find out about the criteria that will be the benchmark for millennial and Generation-Z voters in deciding who to choose, especially during the general election process.

The decision of the millennial generation and Gen-Z in determining their choice during the general election process is one of the things that has an important influence on the election results. Generation Z's decision-making in choosing is influenced by several factors, including voting behavior, political branding and political disaffection (Azis, 2018).

Usually millennial voters are still influenced by certain interests, especially by people closest to them such as family members, from parents to relatives, so that millennial voters are the right target for political parties in gaining votes. The lack of political education they receive and are influenced by the existence of technology that contains various kinds of information about the election.

The election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Surabaya is one of the political democracy events in Indonesia. One of the important things in the implementation of the Regional Head Election (pilkada) is the behavior of voters who support the success of the election. Political behavior of voters and political participation of voters are important aspects that cannot be separated and are aspects that support the success of a general election.

Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), millennial voters in the 2018 Pilkada were around 35% of the total list of permanent voters (rumah Gubernur.org, January 31, 2018). Millennial voters as a technology generation, their lives cannot be separated from technology, especially the internet, entertainment has become a basic need for the millennial generation, including in relation to the general election, millennial voters will seek information on the general election from the internet.

Meanwhile, we know that anything on the internet is not easy to filter out what is right and what is wrong. Social media as a means for the millennial generation to socialize contains various kinds of information that cannot be ascertained as true, so sometimes what they choose is not in accordance with what is expected.

Research related to millennial voters was also conducted by Mohamad Faizal Azis, Elsy Rahmayani and Fadillah Suwarno in 2018 "Exploratory Study of Voting Behavior, Political Branding, Political Disaffection in the Millennial Voter Generation". Based on this research, it can be concluded that the millennial generation is less interested and does not know much about the world of politics. However, this does not dampen their intention to use their voting rights during the election process, due to their high concern for the progress of a better country and the hope that society will get welfare.

Based on research related to millennial and Generation Z voters which was also conducted by Retnayu Prasetyanti in 2017 "Millennial Generation and Innovation of Ahok's Friends Democracy Network", it can be concluded that the millennial generation is not only optimistic, but can also be a new spirit that can move the role of society, especially the younger generation, to be more optimistic about the future of regional politics which is an implication of creativity, a new style of nationalism, and a picture of the weak credibility of Indonesian political actors.

Research on millennial and Generation Z voters was also conducted by Muhamad Isnaini in 2017 "Millennial Generation Volunteer Movement: Case in the 2017 Jakarta Regional Head Election (Pilkada) in the Perspective of Political Communication". The volunteer movement initiated by the younger generation, both as supporters of candidates and as supervisors of the election process. The millennial generation by initiating the volunteer movement is an indication of their readiness as political actors. The form of these political actors is as activists, who bridge the interests of the community with the candidates they support, and to achieve a more honest, fair, and transparent democratic process. The millennial generation, through their participation in politics, not only wants change, but also hopes to become agents of change in their own way.

Before discussing the opportunities of Generation Z in the Surabaya Regional Head Election (Pilkada), it is a good idea to refresh some cases involving the millennial generation as political movement determinants in other

countries. Although there are strong rumors that say that the Generation Z group is a-political, which is caused by the stereotype that politics is dirty and cruel, the facts in Hong Kong and England say otherwise. Millennials and Generation Z are not a shy, obedient, and attitudeless generation. Millennials and Generation Z are actually assertive, and do not hesitate to voice their political stance.

In Hong Kong, for example, thanks to leading students in pro-democracy actions, in December 2015, Nathan Law became the talk of the news. Thanks to his actions, the young generation in Hong Kong managed to get attention. Finally, at the age of 23, Nathan Law was officially elected as the youngest member of parliament on September 4, 2016.

The Brexit event in the UK also provides an indicator of the involvement of the millennial generation in political participation. In a poll conducted by YouGov on 4,772 people in the UK, it was stated that 64% of the population aged 25-29 years wanted the UK to remain in the European Union, while 61% of those aged 30-34 years wanted to leave, the desire to leave was also desired by voters aged 45 years and over. Although in the end the millennial group's vote was declared defeated, which was marked by the UK's exit from the European Union. However, the political stance of the millennial group is already clearly visible. They dare to speak up, even take a stand, even if they have to be at odds with the older group or their parents.

Derek Thompson, a contributor to *The Atlantic*, once wrote that millennials and Generation Z have liberal political views, bordering on socialism and even leaning towards the left wing. This is what then encourages the political attitudes of millennials and Gen-Z to be more actively involved in realizing their political views or at least choosing and being with people who are close to their views.

In contrast to the attitude of the previous generation which is the key to the political attitude of the millennial and Gen-Z groups in East Java, at that point lies the opportunity and challenge for political parties or regional head candidates to be able to embrace and understand what the hopes of the existing millennial groups are, so that potential support from this generation can be easily obtained.

In addition, in politics the key of generation Z is a liberal political view. Where they tend to want to be directly involved in realizing their political views. More than that, generation Z will even prefer candidates who can represent their group.

The important role of the millennial generation of voters lies in the behavior and abilities possessed by this generation. The journal entitled "Political Participation of Millennial Voters in Elections" in Indonesia written by Zulkarnaen, et al. (2020) states that the millennial generation and Gen-Z are not apathetic towards politics and have a great sense of responsibility towards their status as good Indonesian citizens.(Zulkarnaen et al., 2020). In addition, the generation of Generation Z voters is also related to the development of communication and information technology which is also in line with the real world situation that Generation Z uses social media to access information both general and related to politics. Statistics also show that the total number of millennial and Generation Z voters based on data from the KPU (General Election Commission) reached 70-80 million people out of a total of 193 million voters, this has caused the millennial generation to reach a ratio of 30-40 percent of total voters.(Zulkarnaen et al., 2020)in the general election, making the voice of generation Z important and unavoidable.

Important aspects of the millennials and Gen-Z generations according to Gallup (2016) quoted in the book "Profile of the Indonesian Millennial Generation" written by Budiati and Kolega (2018) that make this generation different from previous generations. The first characteristic is that the millennials and Generation Z are generations that are more attached and interested in values, or generations that focus more on big goals and put aside material things. This makes the millennial generation as prospective voters able to see the point of view of who they will choose based on logic and the best goals, not only based on populist promises.(Budiati et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the characteristics of millennial and Gen Z voters who have better education than the previous generation and are close to technology make millennials and Gen Z have an open-minded culture. Although millennials are potential voters, Budiarti and colleagues (2018) also highlighted the shortcomings of millennials and Gen Z.

Milbrath and Goel (1997) stated that there are three categories based on mindset, the first is the apathetic type that tends to be allergic to anything political so that they withdraw from every existing political process. The second is the spectator type who has little interest in politics but still has the desire to exercise their right to vote. And the third is the gladiator type which is a group within the millennial generation that tends to be active in political activities, either through party activists, campaign workers, or in other political organizations.(Budiati et al., 2018)

The three groups in the millennial generation and Generation Z are of course important considerations in the fight for votes in the 2020 Surabaya Pilkada. Budiati (2018) stated that the millennial generation and Gen Z tend to be apathetic but have a critical mindset, and are exemplified through political participation in non-conventional forms, such as high participation on social media pages. [www.change.org](http://www.change.org) which has an influence on the petition made for a legal decision (Budiati et al., 2018). This shows that the millennial generation interprets their political activities not only as democratic celebrations held such as General Elections, to Regional Elections. (Budiati et al., 2018)

The city of Surabaya, which for the first time participated in the simultaneous regional elections on September 28, 2015, will again be part of the simultaneous regional elections in 2024, in order to find a replacement for Mayor Eri Cahyadi. Where the standards that have been set by Eri Cahyadi, are a challenge for his successor in the future. Eri Cahyadi, who is firm and disciplined, has led Surabaya to become a city that is not only reckoned with nationally, but also internationally. Of course, this will be an important note for the millennial generation in forming a replacement figure for the PDI Perjuangan Mayor.

Seeing how Mayor Eri Cahyadi is so open to providing a place for the creativity of young people in Surabaya (seen in almost every park and public space, Eri Cahyadi is very careful in thinking about the layout that is acceptable to young people). As if deliberately providing the widest possible space for the millennial generation to be part of the sustainable development carried out by Eri Cahyadi for the City of Surabaya. So it is not naive if the 2024 Surabaya City Pilkada contestation is colored by the active role of the millennial generation. How the millennial generation plays an important role in shaping public opinion, through their voting behavior which is suspected of having determined the map of the 2024 Surabaya City Pilkada contestation.

The millennial generation who are active in the 2024 regional elections may have become more mature in terms of political culture, the character of the political behavior of the youth is then transferred or passed down to the next generation, namely generation Z.

Based on the background above, this study is important to see what the behavior patterns of Generation Z are in the City of Surabaya in the 2024 Surabaya City Regional Head Election. This is as stated by Dennis Kavanagh (1983) regarding three types of voting behavior that have differences in their approaches. The three types of approaches according to Dennis Kavanagh consist of a sociological approach, a psychological approach, and a rational approach.

Research on the behavior of Generation Z voters in Surabaya City in the 2020 Surabaya City Regional Head Election is very interesting because of the background of previous leaders who are close to the millennials in Surabaya City. So this study will try to find out about the behavior of Generation Z voters in Surabaya City in the 2024 Surabaya City Regional Head Election.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Democracy**

Various Definitions of Democracy United States President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) defined democracy as: Government of the people, by the people, for the people. Democracy as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. ([www.democracy-building.info](http://www.democracy-building.info)) The term democracy comes from Greek and means "government by (simple) people". Democracy in classical antiquity (Athens and Rome) was an early form of modern democracy. Like modern democracies, they were created as a reaction to the concentration and abuse of power by rulers.

However, the theory of modern democracy was only formulated after the Enlightenment (17th and 18th centuries), when philosophers defined the essential elements of democracy: separation of powers, basic civil rights or human rights, freedom of religion and separation of church and state. ([www.democracy-building.info](http://www.democracy-building.info)) The concept of democracy, although it can be traced back to the Greek era, has experienced significant growth during the European revival towards the Enlightenment. At that time, great thoughts emerged about the relationship between the ruler and the people, or the state and society according to contemporary concepts. The developing thoughts have provided valuable contributions to efforts to redefine and also actualize the term and concept of democracy (Urbaningrum, 2004:17).

### **2.2. General Election (Election)**

General Election Filling of representative institutions in state practice is usually carried out through General Elections. After the amendment to the 1945 Constitution, all members of representative institutions and even the president and regional heads were elected through the General Election mechanism. General elections are an agenda



that is held periodically in Indonesia. Ibnu Tricahyo (2009:6), defines General Elections as follows: "Universally, General Elections are an instrument to realize the sovereignty of the people which intends to form a legitimate government and a means of articulating the aspirations and interests of the people". The definition above explains that general elections are an instrument to realize the sovereignty of the people, form a legitimate government and as a means of articulating the aspirations and interests of the people.

### **2.3.Regional Head Election (Pilkada)**

Pilkada is one of the political activities that is the implementation of the people's sovereign rights in choosing a leader for the next 5 years. Through Pilkada, there is a change of power holders in an orderly, peaceful and quality manner. According to Government Regulation No. 6 of 2005 concerning the Election, Confirmation, Appointment and Dismissal of Regional Heads and Deputy Regional Heads, the election of regional heads is a means of implementing people's sovereignty in the province and/or Regency/City based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution to elect regional heads and deputy regional heads. Pilkada is also a new breakthrough in the Indonesian political system, especially for the local government level. Before Pilkada, regional heads were elected through a political process that could not be called an election, because it did not involve the voters.

According to Zuhro, et al (2009:48) said that Pilkada is a momentum to carry out local leadership succession as a form of implementing participatory democracy. Pilkada is an election held in autonomous regions which is an order from the amendment to Law No. 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government. According to Irtanto (2008:159) what is meant by Pilkada is a political process to directly elect regional heads. The implementation of Pilkada is a mandate of Article 56 paragraph (1) of Law No. 32 of 2004 which states that: The Regional Head and Deputy Regional Head are elected in one pair of candidates which are carried out democratically based on the principles of direct, general, free, secret, honest and fair.

### **2.4.Local Politics Regional Head Elections (Pilkada)**

Understanding the construction of local political dynamics (understanding the dynamics of local politics) in the city of Surabaya in the context of the simultaneous regional head elections (Pilkada) in November 2024, is actually not just a democratic ritual. However, what we can understand through a socio-political and political economy analysis approach is a battle between political actors and local oligarchies. Why is that? Local actors or oligarchies have a hegemonic structure and intervene in the design of local politics in Surabaya.

The hegemonic structure can be seen from the existence of political parties (parpol) controlled by capital owners or with a background as mining owners. Therefore, debating the existence of political parties in the era of democratization is an academic debate that is always interesting. Ideally, the existence of political parties as stated by Robert Dahl, one of its functions is to be an instrument of political communication and build political participation of citizens.

However, in fact, political parties so far, as written by Bonafasius Hergens (2020) in Oligarchic Cartelization in Post-Suharto Indonesia, the existence of political parties has transformed into oligarchic cartelization. This is the reality of democratic instruments that cannot be avoided in the era of capitalist democratization today. Bonifasius Hergens' writing provides theoretical confirmation in understanding the reality of political parties in Surabaya. A reality where political parties are controlled by capital owners and are cartelistic. Furthermore, in addition to political parties being cartelistic, they are also instruments for strengthening family politics, fostering oligarchic practices and preserving political feudalism.

The political structure and design of political feudalism increasingly distance the quality of democracy in the upcoming political contest. The product of simultaneous regional elections will continue to produce paradoxical democracy that will answer the people's anxiety amidst economic and political realities that are increasingly far from the ideals of reform. Namely, the shared dream and ideals for a just and dignified social, economic, and political system for the children of this country.

### **2.5.Voting Behavior**

Voting behavior is a person's behavior in determining their choice that they feel is most preferred or most suitable. According to Haryanto (2000), Voting behavior is: "The activity of citizens who have the right to vote and are registered as voters, casting their votes to elect or determine their representatives". Voting behavior according to

Jack C. Plano is intended as a study that focuses on the field that deals with the habits or tendencies of people's choices in general elections, as well as the background of why they make the election (Plano, 1985).

Budiharjo (2001) defines voting behavior as an activity of a person or group of people to actively participate in political life, including by choosing a country's leader and directly or indirectly influencing government policy (public policy). This activity includes actions such as voting in general elections, attending public meetings, contacting or lobbying with government officials or members of parliament, becoming a member of a party or a social movement with direct action, and so on.

### **2.6. The Development of Generation Theory**

In the literature on generational differences, general and widely accepted criteria are used in various regions, in this case the criteria used are year of birth and events that occur globally (Twenge, 2006). Several research results consistently compare generational differences, with samples ranging from the 1950s to the early 2000s, showing differences in characteristics of 3 generation groups, namely the baby boomers generation, generation X and generation Y (Millennials), one of which is research from Lancaster & Stillman (2002), which provides the following results:

**Table 1. Differences in Characteristics of 3 Generation Groups**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Baby Boomers</b>	<b>Generation Xers</b>	<b>Millennial Generation</b>
<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Optimistic</b>	<b>Skeptical</b>	<b>Realistic</b>
<b>Overview</b>	This generation believes in opportunities, and is often too idealistic to make positive changes in the world. They are also competitive and look for ways to change the existing system.	A closed generation, very independent and has potential, does not depend on others to help them	Highly respect differences, prefer to work together rather than take orders, and are very pragmatic when solving problems.

### **2.7. Behavioral Sociology Theory**

Behavioral Sociology Theory is a theory included in the paradigm developed by BF Skinner, namely, the Social Behavior Paradigm. The social behavior paradigm itself is one of the three paradigms contained in the understanding of the nature (meaning) of sociology based on George Ritzer (1975), namely, the social fact paradigm, the social definition paradigm, and the social behavior paradigm. (Mustaqim, 2016). In the process of understanding sociology with the social behavior paradigm where the behavioral sociology theory is located, there are important things that need to be considered, namely the role of the interaction process that occurs between individuals with both social objects and non-social objects is very important so that it becomes the center of attention of the social behavior paradigm.

Behavioral sociology theory according to BF Skinner itself focuses on the relationship between environmental behavior and individual behavior to find out the consequences of behavioral relationships. In other words, BF Skinner tries to convey that the relationship between environmental behavior and individual behavior will produce something that follows or can also be called a result of the relationship between the two relationships. Furthermore, this theory also states that in the consequences of the relationship between environmental behavior and individual behavior that produces a result that follows, a pattern can eventually be formed.

### **2.9. Millennials and Generation Z**

Generational differences in the work environment are one of the subjects that always appear in the development of human resource management, and the concept of generational differences continues to develop over time. The first study on the development of generational values was conducted by Mannheim in 1952, the study was based on writings in the field of sociology about generations in the range of 1920 to 1930. Mannheim revealed that the younger generation cannot socialize perfectly because of the gap between the ideal values taught by the older generation and the reality faced by the younger generation, furthermore it is said that social location has a major effect on the formation of individual consciousness.

According to Mannheim (1952) generation is a social construction in which there is a group of people who have the same age and the same historical experience. Furthermore, Mannheim (1952) explains that individuals who are part of a generation are those who have the same year of birth within a span of 20 years and are in the same social and historical dimensions. This definition was also specifically developed by Ryder (1965) who said that a generation is an aggregate of a group of individuals who experience the same events in the same period of time. In recent years the definition of generation has developed, one of which is the definition according to Kupperschmidts (2000) who says that a generation is a group of individuals who identify their group based on the similarity of year of birth, age, location, and events in the lives of the group of individuals that have a significant influence on their growth phase. From several definitions, the theory of generational differences was popularized by Neil Howe and William Strauss in 1991. Howe & Strauss (1991, 2000) divided generations based on similarities in birth time span and similarities in historical events. This generational division has also been put forward by many other researchers with different labels, but in general have the same meaning.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Approach**

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach, namely an approach that sees social reality in its natural setting, without manipulation by the researcher. Different from research conducted to test hypotheses, this study aims to describe and reflect the social reality of community groups by trying to reveal "how" and "why" with the behavior of millennials voting in the Surabaya City regional head election and the factors that inhibit and encourage. Researchers compare phenomena as a comparison, or as a data triangulation process so as to obtain data that can be accounted for. Researchers also classify phenomena by setting standards or norms (normative surveys), investigating the position (status) of phenomena or factors and seeing the relationship between one factor and another (in this case, the descriptive method is also called a status study). Therefore, the main tool (instrument) of this study is the researcher himself.

#### **3.2 Research Focus**

The focus of the research will be emphasized on:

- 1) Generation Z Voter Behavior in the 2024 Surabaya Pilkada, includes the following indicators:
  - a. Rational Behavior
  - b. Traditional Behavior
  - c. Pragmatic Behavior
- 2) Factors that are drivers and obstacles that can influence the behavior of Generation Z voters in the 2024 Surabaya Pilkada with the following indicators;
  - a. Driver
    - (1) Internal
    - (2) External
  - b. Inhibitor
    - (1) Internal
    - (2) External

#### **3.3 Research Informants**

Informants are people who can provide information about the situation and conditions of the research background. The technique for determining informants in this study uses purposive sampling, which is a sampling technique for a specific purpose (the people selected really have the criteria as samples). These informants are needed to find out the conditions that are in accordance with the phenomenon of communication behavior of millennial voters in the 2020 Surabaya Pilkada. This means determining informants according to selected criteria that are relevant to research problems such as:

- 1) Sampling must be based on certain traits, properties or characteristics, which are the main characteristics of the population.
- 2) The subjects taken as samples are truly the subjects that contain the most characteristics found in the population.

3) Determination of population characteristics is done carefully in the preliminary study. As mentioned, the selection of the first informant is very important and must be done carefully.

Furthermore, it can be strengthened with the Snowball Sampling technique, where the process of taking informants is continuously carried out based on suggestions or traces from previous informants, until no new data is obtained or the data has reached saturation point. The number of informants in this study is at least a minimum of 10 people or more from various backgrounds that meet the purposive requirements and meet the tracing snowball sampling. With the following details: (1) Students (2) Students, (3) Workers/laborers, (4) Social Organizations, (5) Religious Organizations, (6) Youth Organizations, (7) Sports communities, (8) Arts and Culture Communities, (9) Civil Servants, (10) Entrepreneurs.

**Table 2. List of Informants Who Decided to Use Their Right to Vote**

No	Name	Age	Status
1	Indrabekti	17 years	Private High School Students in Surabaya, Grade 11
2	English	20 years	Student of Faculty of Economics of Private Universities in Surabaya
3	Dandi Dwi Prakoso	23 years	State University graduate in Surabaya, running a food product and Angkringan business
4	Mario	24 years old	Bachelor of State University, Computer Business
5	Imam Hanafi	22 years	Once a resident of the Tebu Ireng Islamic boarding school in Jombang, he is an activist at the Tahfis House in the Kebraon Housing Complex in Surabaya.
6	Amelia	24 years old	NGO activist
7	Dhani Achmad S	24 years old	State University Students in Surabaya
8	Ragil Pragolapati	25 years	Civil servants in Nginden Subdistrict
9	Chandra Wijaya	24 years old	State University students, parents as ASN in Surabaya
10	Wildan Krisnarwanto	23 years	High school graduate, parents in the automotive business
11	Vishnu Jaya	18 years	Private high school students in the South Rungkut area
12	Benjamin Sukardi	19 years old	High School Students in the Jambangan Area
13	English: Novian Yuli Pratama	23 years	Employees in Semolowaru
14	Retno Susilowati	23 years	Female employee of garment company
15	Sri Saifullah	22 years	Private University Students in the Siwalankerto Area
16	Agustin Pangalulu	22 years	Student of State University of Surabaya
17	Bahrudin	21 years	NGO activist in the field of children with special needs

**Table 3. List of informants who decided not to use their voting rights**

No	Name	Age	Status
1	Sutejo	22 years	Junior high school graduate, used goods collector
2	Goddess Aisha	20 years	Active in the Asyiah social organization
3	Zainal Mutaqien	20 years	State University Students
4	Thank you	25 years	Minimarket Employee
5	Bambang Wisnubroto	24 years old	Private employees in Surabaya

**3.4 Data Analysis Techniques**

In qualitative research, data analysis is carried out from the beginning and during the ongoing research process. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) classify interactive analysis into 3 (three) components of data analysis



(interactive model), namely reduction or condensation, data presentation, drawing conclusions and can be presented transparently as in Figure 2 (two) below, namely, this Data Analysis technique is carried out through an interactive analysis process consisting of data collection, data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions/verification.

## **4. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

### **4.1. Generation Z Voter Categories in Surabaya**

The existence of young people (generation X and generation Z) in the context of political contestation in Indonesia is a very significant phenomenon in the current political democracy process. Judging from the population, the two generations combined have reached 52 percent (more than half of the total population of Indonesia who have the right to vote). This figure is very important when associated with the direct democracy system that determines the winner of the contestation is determined by the number of voters obtained. In the context of legislative elections, the winner is determined by the acquisition of votes that exceed the ceiling determined by the election organizers (KPU) in each respective electoral district (dapil). Meanwhile, for executive elections (such as president-vice president, governor-vice governor, mayor-vice mayor, and regent-vice regent) the most votes are determined by 50% + 1. If this number is not obtained, it is continued to the next round, the second election.

If the contestants succeed in winning the hearts of all generations X and Z, then the number can be converted into potential electability towards victory. Nationally, the voter population in the 2024 election is as follows: According to the Permanent Voter List for the 2024 Election issued by the Indonesian General Election Commission (KPU), the total number of voters in the 2024 Election is 204,807,222. of that number are divided into several categories based on generation and age. For Pre Boomers or voters with a birth year before 1945 as many as 1.74 percent, baby boomers (1946 - 1964) as many as 13.73 percent, generation X or gen X (1965-1980) as many as 28.07 percent, millennial generation (1981-1996) as many as 33.60 percent and generation Z (1997-2009) as many as 22.85 percent.

In this dissertation, we want to explore more qualitative facts in the field, namely the meaning that emerged from the results of interviews with Generation Z voters. In this case...Dandi Dwi Prakoso, shows that the social environment, especially the family, greatly determines the choices of family members.

Different things were found from the results of the interview with Mario (24 years old), a resident of Simogunung who had just graduated from a State University in Surabaya and was running a computer equipment business. In the legislative and presidential elections, he utilized his expertise in the computer field with a business drawing presidential candidates for screen printing t-shirts, ordering billboards, banners, and posters. Mario (his nickname) represents a pragmatic voter. The words "return favors" indicate transactional behavior between him and a particular party. The question is, are these Generation Z voters affiliated with political parties?

This question was confirmed by the results of a survey conducted on Generation Z affiliates who turned out to have an attachment to a particular party, either as a supporter (follower), as an administrator, or a sympathizer due to pragmatism as happened to Mario.

### **4.2. Supporting Factors for Political Participation**

Many factors determine the political participation of citizens. Although based on survey data, generation Z in the city of Surabaya admitted that they would use their voting rights in the Surabaya City Pilkada, the figure reached more than 60%. But nationally, some of the generation Z did not use their voting rights, aka Golput, in the 2024 election (legislative and presidential elections). Based on a survey by the Center for Strategic and International, respondents who chose Golput reached 11.8 percent in the 2024 Election.

Gita Amelia (24) gave the following reasons: There are many causes of Golput in the Election. Moreover, with young people dominating, they will think briefly about politics. The critical and brave thoughts of the young generation to build the country and freedom of opinion must be voiced because choosing a candidate for leader for the country must be careful in order to be more advanced for Indonesia.

To increase the political participation of Generation Z in Indonesia, proper education is needed so that social media users can control extreme behavior based on their identity politics. In addition, the government and state need to provide a more open and inclusive space for Generation Z to participate in politics. Such as through political education programs and participation in public policy. Can facilitate the community, especially Generation Z who really need to participate in the Election because of the many differences in the era.

This dissertation examines the supporting and inhibiting factors of political participation of generation Z from a sociological and psychological perspective. The sociological perspective captures how generation Z uses/utilizes their social relations or interactions in order to participate, while the psychological perspective examines feelings (affective) and thoughts (cognitive) that are determinants of participation.

The sociological factors that drive Generation Z's political participation are listed as follows:

1) Surabaya City General Election Commission

Dhani Achmad Sultoni (24 years old), a state university student in Surabaya, represents his political participation thanks to the information penetration carried out by the election socialization activities by the Surabaya City General Election Commission.

He participated in many events held by my campus in collaboration with election organizing institutions such as the General Election Commission (KPU), especially the Surabaya KPU. The activity that he had participated in was the socialization of the 2024 election. According to him, the material presented was very useful for him, because his knowledge about elections increased. His increasing insight further strengthened his confidence in using his right to vote in the upcoming Surabaya Pilkada. With that knowledge, it made it easier for him to make a choice. The KPU member who was the speaker was quite good, as can be seen from his delivery and when answering questions from the audience.

From Dhani's confession, it is clear that there is social interaction between the person concerned and the KPU, although the relationship is not intensive, but it shows the strategic role of the KPU in encouraging political participation in Surabaya. Moreover, according to the informant, the Surabaya KPU is quite credible (can be trusted) from the indication of mastery of the material and the ability to answer questions from the audience.

Did you follow the socialization in other ways by the Surabaya KPU?

Dhani admitted: "Yes, I followed the socialization of the Surabaya KPU through social media, especially through Instagram." If we track Instagram ([https://www.instagram.com/p/C8DclFhxhpsI/?locale=de-DE&img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/C8DclFhxhpsI/?locale=de-DE&img_index=1)) belonging to the Surabaya KPU, we can find information about the KPU's activities in socializing elections to its citizens.

The Surabaya KPU held a Socialization of the 2024 Surabaya Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral Election (Pilwali) targeting new voters. The activity themed "Increasing the Role of Gen Z in the 2024 Pilkada through Socialization and Education of New Voters" took place at Wijaya Putra High School.

Member of the Surabaya KPU, Subairi, in his presentation reminded Surabaya residents to use their voting rights optimally for the sake of Surabaya for the next 5 years.

Next, it was continued with the presentation of material on the Election by two speakers, namely Cartoonist, Wahyu Widodo and the Human Resources Development Division of the Indonesian Photojournalist (PFI) Surabaya, Ali Masduki.

In addition to regular face-to-face socialization to community members through cooperation with local governments, schools, and universities, the KPU also created flyers containing certain information that can be shared (made viral) through other social media.

As comparative data, Nur Devi Rahmalina (2024) found that the Banjarmasin KPU uploaded data reached 464 uploads throughout 2023.

Rahmalina added that Instagram is the second most widely used social media by Indonesian people with a percentage of 84.8%. The platform is a place to display images, short videos and posters that are varied and not monotonous. Instagram is the most actively used social media by the Banjarmasin City KPU as an effort to increase Generation Z's political participation. This shows that the Banjarmasin City KPU has a good understanding of social media that is a priority for Generation Z, and actively shares relevant content regarding the general election.

2) Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) of Surabaya City

Ragil Pragolapati (25 years old). This young man who was born in Surabaya claims to be a graduate of a State High School in Surabaya who now works as a civil servant in the Nginden Sukolilo Village, Surabaya. Ragil Pragolapati reflects the Z generation whose political participation was inspired by information/knowledge about elections from Bawaslu.

He said he knew a Bawaslu member who happened to be in the same neighborhood in his housing complex. They often met him at the security post. They often chatted while playing chess. The impression was that as a

Bawaslu member, he was very skilled at explaining matters related to elections, especially regarding vigilance against the behavior of certain individuals who try to lure us with money or basic necessities so that we vote for a certain candidate. He warned us not to be influenced by such bribes, because such behavior is prohibited by law and can be criminalized. In addition, providing material with the motive of directing us to vote for a certain candidate is immoral behavior, damaging democracy, and making the elected leader a figure with a bad reputation. Later, when leading, he will definitely continue dirty methods.

Ragil Pragolapati's confession above reflects that Generation Z also had the opportunity to interact with election organizers and used it to absorb political information, especially about elections. Ragil Pragolapati also admitted to seeking information about Bawaslu through Bawaslu's social media which contains information about the institution's existence, main tasks and functions, and activities carried out. Ragil Pragolapati views Bawaslu's steps as very positive in supporting the enthusiasm of the community to exercise their right to vote.

If we look closely at Bawaslu's social media, especially Instagram, it turns out to be in accordance with what Ragil Pragolapati said. Like the KPU, Bawaslu also manages its Instagram to socialize the election. The difference is, if the KPU encourages active voter participation, Bawaslu tends to ensure that the public actively monitors fraud in voting and avoids money politics.

### 3) Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) of Surabaya City

To portray this entity, researchers interviewed 2 different informants. Candra Wijaya (24 years old) a final semester student at a State University in Surabaya whose parents work as ASN at the Surabaya City Government and Wildan Krisnarwanto (23 years old) whose father works as an entrepreneur in the automotive sector. Wildan himself admitted that he was only a high school graduate who did not continue his studies to college. He himself is active in an NGO that actively advocates in the field of local politics.

Candra stated that his father who works at the Surabaya City Government said that the role of the City Government was quite extensive to make the 2024 Election (legislative and presidential elections) a success, starting from socialization to Generation Z in schools, deploying city government security guards to each sub-district to anticipate chaos at several stages, to screening (health checks, he meant) for personnel who are members of the PPSK in the sub-districts, and many more. In the upcoming October Mayoral Election, the city government will also do the same thing so that the mayoral election is a success. The concentration of the City Government's role, according to his father, is that the implementation of the mayoral election runs smoothly and does not cause chaos in the community.

Meanwhile, according to Wildan as an NGO activist, he rarely gets an invitation to attend the election socialization held by the Surabaya City Government. Moreover, in the mayoral election, Wildan Krisnarwanto did not know because he had never heard of a socialization event. He also had never heard or read the news on social media that Mr. Eri Cahyadi (Mayor) went down to participate in the socialization."

Your opinion Candra and Wildan Krisnarwanto and the City Government, showed that the role of this state institution already exists, both in facilitating the implementation of the Pilwali and in order to increase voter participation, but there seems to be a gap that the escalation carried out by the city government is still limited so that it has not reached a wide segment of society, such as NGOs. Regarding the lack of involvement of Mayor Eri Cahyadi in the socialization, it is likely that it was set up that way to prevent accusations from the public that the City Government is not neutral. Meanwhile, Eri Cahyadi himself as the incumbent admitted that he would run again as a candidate for Mayor of Surabaya in 2024-2029 for the second period. At least Eri Cahyadi's billboards for the second period are already scattered on the main roads in Surabaya.

### 4) Playgroup (peer group)

Playgroups are a need for adolescents or young adults. In this group, individuals identify themselves and interact socially through similarities in interests, such as hobbies or other interests. This can be seen from the confession of informant Wisnu Jaya (18 years old), a student at a private high school in the South Rungkut area, who admitted that he has many playgroups. He has a badminton sports group. Incidentally, in my RW there are sports activists who gather teenagers here. He is also a member of a fishing group, a Sunday jogging group, a religious study group at the mosque (remas), a youth organization, and an online game group. However, the groups that interact most often are the jogging and online game groups. At every meeting, there are definitely chats that make us laugh. However, serious chats about politics, such as the mayoral election, often occur in mosque youth groups and jogging.

Does this playgroup have a role in encouraging political participation in the mayoral election?

Wisnu stated that many friends are of the opinion that it is time for us to show our true selves, one of which is by using our voting rights in the Pilawali. Unfortunately, until now there have been no candidates who will compete in the Pilawali, so we cannot discuss it by comparing the contestants with each other. Finally, it seems that who is worthy of leading Surabaya next is only him. According to friends, Mr. Eri is a person with authority, straightforward, and no nonsense. There is no track record that shows his dark side. So for now, Mr. Eri is the reference. Who knows if another candidate will emerge, we will definitely discuss it further.

From Wisnu's opinion above, at least it indicates that generation Z is not apathetic in political participation. Playmates are a reference in determining choices. It is implied that political evaluation cannot be carried out in this playgroup because no other candidates have socialized themselves. This is also an indication that the candidates are a bit late in socializing themselves to be known by the public. It could be that the factor is waiting for recommendations from the DPP of political parties to advance in the Surabaya Mayoral Election.

There are indeed some names that have emerged through the Billboard, but not as massive as the Eri Cahyadi Billboard, so it is not widely known by the public. In addition to Eri Cahyadi, there are two names that have emerged; namely Arif Fathoni and Kaesang Pangarep (President Joko Widodo's youngest son).

The role of playgroups in encouraging political participation is confirmed by previous research conducted by Alex Victor Wanma (2015). The research was conducted in Samofa District, Biak Munfor Regency. This research found that young voters are generally influenced by their playgroups (Alex uses the term "social groups"), both in exercising their voting rights, their affiliations, and their contestants. The reason for being comfortable with social groups is because they want to create a sense of togetherness.

Another study that shows that young voters generally still depend on other parties, was conducted by Fitriyah et al. (2021). In this study, it was found that this study found that young voters still depend on many parties in making decisions to choose candidates. In first place are religious figures (93%), followed by parents (90%) and friends (74%) who will be their references in considering choosing.

#### 5) Props

In the Regulation of the General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia No. 28 of 2018 paragraph 28, the definition of campaign materials in general elections is stated as: all objects or other forms that contain the vision, mission, program, and/or other information of Election Participants, symbols or signs of Election Participants, which are installed for campaign purposes aimed at inviting people to vote for certain Election Participants.

These props provide space and time for the public to obtain information related to election participants so that the public has sufficient knowledge to make their choice. The purpose of using props for election participants is to introduce themselves so that they become popular, then over time they can be accepted by the public (acceptability), and then they can be adopted (electability).

One informant, Bunyamin Sukardi (19 years old), a high school student in the Jambangan area, stated that he often observed the contestant's pictures on the billboards displayed on the side of the road. He was interested in observing them briefly because the appearance was certainly refreshing. The candidate's self-portrait looked dashing, energetic, smiling with bared teeth showing that he was a friendly person. Maybe he meant that he cared about the people. At the next meeting I got to know his name. At the next meeting he began to be interested in reading the words underneath. He was actually more interested in the t-shirts with pictures on them because they could be useful for everyday wear at home or other items that were useful for him. Meanwhile, the billboards and banners were only information materials, while he had to ask his parents about his choice.

From Sukardi's confession above, it shows that the role of Billboards in transforming information to the public does exist, but it does not necessarily influence the choice. There are many parties involved in determining the choice, including family members, playmates (already in point 4), tastes or preferences, and others. Such empirical reality is confirmed through triangulation of survey data as follows:

Billboards were only liked by 3.90% of respondents and banners by 3.10%. So the props installed on the streets were less liked by the public. For country Z, they would rather get a t-shirt (34.30%). Does that mean that Billboards and banners have no role? This data needs to be interpreted in another way. First, Billboards and banners still play an important role but only as knowledge (information), it can also be limited to reinforcing existing choices, or as initial information which is then confirmed in the social environment. Second, using Everett



M Rogers' theory (1986) about the role of the media in the process of "innovation-Defusion and adoption. According to Rogers, the acceptance of ideas (invitations to be known-accepted-and chosen) goes through several stages known as the AIDDA formula. A equals Attentions, I = Interest, D = desire, D = decisions, and A = Adoption.

It could be that Billboards and Banners in the eyes of the public only function to attract attention, which then with mixed media - for example through social media, will be converted into interest, and has the potential to create desire, while to reach the Decision (decision) still needs to be confirmed with the social environment (such as family, friends, and so on. And that does not ensure that in voting in the voting booth (adoption) someone is consistent according to their decision, because there are still many variables that can change someone's choice in an unexpected time, for example before voting suddenly tempted by money politics (can be money, basic necessities, promises, and so on).

### **5.3 Psychological Driving Factors**

This Psychological Approach follows the tradition of political research created by Michigan School Scientists. This model was pioneered by Angus Campbell from the University of Michigan. One of the academics who applied this research model in Indonesia is Nicodemus (2015) who studied the Factors that influenced voters in the village head election in Entikong sub-district, Sanggau Limantan district. Nicodemus used psychological dimensions, which include; (1) Personal perception and assessment of candidates, (2) personal perception and assessment of the themes raised and (3) identification with the party.

#### **1) Personal Assessment**

Personal assessment is a subjective personal meaning. Meaning is the result of an individual's perception of something, which can be directed back to the mind or to feelings.

To identify this psychological aspect, the researcher interviewed informant Novian (23 years old), an employee in the Semolowaru area and admitted that he would use his voting rights. According to him, the candidates who will compete in the Surabaya Mayoral Election next October, at least from the socialization carried out, are still dominated by the incumbent, namely the pair Eri Cahyadi and Armuji, abbreviated as ErJi. The others are still shy. There are figures of Hermas Thony, Bayu, Arif, and others. The socialization is still half-hearted, not massive. Maybe it is still not certain to get a recommendation. However, for me, the incumbent figure is enough to assess the appropriateness of Mr. Eri and Mr. Armuji to run again as a pair of mayors of Surabaya for the 2024-2029 period. Under their leadership, Surabaya has a relatively conducive socio-political atmosphere. There is almost no controversial commotion that divides Surabaya residents. Our lives are comfortable. In addition, under his leadership, the city of Surabaya always looks clean and beautiful, because Mr. Eri continues the program of his predecessor, Mrs. Risma, who is actively organizing the city so that the streets in Surabaya are bright. The city's sanitation has also been renovated so that flooding can be relatively overcome and anticipated. So that other candidates who emerge will find it difficult to match their reputations.

#### **2) Empathy**

The next issue in the psychological paradigm is identification with the party. Obtained facts from an informant named Sri Sayekti (22 years old), domiciled in Siwalan Kerto, a student at a PTS in the area. In addition to studying, she also does business online. There are many points worth noting from Sri Sayekti's confession above. First, according to her perception as a generation Z, differences of opinion are something normal, and even show the enthusiasm of political parties in democracy, fighting for the rights of the people. Second, politicians in political parties that are liked are the ones who dare to express their opinions even though they cause controversy or even chaos. That is precisely the vehicle for testing their ideas, whether they are accepted by the people or rejected. Differences in views are considered a way to maintain heterogeneity in society. The atmosphere of "noise" is considered the spirit that makes someone like Sumini enthusiastic about using her right to vote in every election moment, including the regional elections in Surabaya.

In the case of Sri Sayekti, it is similar to what Daniel Lerner told in his book *The Passing Traditional Society* (1958), translated by Prof. Muljarto Cokrowinoto "The Fading of Traditional Society". (1983). Lerner's view was later known in Communication Science studies as "Media Literacy Theory". The focus of Lerner's study was actually on social change in society in the Central Asian region. Communication scientists are interested in Lerner's Theory because it discusses the role of the media in encouraging community participation in development.



The role of media in development according to Lerner is not linear or direct but through intervening variables called "empathy", namely the ability to imagine the role of others according to what is thought. A person's thinking that is influenced by media information forms empathy. In Lerner's research, people who have empathy also have high participation in development programs initiated by the state/government. An example of a person who has high empathy is when someone is asked "if you were a member of the Council, what would you do?", then he answered about collecting aspirations and then aggregating them into public policy. But those who have low empathy will answer "walah ... let alone being a member of the Council, it's impossible to even be the head of the RT ....". People who have high empathy and active participation are then cross-tabulated, and it turns out to be in accordance with the media penetration they have, meaning that those who are empathetic and participatory have a high intensity of contact with the media.

In Sri Sayekti's case, there is an interview clip that shows her following the politicians' idea debates via television, radio, print media, and social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and online media.

In the generation before generation Z, the significant other, which Prof. Deddy Mulyana (2005) called the party that most influences a person's identification is the closest family (parents, siblings, parents' siblings, to grandparents), and then in certain ethnicities to the clan, but in generation Z the other party that greatly influences their attitudes and thoughts is social media. According to research conducted by McKinsey (2023), there are 58% of respondents from generation Z who spend more than one hour a day surfing social media. With details of 35% accessing social media for more than 2 hours and 23% of respondents accessing social media 1-2 hours a day.

### 3) Positive Image

Image is a meaning formed in a person's mind about another person or what a person is like. In politics, a positive image is very important for someone to get support from their constituents. In this context, the researcher found facts from the results of an interview with an informant named Agustin Pangalulu (22 years old), a second-year student at a State University in Surabaya: he was happy that in the upcoming Surabaya mayoral election, names that were already known to the public would emerge. At least the names circulating on social media, such as Mr. Eri, Cak Armuji, Mr. Bayu, Mr. Arif Fathoni, Mr. Hermas Thony. They are people who are already famous in this city. My impression is that they are people who have high dedication, morals, and leadership skills. Of course my choice is not far from them, unless there are other figures who appear later and have a greater reputation... maybe he will choose the latter.

Agustin's confession at least ensures that the popularity of a figure is very important for voters in determining their choice. In marketing, including political marketing, it is called Branding. Branding implies two things: image and popularity. The stronger the positive image attached to a person or political party, the stronger the branding. Branding implies a selling point, in the context of elections, whoever has a strong and positive branding is more likely to be chosen.

Silih Agung Wasesa (2011) uses the term political branding, which includes political party imagery and personal branding. In the content of the Pilwali, what works is personal branding, although the image of the political party that supports it is also important or helps strengthen personal branding. According to Wasesa, political branding is a continuous effort by a person or political party to introduce themselves to constituents. Because branding is accumulative (from weak to strong), depending on the frequency and intensity of its socialization. However, most are only done before the five-year contest. According to Wasesa, because branding depends on money, while generally money is only available before the election. Therefore, in terms of political marketing, the party that benefits is the incumbent, because they have good resources to be able to access the media and mobilize the community. Meanwhile, parties who were previously out of power usually have to work hard or harder than the incumbent to introduce themselves to voters, while at the same time the incumbent also increases the frequency and intensity of influencing voters.

Based on the results of the KOMPAS Research and Development survey before the 2024 Election (Presidential and Legislative Elections), it shows that the enthusiasm of Generation Z voters tends towards the Presidential Election, which means that personal branding is more of a determinant. Generation Z prefers to choose based on personal image rather than party image.

The results of the Kompas Research and Development Survey show that the enthusiasm of the Gen Z voter group tends to be more focused on the presidential election contest. If choosing all three at once (presidential candidate, party, and legislative candidate), their enthusiasm is indeed the lowest. On the other hand, when it comes

to the presidential election, enthusiasm is recorded as the highest compared to the generation above it. However, public attention is indeed more focused on the presidential election compared to other contests. The survey results noted that 8.6 percent of respondents from Gen Z intend to use their voting rights in the upcoming election only for the presidential election, not for others. This figure is relatively higher compared to other generations. Thus, the personal image of the contestants is perceived to determine the political participation of Generation Z.

#### 4) Social Atmosphere

Generation Z's perception of the environment influences their political behavior. As stated by Bahrudin (21 years old), an NGO activist who works for children with special needs. According to him, the current atmosphere in the city of Surabaya is quite conducive. This means that there is no commotion that makes the community restless. There was no incident like in Jakarta ahead of the gubernatorial election four years ago which was marked by commotion with racial nuances, which coincidentally dragged the name of one of the contestants, residents were face to face as if a civil war was going to happen. There was also no incident of motorcycle gangs brawling with residents in South Jakarta. In Surabaya, there are also almost no muggings carried out by criminals on motorbikes. The main thing is it's safe... at least the atmosphere is cool and quiet so that residents can think logically, there is no pressure or intimidation. In an atmosphere like this, voters can make choices according to their conscience. A leader who is trustworthy, capable, and has integrity will definitely be elected.

Based on Bahrudin's confession, it shows that the social atmosphere strengthens his political participation. A conducive atmosphere is related to the obedience of citizens, so that citizens can determine their choices rationally. An unconducive atmosphere can be a psychological factor that allows citizens to determine their choices according to their conscience, not directed through pressure or intimidation. What Bahrudin put forward is related to social perception. Deddy Mulyana (2005) stated that it is a process of capturing the meaning of social objects and events that we experience in our environment. According to Mulyana, perception is determined based on experiences. As happened to Bahrudin, he had experience of violence (conflict) based on religious perceptions such as what happened in the Jakarta gubernatorial election, and then he compared it with what happened in his closest environment (the city of Surabaya), so he concluded that a conducive atmosphere exists in this city. Bahrudin's choice to participate in the mayoral election is a combination of the results of his perception of the environment with what is expected. This was once put forward by Ancok with the formula  $P = f(O, L)$ . P is Behavior, O is object, and L is environment.

Behavior is a function of the object between what is in a person (O) and what is in his environment. In Bahrudin's case, P is participation in voting in the Surabaya Pilkada, O is wanting to vote rationally without pressure, and L is a conducive environment, far from noise, let alone riots. Thus, the conducive atmosphere factor psychologically strengthens (encourages) Bahrudin to choose a leader who is in accordance with his conscience, namely one who is trustworthy, capable and has integrity.

### 5.4 Factors Inhibiting Participation

#### 1) Sociological Factors

The issue that has been widely studied regarding the issue of community participation is the factors that inhibit the emergence of participation. One of them was written by Agus Sutisna (2023). This democracy activist from the Nurul Madani Cipanas Lebak West Java Islamic Boarding School stated that the more citizens come to the Polling Stations (TPS) and cast their votes correctly according to the regulations, the higher the level of participation is said to be. Judging from these indicators, the voter participation rate from one election to the next in the country, including increasing participation rates. The following is data on the level of voter participation throughout the transitional and reform era elections in Indonesia. The 1999 transitional election, the voter participation rate reached 92.7%. Then the 2004 Election was 84.1%, the 2009 Election was 71%, the 2014 Election was 75.11%, and the 2019 Election was 81.69%. However, there are still many citizens who decide not to exercise their right to vote in the election.

Tisna wrote several factors, namely: first, socialization is not massive enough. The reluctance of the community to come to the TPS is thought to be due to a lack of information and knowledge about the election. Socialization is not carried out widely in various circles spread across the country. Election organizers, for example, feel that currently there are already many media platforms. Then everyone assumes that the community will easily obtain information without having to get direct socialization from the organizers. This assumption only applies in urban

and suburban communities that have easy access to information. Meanwhile, residents who live far away in mountainous areas, villages and hamlets, whose numbers are not small, certainly do not always easily receive information.

Second, Technical aspects that are not easy, aka complicated and written. For example, mapping and arranging the location of Polling Stations (TPS). Voters who are distributed to TPSs that are too far and/or difficult to reach tend to be lazy to come to exercise their right to vote.

Third, Low Awareness of Voting. Low level of education, limited breadth of socializing or social interaction as a citizen, and rarely obtaining information and political participation in daily life as a citizen can be the trigger for this low awareness of the state.

Fourth, Government support is not optimal. The support in question can be in the form of minimal facilities and infrastructure as well as commitment and attitude to support the implementation of the Election in the form of, for example, socialization and invitations to residents that are carried out continuously and massively.

Fifth, people's disappointment. They are disappointed with political policies that they consider not to be on the side of the people. Disappointed with development programs that are said to be for the people, but have only just begun and are already causing misery to the people.

Distance of domicile from the center of power

What about Generation Z in Surabaya City? To answer this question, researchers interviewed five informants from Generation Z who admitted that they would not vote in the October 2024 Pilkada in Surabaya with different profiles.

a. Domicile far from the center of government

Sutejo (22 years old), domiciled in South Kenjeran who admitted to only graduating from junior high school, works as a collector of used goods, especially those containing metal. He admitted that he would not use his right to vote in the October mayoral election, because he did not understand what the benefits were of him voting, after all, many people said the winner had already been determined. Elections in Indonesia cannot be honest because all lines can be arranged with money. So the winner is the one who has the money or is supported by rich people. Then what is the point of his vote, like *nguyahi segara*, it is meaningless. "I'd rather play games at home," he said.

Sutejo's statement above shows a combination of factors that inhibit political participation. There is a factor of minimal knowledge about elections which is very important for national and state life. The lack of knowledge makes Sutejo skeptical of his voting rights.

In terms of the monomyth of knowledge, it is suspected to be related to lack of access to information. As Agus Sutisna said, this is related to the breadth of socializing or social interaction as a narrow citizen, as well as the rarity of obtaining information and political participation in daily life as a citizen can be a trigger for this low awareness of the state. The location of the domicile that is far from the center of power, such as a sub-district, causes a lack of direct socialization while previously they had often received exposure to information about the poor implementation of elections in Indonesia. In this year's Presidential and Legislative elections, the Indonesian people were flooded with negative information about the implementation of elections, especially through the mass media. Limited direct interaction with election organizers has closed access to confirm the bad news (stigma).

According to Mochtar Mas'oeed in Theritta Febriyani Wawo Bongo (2023: 30) factors that inhibit political participation include: low economic status, low social status, and low education levels. According to the Professor of Political Science UGM, the lower a person's status, the lower their political participation. In Sutejo's case, in addition to the low socio-economic status and education factors, it is reinforced by the low knowledge possessed due to the lack of socialization by the election organizers. The lack of socialization is also related to the relatively long distance between the place of domicile and the central office of power. It can also be interpreted as low knowledge qualitatively. Sutejo as a generation Z who is familiar with his gadgets is certainly exposed to election information but the context is negative, so the low quality of election knowledge he has causes skepticism and resistance (rejection).

b. Family factors

As stated by Prof. Deddy Mulyana in the previous section, the most determining factor for individuals in the process of self-identification is the family. Starting from the nuclear family (*batih*) such as parents, parents'

siblings, even parents' parents (grandparents). Although currently other parties who influence self-identification and orientation (significant others) from concrete families to cyber or virtual families, in many cases the family remains dominant in making important decisions. In our society, the adage "parents' blessing is God's blessing" is known, indicating this determinism.

c. Hoax or Fake News

One of the excesses of Generation Z's involvement in social media is being trapped in false information or fake news. Fake news can be in the form of events that do not exist (the creator's imagination), the source is unclear, and often the journalists and media are not concrete. Moreover, there is a tendency in the current era of social media, individuals have the freedom to create their own media using only certain accounts. Individuals can freely produce messages and spread them (share) throughout the world, fake news is increasingly potential to experience reproduction and duplication very quickly and in large numbers. So hoax news overlaps with real news so that users find it difficult to distinguish which is fake and which is real.

2) Psychological Inhibiting Factors

The phenomenon of the younger generation taking a stand (deciding) not to use their voting rights in the election is interesting to study, considering that currently information channels about elections are very easily accessible to the public. Moreover, generation Z who are very familiar with their gadgets, of course, provide flexibility in absorbing that knowledge and have the freedom to determine their choices. Moreover, the election system that has been implemented several times provides valuable lessons for the growth and development of democratic practices in Indonesia. The election system is getting better and healthier. Citizens are given the freedom to participate in elections that are increasingly free, transparent, fair and secret. However, why do many choose not to use their voting rights or better known as Golput?

Based on the results of a survey by the Center for Strategic and International (CSIS), as many as 11.8 percent of respondents chose to abstain from voting in the 2024 Election. KPU data itself shows that young people dominate 56.4 percent of voters in the 2024 Election. (<https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20240213131533-4-513798/what-is-golput-this-is-its-history-and-reasons>). Although it always appears in every election, not all Golput decisions are based on idealism, but rather conditions that force someone not to vote.

This study revealed findings that showed that on the one hand, Generation Z experienced an abundance of knowledge from the information they accessed from social media, but many also experienced dysfunction because the nature of the information obtained actually caused them to be disappointed with the situation.

One of the informants who admitted to deciding not to use his voting rights in the Surabaya mayoral election was Sugeng Prihadi (25 years old), an employee at a minimarket on Jalan Achmad Yani who used his voting rights in the 2019 presidential election and also in the simultaneous elections (presidential and legislative elections) in 2024. This is his confession:

Sugeng Prihadi's first experience participating in the election was in 2019. He felt called to vote because he believed his vote would be useful in determining the election of the nation's leader. He didn't care whether his candidate won or lost, what was important was that after the election there was a check-and-balance pattern in government practice. The winner can take care of the country and the loser becomes a balancer, a force outside the government, so that there is control. If there is control, the ruler feels supervised so that his policies are not as I wish, his policies become on the track. However, after the winner formed the government cabinet, I was very disappointed. It turned out that they participated in the election not to test their programs and ideas to the people, but only to find a way to gain power. Sugeng Prihadi admitted that he was very disappointed that Prabowo and Sandi accepted the offer to join the cabinet on the grounds of reconciliation. In the 2024 presidential election, I voted, of course I did not vote for Prabowo again. As a leader of the nation, he disappointed me very much. Unfortunately, he won. He was disappointed that his victory was filled with unpleasant issues such as the Constitutional Court's decision that gave room for dynasty politics, then the manipulation of the recapitulation in the KPU system, and the state apparatus, police and TNI who were not neutral. The impression was that to become a winner, all means had to be justified. It was a disgusting and very disappointing experience. Therefore, from now on he will never again use my right to vote in any election.

What Sugeng Prihadi explained above shows that the decision not to use his right to vote was not solely due to his idealism. For example, because none of the contestants who advanced met the criteria according to his idealism standards. Pariman mentioned about check and balance, as one of his idealisms. It turned out that what was



imagined did not happen. That was what caused disappointment, but what hurt him was the issue of dynasty politics and the sharing of power after the presidential election and data manipulation in the recapitulation system at the KPU (indications of fraud). That is what Pariman called "justifying all means". Those events caused psychological impacts such as hurt feelings because they felt betrayed. Then Pariman generalized that every election practice, including the mayoral election, is the same.

Sugeng Prihadi himself actually did not understand that the political system in Indonesia was different from that in America, so he imagined a check and balance pattern. Those who win the election are given the right to rule and those who lose become the opposition. In America it is known as a zero sum game. The party that wins the election (including the president of the party) is given the right to form its government without forming a coalition with groups that were previously competitors. The term is that the winner has the right to take all. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, a "presidential" system applies, which prioritizes a "win-win solution". So that in every election the winner needs a "coalition" of political parties that were previously rivals. The reason the elected president needs a coalition in the cabinet is as a way to accommodate various interests so that the running of the government does not encounter obstacles in parliament. In a presidential system, parliament is a very important institution for the functionality of power. Government policies cannot be implemented without support from parliament. Likewise, laws made by parliament (People's Representative Council) are not valid before they are signed by the President. The President can also issue a Regulation in Lieu of Law (Perpu) if he rejects a law made by Parliament. So, as a consequence of the presidential system, Prabowo and Sandi's inclusion in Jokowi's cabinet is inevitable.

It is also not certain whether if Sugeng Prihadi gets enlightenment about the Indonesian political system which is different from the political system in America, then changes his attitude from abstaining from voting to participating, because the problem has already hurt his heart. The feeling of hurt because of feeling betrayed has induced into his belief which contains skepticism and distrust towards the implementation of the election.

The decision to abstain from voting among Generation Z is a matter of marginalization with complex backgrounds. Marginalization because access to interact with active participant groups is closed, marginalization because political representation is not in accordance with their interests or needs or others.

This phenomenon was obtained from an interview with an informant who had such a profile. Bambang Wisnubroto (24 years old) a resident of Kebraon which is located far from the center of city power, precisely on the western edge of Surabaya which borders Sepanjang Taman (Sidoarjo). Graduated from high school in the area. Works as a sailor on a cargo ship. He stated this: "I choose not to use my right to vote, because I do not see any political elites who have a program to improve my life as a ship's person. I have also never experienced or even heard of any political elites who collect aspirations in my place. So why should I vote for a candidate who doesn't know about my life. It's useless. Therefore, since the 2019 presidential and legislative elections, I have not voted."

Bambang's confession shows that geographical alignment, interests and representation are closely related to knitting the idea that politics does not benefit him. This fact can also be interpreted as individuals who feel they do not have a suitable/liked role model because of their interests and needs choose not to use their right to vote.

Similar to the results of Eri Bertson's study (2019), which found empirical evidence that historically discriminated minority groups choose to avoid political participation. Also, Melisa William's study (1998) showed that people from marginalized groups choose not to care about politics (apathy) related to the lack of political representation and the perception of a lack of conformity between politicians' ideas and actions to their interests. The result of alienation creates distrust and then decides not to use their right to vote.

There are many things we can examine from Simiati's statement. First, her affiliation with a particular mass organization or association provides benefits in absorbing information or knowledge, including knowledge about politics. Second, her interaction in the association trains her to adapt to situations in order to maintain togetherness (social harmony). But this is crucial, that knowledge does not correlate with her thoughts or even with her decision to make a choice. There is pressure from her family to choose one of the candidates. Although the pressure from her family is against her conscience, even considered violating human rights and authoritarian, Sumaty chooses to take a compromising stance. On the one hand, she tries to maintain harmony with her family by pretending to obey, but on the other hand, she will decide not to use her right to vote. She will still come to the TPS but will not vote for anyone or vote for all so that her votes are not converted into choices. Third, the choice of the diction "human rights violations" and "authoritarian" is a very academic or textbook conceptual thought, which is generally more commonly used by academics or human rights activists. This shows that the absorption of knowledge from the



social group he associates with can be converted into a political concept in his mind, but once again this rationality ultimately has to lose out to the family for the sake of social harmony.

Most people do take realistic rather than rational choices when faced with a dilemma. If it is felt that it will cause conflict and disintegration, a person takes the safest choice (safety), namely by choosing to adapt or compromise with the situation. In our society, the choice of maintaining harmony is still a priority rather than having to confront face to face.

What Sumiati did above is part of a rational choice to achieve equilibrium in the family. Conflict is suppressed or diverted by sublimation of artificial behavior, namely pretending to come to the TPS, but in fact the differences of opinion remain only later become latent. Perhaps this is what Talcott Parson meant in Haryanto (2012), that individuals always look forward to achieving or maintaining equilibrium (balance or harmony) by adapting, adjusting to their environment. Although adaptation is often temporary (Ritzer & Samart, 2012), it is a form of transformation towards a certain balance according to the needs of the subsystem. These adjustments will become patterns that will be determined in subsequent events. If the adaptation is considered functional in the system (family), it will become a pattern according to existing agreements.

### **1.5 Proposition**

- 1) Social media is the main source for Generation Z to gain knowledge about elections. Positive knowledge about elections encourages political participation. However, the opposite is also found. Negative information about elections from social media causes Generation Z to view elections and politics in general as full of negative things, so that many Generation Z have a bad opinion about politics. This causes them to take an antipathy towards politics, including deciding not to use their voting rights. In this case, social media is like a double-edged sword.
- 2) In rational families, generation Z gets the opportunity to choose their choices according to their own personalities, while in traditional voter families, there are indications of intimidation and coercion to choose certain candidates. In facing conflict situations in the family, generation Z chooses to adapt with an ambivalent attitude. In front of his family, he seems to follow and come to the TPS but does not vote or all are voted.
- 3) The social situation created by social media in the form of fake news (hoaxes) makes Generation Z experience doubts about the benefits of politics. The fake news that is exposed massively and sporadically enters their subconscious that it seems like fake news is a fact. While hoaxes generally have negative nuances. This causes Generation Z to experience distrust of politics, including the Surabaya mayoral election.
- 4) Generation Z who experience alienation due to domicile, representation of interests and needs or the absence of figures who meet their criteria choose to abstain from voting in the mayoral election.
- 5) The results of the socialization carried out by the KPU, Bawaslu, and the City Government strengthen the political participation of Generation Z.
- 6) Generation Z feels disappointed and hurt by the political stance of the losing election contestants who are willing to form a coalition in the winning cabinet, so that there is no check and balance mechanism in the government. Generation Z feels betrayed and considers the contestation only as a means or way to gain power. This national fact is generalized by Generation Z as a general condition that causes them to choose not to use their voting rights in the mayoral election.
- 7) Generation Z who have high empathy about the role of a leader tend to have high political participation. Empathy is formed by knowledge and experience. Therefore, political literacy is very much needed by generation Z.

### **Major Proposition**

Prospective voters in the 2024 Surabaya Mayoral Election who come from generation Z generally have the character of rational voters, whose voting behavior is based on the knowledge they gain from election socialization carried out by various election stakeholders. Knowledge is strengthened by surfing on social media. Generation Z is known to be very familiar with interacting with social media. Generation Z's social and political affiliation strengthens Generation Z's tendency towards political participation. Through this social and political affiliation, Generation Z experiences a transformation of knowledge, especially knowledge about elections. Furthermore, knowledge builds political awareness which encourages political participation.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **5.1. Conclusion**

In the demographic composition (population) in Indonesia today, Generation Z is the largest group compared to other generation groups. When combined between Generation Z and the Millennial Generation, the number is more than half (56%). Thus, the presence of Generation Z in every election event held in 2024 is very strategic when viewed from the potential for political participation.

Based on research conducted qualitatively and surveys as triangulation instruments, the enthusiasm for political participation in the October 2024 Mayoral Election is quite good. From interviews conducted with several informants, several characteristics of voters from Generation Z were found. Most of them are rational voters, namely voters who determine their choice based on something that makes sense or can be assessed based on the knowledge they have. However, traditional and pragmatic voters were also found. The rationality that stands out is that Generation Z, who stated that they had determined their choice, admitted that they would not change, except for the vision-mission factor or the contestant's work program. Their assessment of the contestants was not yet based on comparison (comparing) because when this research was conducted, there had been no determination of the Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral candidates by the General Elections Commission. The only one who was considered certain was Eri Cahyadi who was paired with Armuji, who are the mayor and deputy mayor who are currently still leading. This is an advantage for the incumbent because they are the only ones who are included in the object of evaluation by Surabaya residents.

There are several driving factors that make the political participation of generation Z relatively high, from a sociological perspective, it was found that this was due to the success of the election socialization carried out by election organizers such as the City KPU and the City Bawaslu, then support from the Surabaya City government. Others stated that they received support from their peer group. Also the interaction factor with props such as billboards, banners, flyers, and others. The most dominant is the role of social media and online media that disseminate election information in real-time, so that it can be accessed at any time according to the time available for generation Z and their wishes.

Meanwhile, from a psychological perspective, a personal assessment factor was found regarding the existing political reality. Again, the incumbent greatly benefits from this political behavior, because voters consider that the Eri Cahyadi-Armuji pair is a continuing reality of the city government pioneered by the previous mayor (Tri Rismaharini). As is known, the Eri-Armuji pair is a food endorsed by the previous incumbent (2019-2024) such as the endorsement made by Jokowi for the presidential candidate pair Prabowo Subanti-Gibran in February 2024. There is another psychological driving factor, namely the socio-political situation of the city of Surabaya which is considered conducive. Unlike the 2019 Jakarta Pilkada which was marked by conflicts on land and social media with SARA nuances. Furthermore, the positive image factor. According to them, all the Surabaya city leader candidates who emerged through socialization are all good. Have high leadership skills, morals, and integrity. Do not have a bad track record, are free from corruption issues, and abuse of office.

From the inhibiting factors of participation, it can be explored from informants who stated that they would not use their right to vote in the Pilwali. Among them, the lack of knowledge about the election due to not being able to reach the socialization carried out by the election organizers. While there are also those who have excess knowledge obtained through social media, but it actually causes them to abstain. This is because the person concerned is influenced by hoax information or fake news whose existence overlaps with real news. The hoax news enters their subconscious as a fact because it repeatedly comes to their minds. Those who are consumed by this hoax news generalize that the political atmosphere, especially after the presidential election, tends to be unhealthy. They hope that the election mechanism is a way to build democracy. The winner is given the opportunity to lead, while the loser becomes the "opposition" to implement political balance or control power so that checks and balancing are realized. However, what happened was that the loser was co-opted by the winner, so that the check and balancing mechanism was not realized. They were very disappointed with this condition and considered it a betrayal. This disappointment caused them to decide not to use their right to vote in any election.

### **5.2. Suggestion**

- 1) It is recommended for contestants to conduct public opinion surveys to find out the dimensions of needs, desires and preferences, which are very useful when contestants prepare their vision, mission and programs that will be used as socialization and campaign materials.

- 2) It is necessary to recruit a successful team from among Generation Z, whose role in the field is very important in political marketing, especially through social media networks.
- 3) For local governments, complete data is needed, especially regarding voter groups, and then socialization about the election is carried out massively to reach all levels of society that are far from the capital or center of government.
- 4) Bawaslu and Polri should actively conduct supervision before, on the day, and after the election to ensure social conditions, especially supervision of hoax content containing SARA content and hate speech. Law enforcement is urgently needed to provide a deterrent effect on perpetrators who intend to do the same thing.

### **5.3. Implications of Research Results**

#### **5.3.1. Theoretical Implications**

The theoretical implications of this study provide valuable insights into how Generation Z voters behave in the 2024 Surabaya regional elections. The findings in this study strengthen the theory put forward by Dennis Kavanagh through his book entitled *Political Science and Political* (1983). Empirical evidence was found that there is a tendency for Generation Z, which has the largest population of other generations, to behave rationally. Another fact is that the source of political knowledge obtained by Generation Z is more dominant from environmental influences (traditional behavior) or new media called social media. And the third is because pragmatic behavior means that there are certain interests in determining choices and not just following general tendencies or following patrons, but based on their evaluation of the contestants, especially the visions, missions and programs offered.

##### 1) Theoretical Implications of Voting Behavior

This theory was put forward by Jack C. Plano who put forward as a study that focuses on the field of dealing with the habits or tendencies of people's choices in general elections, as well as the background of why they made the election (Plano, 1985). In this study, empirical evidence was found that there is a tendency for generation Z, which has the largest population of other generations, to decide to cast their votes in the election for Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Surabaya in October. It was found that the decision was formed or driven by the internalization process (in the language of the election organizing bureaucracy, it is called socialization) which has been carried out by election organizers such as the General Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu). Socialization is also carried out by the city government to educational institutions such as High Schools (SMA) and Vocational Schools (SMK). Of course, this is only for schools that are organically under the authority of the city government. While schools organized by the Community or Private schools. Out of reach. Especially in the 2024 Pilwali, the role of the Mayor is minimal because the person concerned has decided to run again in this contest for the second time. As the incumbent Mayor, it seems that he deliberately withdrew from the socialization activities to avoid negative accusations from the public, such as the city government not being neutral in the election.

As stated by Plano, political behavior does not always follow old habits, but can change along with factors that develop in society. The factors in question are not far from the phenomena that emerge in society related to the transformation of political knowledge in citizens. It turns out that there are many types of knowledge transformation. Sources of information obtained by city residents, especially generation Z, are participating in socialization activities organized by election administrators. Plano assumes that the more decoding knowledge in an individual's intellect, the greater the potential to influence the individual's mindset and that is what is most dominant in building participatory awareness of the importance of choosing a leader. Leaders who are correctly elected by the people are responsible for organizing government management so that they are able to make better (constructive) social changes. Plano's thesis that knowledge is related to participation is also confirmed in this study, both from the results of interviews with informants and quantitative survey results showing that voters from generation Z generally tend to be rational. This means that they make choices not just by following general trends or following patrons, but based on their evaluation of the contestants, especially the visions, missions and programs offered. This research also found empirical evidence that the source of knowledge used to evaluate contestants is not only from election organizers and city governments, but there are other sources, such as peers. It turns out that this study actually found the fact that the source of political knowledge obtained by generation Z is more dominant from new media called social media. This is understandable because based on research conducted by experts, generation Z spends their time surfing social media 3-5 hours every day. This media provides free access whenever generation Z wants or is often called real-time. This abundance of knowledge causes generation Z to tend to be

rational voters or borrowing the concept of Gabriel A Almond (1965), the political culture of generation Z is classified as an active participant political culture.

2) Behavioral approach to choosing

This theory was put forward by Dennis Kavanagh through his book entitled *Political Science and Political* (1983) stating that there are 3 models of approaches in voting behavior, namely sociological, psychological and rational approaches. In this study, all of these approaches found empirical facts. Interestingly, there is an indication that the habitat of generation Z also determines political participation. Generation Z, who in their daily lives in a free habitat, is very patterned by the knowledge they gain, both through face-to-face communication and independently obtained through social media. While generation Z, who in their daily lives depend on their families, especially families that are still traditional and tend to be authoritarian, generation Z faces psychological barriers to following their own choices. Generation Z cannot independently determine their choices. It is known that generation Z makes adaptations in behavior in order to maintain social relationships with their families. Similar to what Talcott Parson put forward, individuals in conflict try to maintain their balance (equilibrium) with the necessary adaptations. Through informants who choose to abstain from voting, individuals use adaptation with pseudo or artificial behavior, such as appearing to agree with their parents' choice and will follow their parents' choice, but when they are in the polling station booth, they do not vote for it or vote for all contestants.

3) Theory of Generational Characteristic Differences

This theory was proposed by Bencsik & Machova (2016). One of Bencsik's findings that is relevant to this study is that they always ask everything on social media and their fondness for accessing all content (social media content). This study found a lot of empirical evidence. Generation Z accesses all social media platforms and online media. What Bencsik did not study was the implications of excessive generation Z accessing information. As many experts have stated, the consequences of excessive information cause social media to be like a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it provides knowledge about everything, including abundant politics, so that it can be a reference in making decisions. Generation Z has the opportunity to sort and compare in assessing political content. Then encourage political awareness for political participation. However, on the other hand, the abundance of information can be a psychological problem for generation Z. Several facts obtained from informants show that they decided not to use their voting rights because they were disappointed with the situation. Their past experiences lead Generation Z to generalize our bad politicians, unable to maintain their commitment to supporters, as exemplified by Prabowo joining Jokowi's camp, which he considered to have betrayed his voters for the sake of office. Added to the negative issues about subsequent events, such as dynasty politics, causes Generation Z to distrust politics. All negative information is obtained from social media, including information in the form of hoaxes or fake news. It is true what Jean Baudrillard suspected that media (social) is nothing more than garbage, which can cause its users to experience contamination.

### **5.3.2. Practical Implications**

In relation to the major proposition that generation Z generally has the character of a rational voter, whose voting behavior is based on the knowledge gained from election socialization carried out by various election stakeholders. Knowledge is strengthened from the results of surfing on social media. Generation Z is known to be very familiar with interacting with social media. So the practical implications can be formulated as follows:

- 1) This empirical fact makes it easier for stakeholders in the election organizers, be it the KPU, Bawaslu, the Government/regional government, or political parties in building awareness of political participation in the community, including Generation Z. These stakeholders only need to maintain the election socialization mode that has been carried out so far, either through mass media, websites, or social media. The character of Generation Z has an activeness in accessing information, so that if information is difficult to present in the media, the digital algorithm system will direct to such information. Perhaps it is only necessary to strengthen the media team, which has competence in message creation so that the messages uploaded not only meet the criteria of "importance" for the audience, but are also attractive to see. Variation in message presentation is very important to avoid public boredom. Boredom is often caused by important messages but bad in appearance or important messages but monotonous, thus accelerating information saturation (overload of information).

Wendi Zaman (2021: 6-18) found evidence that information saturation is a problem in communication effectiveness. Readers tend to avoid information when they find the same information repeatedly in a search. The



audience avoids information not because they do not know that the information is important, but because of saturation. According to Wendi, one way to overcome information saturation is to make the message content delivered in pieces with an interesting title or by conveying the same message through certain variations. Illustrations are one alternative to make a saturated message fresh again.

A more comprehensive review of the implications of information saturation was conducted by Stenly Eve Okololo from Western Delta University (2021:1-6), who highlighted the causes of information overload, its consequences, and solutions. According to Okololo, overload is the result of the extraordinary enthusiasm of the contestants to popularize themselves until the audience is influenced by their promotional activities until they accept them and end up with electoral figures. The contestants believe too much in the assumption that the more information is spread to the audience, the greater the potential for getting support. In fact, this assumption can actually be reversed in reality, people actually avoid the message because of saturation. The solution according to Okololo is for contestants not to over-disseminate information in a short time. The momentum or the right time must be worked out. Information is published step by step, piece by piece, and through the media alternately (not frontally or massively) carried out at the same time or close together. Still according to Okololo, the implications of information are not directly converted into trusted knowledge. There are stages for that, namely starting from just attracting attention, captivating interest, after the umpteenth information then creating Desire, and finally making a Decision to choose or reject. When the audience has reached the level of making a Decision, then usually a name will appear in public opinion research. When asked who or what party you choose, he will immediately answer a name. That is what is called top mind.

This proposition has practical implications, especially for political practitioners, so that they do not concentrate too much on how to construct messages and distribute them, but no less importantly on how and when to convey them.

- 2) Still with the major proposition that generation Z is very familiar with social media, but still shows a gap that can cause negative implications for generation Z citizens. In this study, it was also found that the fact (although less dominant), that social media information is also a psychological inhibiting factor in political participation, especially from information that is less/not credible from fake news or Hoaxes. From several interview results with informants, it was shown that they would not use their voting rights because of anxiety, confusion, and distrust of politics, all of which were caused by the penetration of social media to them. There are two solutions; first, the state (government) must be present in this problem by enforcing the law for the makers and distributors of fake news. Doesn't the ITE law already provide a legal source of authority for state apparatus to criminalize the creation of fake news, pornography, and hate speech. Second, implementing (digital) media literacy with a wider escalation than what already exists, meaning reaching out to more segmented layers of society. As one of the research findings, many social advocacy activists from civil society, for example, admitted that they had never participated in election socialization carried out by election stakeholders.

One of the officials in charge of public information at the Ministry of Communication and Information stated this: "There needs to be a social media literacy process for all levels of society, be it students and college students or the general public, so that the social media we use is much healthier with positive content that brings benefits not only to ourselves, but also to the community and more than that, it is beneficial for the nation and state," said Niken in Jakarta, Friday.

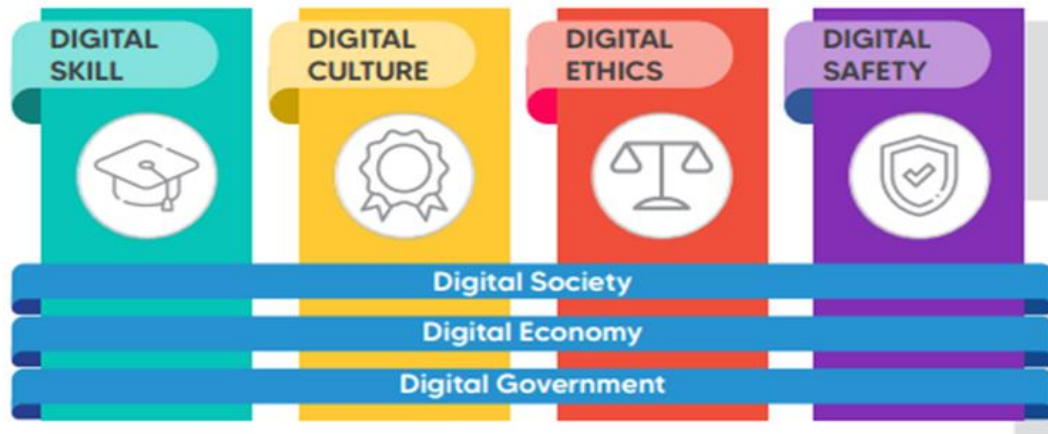
Social media is currently full of hatred based on SARA, and other negative content. According to him, the internet is like a double-edged sword, because it allows people to communicate and interact quickly, but on the other hand social media also has a negative impact on spreading hoax information, hate speech, distortion of facts, provocation, and things related to SARA, terrorism, and so on.

"The problem is that our society is not yet equipped with sufficient information to ward off information like this, there is no checking and rechecking process, and they even tend to spread it quickly. This must not happen again, so it is very important for us to echo social media literacy to the community."[https://www.kominfo.go.id/content/detail/10858/kominfo-community-perlu-literasi-media-social/0/sorotan\\_media](https://www.kominfo.go.id/content/detail/10858/kominfo-community-perlu-literasi-media-social/0/sorotan_media) )

Ahead of the Pilkada celebration, there is nothing wrong with the Ministry of Communication and Information going to the regions to conduct (social) media literacy, especially those related to political content. As the graphic below shows, there has been no specific digital literacy program carried out by the Ministry of Communication and



Information. Perhaps there is a gap in the Digital Government program. The material on the need can be included, but it would be better if there was a special dictum for digital political literacy or digital democracy literacy or a similar name that could accommodate the interests of enlightening the community from the implications of fake news and the like.



**Figure 1.** Ministry of Communication and Information's digital literacy program (2022-2023)

3) In relation to the major proposition that Generation Z's social and political affiliation strengthens Generation Z's tendency towards political participation. Through this social and political affiliation, Generation Z experiences a transformation of knowledge, especially knowledge about elections. Furthermore, knowledge builds political awareness that encourages political participation. It is necessary to follow up on the role of election stakeholders to create activation programs for political institutions, such as political parties. What is meant by activation here is accommodating their participation in election socialization programs.

Patricia Robin, Silvalus Alvin, Tesalunika Hasibuan (2022: 183-189), noted the perspective of generation Z on politics. According to Robin, the perspective of generation Z tends to be related to self-interest, preferences, and projections of politicians when given a mandate. There is a combination of rationality, pragmatism, and playgroups. The position of the playgroup can be a vehicle where they discuss the future by identifying their perspectives with narrow interests. The end of Robin's research notes the importance of the existence of political parties and the social environment of generation Z in determining the political perspectives they have. Generation Z's views on politics on the one hand determine political participation, but on the other hand determine where or to which their voices will be given.

4) In relation to the minor proposition that social media is the main source for generation Z to gain knowledge about elections. Positive knowledge about elections encourages political participation. However, the opposite was also found. Negative information about elections from social media causes generation Z to view elections and politics in general as full of negative things, so that many generation Z members judge politics negatively. This causes them to take an antipathy towards politics, including deciding not to use their voting rights. In this case, social media is like a double-edged sword.

According to Alessandro Nai and Jargeen Maier (2021), bad things on social media are usually issues that aim to attack the opponent by magnifying negative things, with the aim of stigmatizing the opponent politically. According to Alexandro, this habit is a taste and not a problem. What he means is that there are patterns of political campaigns that are traditional in a nation's society. He calls this unhealthy competition a political attack. In a society that is accustomed to political attacks, bad campaigns are no longer a problem, because society can understand the direction and purpose of political attacks. The negative content is then handed over to the taste of its people. This will be different from the condition of our society, which even though it is the fifth largest internet user in the world, its intellectual awareness is not yet adequate to distinguish between good and bad. Like Indonesia, for example, its rational awareness has not been properly formed, so that negative campaigns are regulated in political laws which are included as violations. The problem is, law enforcement for these violations has not been strictly enforced by election stakeholders with various pretexts, so that these nagtive campaigns have

flourished, especially on our social media. This is the practical implication, if our democracy wants to be of better quality, then law enforcement for violations committed by contestants must be truly implemented so that it has a deterrent effect in the future.

- 5) In relation to minor proposition (2) that social media is the main source for generation Z to gain electoral knowledge, it raises practical implications for election stakeholders to place more emphasis on the use of social media as political education for the wider community. Perhaps the frequency and escalation of the message can be doubled and all existing social media platforms can be used.
- 6) In relation to minor proposition (7) that Generation Z who have high empathy about the role of a leader tend to have high political participation. Empathy is formed by knowledge and experience. The practical implication is the need to mobilize public participation in political volunteer activities involving young people so that they have political experience. The digital political literacy programs owned by the Ministry of Communication and Information can be broken down more deeply into the youth area such as schools and NGOs and youth mass organizations.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

From the research results obtained novelty namely that empirical evidence was found that there is a tendency for generation Z as rational voter behavior. Another fact is that the source of political knowledge obtained by generation Z is more dominant from environmental influences (traditional behavior) or new media called social media. And the third is because pragmatic behavior means that there are certain interests in determining choices and not just following general tendencies or following patrons, but based on their evaluation of the contestants, especially the visions-missions and programs offered. Furthermore, generation Z politics strengthens the tendency of generation Z political participation. Through social and political affiliation, generation Z experiences a transformation of knowledge, especially knowledge about elections. Furthermore, knowledge builds political awareness which encourages political participation. So it is necessary to follow up on how the role of election stakeholders to create activation programs for political institutions, such as political parties.

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