Construction of gen Z political insights after watching 'Bacapres Bicara Gagasan' on YouTube

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Abstract

All Indonesians, especially Generation Z, need to be politically literate, as they are the ones who will shape the nation's future. Since Generation Z constituted the majority of voters in the 2024 election, understanding their political insights is crucial. Despite their digital fluency, many Gen Z individuals remain disengaged from formal political processes. This study aims to analyze how Generation Z constructs political insight after watching the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program on YouTube. Using a qualitative phenomenological method, this research explores their cognitive, affective, and personal integration experiences. The findings reveal that the program provided new perspectives on politics and influenced how Gen Z evaluates presidential candidates. The study underscores the importance of media, especially YouTube, in enhancing youth political awareness and participation in the digital age.

Introduction

Political insight involves understanding political dynamics to assess and comprehend politics' role in a country's daily life. The broader one's political insight, the higher their political participation (Burhanudin, 2021). Political insight is closely linked to political awareness, encompassing knowledge, orientations, and principles shaping a person's political perspective and their mastery of politics (Hermawan, 2020). Political awareness influences political participation, defined by involvement in political processes through knowledge of rights and responsibilities (Yuliantina, 2016). Political participation refers to a person's engagement in the different procedures that take place when choosing representatives and affecting political policy (Halim & Jauhari, 2019).

In anticipation of the general election, political parties initiate political socialization and education for public insight, contributing significantly to shaping knowledge of political behavior (Junaedi & Sukmono, 2019). This is crucial for the nation's progress, impacting political parties, activists, and all Indonesians, especially generation Z, who shape the nation's future. Despite the open political climate, Generation Z's political participation remains low. Many perceive politics as corrupt, overly formal, or irrelevant to their daily

lives. The formal nature of politics deters meaningful engagement (Sjoraida & Nugraha, 2023). This phenomenon is also evident in empirical findings, a study in Yogyakarta by Amelia (2024) shows that although first-time voters in the province are beginning to show political awareness, their actual participation remains low, limited to passive interaction and minimal involvement in decision-making.

Rakhman & Haryadi (2019) observed that Generation Z, while valuing social change and recognizing the potential impact of elections, also exhibits high skepticism toward government institutions and low trust in formal political mechanisms. This contradiction reflects their doubts: they acknowledge the importance of elections but hesitate to fully engage due to distrust and disappointment in political structures. This concern becomes more critical when considering the substantial electoral weight of Generation Z. According to Ramadhani et al., (2025), generation Z is often linked with internet use and social media consumption, which tends to reduce their interest in political affairs. Despite being the largest voting bloc comprising over 40% of the electorate and potentially reaching more than 50% their lack of political awareness leads to lower public participation. While they possess the potential to influence Indonesia's political dynamics, their limited sensitivity to political issues risks turning this demographic advantage into a passive force. As such, their decision-making in the 2024 election may be shaped more by media trends and superficial impressions rather than informed political consideration.

Political insight is crucial for national progress, impacting not only political parties and activists but also all Indonesians, especially generation Z, who play a pivotal role in determining the nation's future (Sjoraida & Nugraha, 2023; Dewan Perwakilan Daerah Republik Indonesia, 2015). Despite the open political situation, the younger generation's political participation remains low. Generation Z exhibits minimal interest in politics, ranking at the bottom in various perspectives. Some perceive politics as an adult affair with no influence on their lives, while others view it as a corrupt realm or a means to gain power. The formal nature of politics deters many from engaging in political discussions (Sjoraida & Nugraha, 2023).

In the 2024 general election, voter participation will be dominated by Generation Z (Kadir, 2022). Therefore, understanding the development of their political insights is crucial, especially as they play a significant role in shaping election outcomes. But the character of generation Z's political insight tends to participate in politics instrumentally and informatively rather than strategically. Generation Z's interest in doing activities is characterized by only looking or reading, and they are not very involved in actively saving information or associating people in political movement groups on social media (Alchatib et al., 2021). There is a possibility that the influx of radical understanding among generation Z targets through reading lists or written references makes democracy tainted. Politics has conditions with a number of interests and often uses instant political practices. This attitude makes generation Z apolitical as a form of criticism of politics (Hermawan, 2020).

Generation Z is a digital native group that uses their capabilities to engage in activities in the media (Harsono, 2023). Generation Z is a generation that expresses itself through internet media (Kertati, 2018). Generation Z is adaptable because they were born and raised in an era of rapidly developing technology. Media is important for Generation Z in life activities (Asy'ari et al., 2022).

The existence of new media is one of the current communication media. New media is seen as increasing democratic participation and encouraging new, more equal types of participation (Apriliana, 2021). This shows that the presence or existence of new media is very important to support the ideas of political figures or political parties. While digital media provides wide access to political content, its effectiveness in shaping political

awareness is influenced by how users process and apply the information. Wijaya et al., (2024) demonstrate that despite strong digital competence, Generation Z's political participation is not automatically enhanced, suggesting the need for deeper cognitive engagement beyond technical ability. Technology allows the delivery of messages to consider the number of audiences and their existence so that the most appropriate type of media can be chosen to spread the message (Nurhadi & Kurniawan, 2017). The presence of the internet and new media has enabled political participation in political conversations (Apriliana, 2021). Digital media provides the information needed to be the beginning of the formation of trust and support from the public (Hidayat et al., 2020). The media is also a source of news and political information, and they will seek additional information through other media if necessary (Perangin-Angin & Zainal, 2018). Media such as YouTube make it very easy for political groups to provide explanations that are broadcast around the world. Media selection basically depends on the communication objectives to be achieved (Nurhadi & Kurniawan, 2017).

YouTube, including new media, has a type of user-generated content where content is created by users (Apriliana, 2021). YouTube is the second most popular audio-visual-based social network in the world in October 2023, with 2.491 billion active (Statista, 2023). YouTube's reach in early 2023 was equivalent to 50.3 percent of Indonesia's total population at the beginning of the year (Kemp, 2023). The power of YouTube has infiltrated social, political, and economic entities. YouTube can reach all people, organizations, and politicians because it is used as a political communication medium, so it cannot be ignored (Apriliana, 2021). One of the YouTube media that is in great demand is the Mata Najwa program, which collaborates with Gadjah Mada University with the 'Bacapres Bicara Gagasan' event. In the program, three presidential candidates, namely Ganjar Pranowo, Anies Baswedan, and Prabowo Subianto, met for the first time in a debate of ideas at Mata Najwa on Stage Yogyakarta on Tuesday, September 19, 2023. This opportunity was used to assess the three presidential candidates and determine who is suitable and worthy to lead the nation for the next five years (Elok Nuri, 2023).

With the phenomenon that occurs in generation Z ahead of the upcoming 2024 general election, the emergence of this problem is motivated by political knowledge or insight that is still very lacking, so the media becomes one of the ways that has the opportunity to increase generation Z's political insight. Based on the research data obtained from the results of observations, the focus of the problem in this study is to see the experience that generation Z gets when watching political shows on YouTube media by shaping political insight into generation Z through the construction process. This research uses information-experience theory. This information experience theory was introduced by Christine Bruce and focuses on how people gain meaning from engaging with information in various aspects of their lives (Putri et al., 2023). To obtain meaning from engagement with information where people can choose useful media to get satisfaction and desired needs.

The basic assumption of these needs, according to Katz Gurevitch and Haas (1973) in West and Turner, consists of three aspects: (1) cognitive, which is the need to get information, knowledge, and understanding of the environment, such as searching for information on the internet; (2) affective, which is getting a pleasant experience and can fulfill emotional needs; and (3) personal integration, which is a need that is achieved by following various perspectives with the aim of increasing confidence in the information obtained (Nafiisah et al., 2023). Further elaboration by (Savolainen, 2020) highlights that information experiences are shaped not only cognitively, but also affectively and sensorially, especially through digital and audio-visual media. This aligns with the study's use of cognitive, affective, and personal integration dimensions to understand political insight among Generation Z.

In Indonesia, this framework is reflected in how Gen Z consumes political content. Evita (2023) observed that although Gen Z accesses political information via digital platforms, their engagement remains surface-level and uncritical. Similarly, Damayanti et al., (2021) noted that the credibility of political programs on YouTube particularly those hosted by figures like Najwa Shihab significantly affects the affective and cognitive reception of political messages. This shows that digital content packaging plays a vital role in whether political messages resonate with young audiences. The various needs sought by media users include access to information in the form of text, images, and video where relevance, clarity, and emotional appeal are critical to satisfying both cognitive and affective demands (Ramadhan, 2021).

Research on political insights using a phenomenological approach refers to the results of previous research stating that social media has changed the way people interact and communicate, including new voters. Now, social media is an important platform for politicians to shape public opinions and images (Prasetyawan, 2020). Supporting this, Alfaruqy et al., (2022) explored the various forms of political engagement among Generation Z in Semarang. They found that Gen Z's political participation manifests in diverse ways, ranging from voting awareness to political discussions on social media. Their study highlighted how demographic factors and media habits influence the intensity and nature of youth political involvement, underscoring the significance of contextual factors in understanding Gen Z's political behavior.

Other results reveal that first-time voters use social media to find information about political figures and understand their political candidates better. With social media, politics has the opportunity to speak and convey to the public by attracting the interest of young and novice voters, so social media becomes important for politicians (Febriani, 2020). Subsequent research suggests that young people use various sources of political information to get information about politics and the world around them. These sources include family, friends, teachers, television news, newspapers, radio shows, comedy shows, social media, and community meetings. They passively encounter sources of information as well as actively engage in debates and discussions with other sources. The nature of young people's experiences in obtaining political information varies widely (Smith & McMenemy, 2017).

This study explores how Generation Z develops political insight after watching the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program on YouTube. It specifically examines changes in their political perceptions how they evaluate presidential candidates, understand political issues, and build confidence in their electoral choices through three dimensions: cognitive (knowledge and understanding), affective (emotional engagement), and personal integration (credibility and self-assurance). By focusing on these individual experiences within a digital media context, particularly through YouTube, this study aims to clarify how political content in new media platforms influences the way Generation Z perceives, processes, and responds to political narratives. The findings are expected to inform political communication strategies targeting young voters, especially in the lead-up to the 2024 presidential election.

Method

This research uses descriptive qualitative research, which is a type of research that provides a brief description of the state of the subject (Yaningsih, 2014). Qualitative research is a research procedure that collects descriptive data from subjects and actors in written and oral form (Farida, 2016). The phenomenological method is used to convey various experiences of the same phenomenon (Budiarko, 2021). The purpose of phenomenological

research is to construct the meaning of the same individual experience (Yusanto, 2019). According to Heotis (2020), phenomenological research can be categorized into descriptive and interpretive approaches, and this research is closer to the descriptive tradition, which aims to reveal the meaning lived by participants without imposing prior assumptions. In line with this, Daruhadi (2024) emphasizes that phenomenology serves as a theoretical foundation for qualitative research, particularly when aiming to capture the authenticity of human experience. The phenomenological method focuses on interpreting subjective realities based on participants lived experiences, making it suitable for studies exploring perceptions, insights, or meaning-making processes.

To support this analysis, this study also integrates political communication theory, specifically the symmetrical two-way model by Grunig & Hunt (1984), which emphasizes interactive dialogue and audience feedback as essential elements in political messages. This theoretical framework is highly relevant in the context of digital media in Indonesia. Research by Majid & Andrian (2023) shows that campaign strategies using tags/hashtags and interactive content (memes, videos) on social media play a significant role in shaping voter perceptions and encouraging engagement. A study by Rijalussaumi & Irma, 2025) analyzing presidential candidates' communication on Instagram and YouTube notes that consistent interactive posts, captions, and visuals significantly influence how young voters interpret political messages. Through this model, the study explains how exposure to programs like Bacapres Bicara Gagasan on YouTube can actively shape Gen Z's attitudes toward candidates, their political perceptions, and their trust in the electoral process, serving as a meaningful complement to the phenomenological analysis of their lived experiences.

The individuals referred to in this study are members of generation Z who have watched the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program on YouTube. Informants were selected through criterion based selection, focusing on individuals who met specific characteristics relevant to the study's objectives. This approach aligns with the phenomenological method, which emphasizes the uniqueness of lived experiences as the unit of analysis (Yaningsih, 2014). The individuals referred to in this study are members of generation Z who have watched the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program on YouTube. The phenomenological approach was chosen to capture Gen Z's personal experience in interacting with political content. This approach is considered appropriate to describe the subjective meanings and perceptions formed from the experience of watching political programs on digital media (Sumerta et al., 2024). On the other hand, Gen Z experiences information socially through digital media more often than active search. This finding reinforces the use of information experience theory, where the meaning of information is interactive and contextual, not merely linear or rational (Hassoun et al., 2023).

The research subjects in this study were generation Z, who had the criteria of having watched the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program on YouTube, with a generation born in the range of 1997–2012. Primary and secondary data were the two data sources that were used in this study's data collection techniques. Primary data originates from informant interviews, whereas secondary data is derived from pertinent literature studies for this study. Interviews are the source of primary data collection procedures; the informant is the subject of the interview and provides information to the interviewer. Eight members of generation Z who watch 'Bacapres Bicara Gagasan' were the study's informants. The research was conducted following ethical research principles, including informed consent from all participants, anonymity, and voluntary participation. The following is the data from the research informants in Table 1.

Table 1 Informant Profile (source: interview results,2023)

Informant Code	Age	Occupation
A1	23 years old	Lecturer
A2	23 years old	District government contract employee
A3	25 years old	Mining services consultant staff
A4	22 years old	Master's student
A5	23 years old	Freelance
A6	24 years old	District government employee
A7	23 years old	ATR contract employee
A8	23 years old	Consultant staff

The data analysis technique in this study uses the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Qualitative analysis data, according to Miles and Huberman, consists of words or sentences collected through observations and interviews and then processed through recording, recording, and typing (Hardani et al., 2020). Data reduction in this form is a conceptual framework that will be used as a basis for researchers to conduct interviews with informants. Data reduction in this study is in the form of transcripts or manuscripts of interview results, which are attached as an appendix to the research results (Junaid, 2016; Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024). Data presentation (display data) is a set of information arranged in a narrative to facilitate understanding of what happened. In this study, data display was carried out by separating the data obtained according to each category of aspects studied. Aspect categories related to the interview framework or manuscript in the data reduction section include cognitive, affective, and personal integration aspects. The results of the data display in this study include the main information collected from interviews with informants. Inference drawing is the essence or conclusion of research findings based on descriptions or statements obtained. Inferences or data polarization in this study were drawn from the same statements from several informants the statements that were closest to the research objectives. This conclusion is the keyword from the results of the data display stage, which will be used as material for analysis in this study (Ahmad & Muslimah, 2021).

Results and Discussion

Cognitive Aspects: Political Understanding and Information

Research findings indicate that Generation Z initially holds a negative view of politics, prioritizing personal interests over national interests, perceiving politics as distant and untouchable, and having trust issues with political parties and individuals in structural positions. The cognitive aspect of the study focuses on Generation Z's ability to gain information, knowledge, and understanding from the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program. Social media serves as Generation Z's primary source of political information, acting as their gateway to information. The interest in watching the program stems from their self-awareness to learn about the future Indonesian leader for the next 5 years, driven by the desire for significant changes in Indonesia. As a generation with a substantial impact on the 2024 general elections, they feel the need to understand the ideas and backgrounds of the presidential candidates. Living in the era of social media, Generation Z is influenced by the prevalent political discussions, particularly with the approaching general election season, prompting curiosity and engagement with political content. This aligns with the

informant's experience, who became interested in watching Bacapres Bicara Gagasan due to the widespread political discussions on social media, fostering curiosity about politics, especially leading up to the upcoming general election.

> *"Everywhere social media discusses politics, so I can't help but be curious about politics and read content about politics on social media" (Interview A6/23/11/2023).*

Generation Z's interest in the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program on YouTube is amplified by the entertaining packaging of political content by the platform. Platforms like Mata Najwa consistently present political issues in an engaging manner, making it a compelling choice for Generation Z. The ever-evolving and fresh packaging of information by Mata Najwa captures the attention of Generation Z, simplifying complex political information for an audience unfamiliar with politics. This aligns with the informant's perspective, highlighting the relevance of packaging politics as entertainment for Generation Z, who are immersed in technology and social media. The approach resonates with their preferences, ensuring that political content remains attractive and engaging, addressing the challenge of disinterest among the younger generation.

> *"Because of how the media packages politics into entertainment" (Interview A4/20/11/2023).*

Following the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program, Generation Z gains extensive new information and knowledge, encompassing the vision, mission, and ideas of each presidential candidate, as well as insights into Indonesia's challenges and the character of the candidates. Their understanding extends to the distinct delivery styles of candidates, such as Anies and Ganjar's structured and systematic responses, influenced by their prior experience as regional heads, while Prabowo adopts a simpler approach. The three candidates exhibit diverse ways of addressing issues. An informant expresses openness to political insights, attributing it to each candidate's presentation of ideas in the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program.

> *"It's quite open to insights about politics because the presidential candidates are branding their ideas and getting new information related to the 2024 elections; each presidential candidate conveys ideas or ideas that are raised if elected president that are different, and the way they solve problems is also different" (Interview Informant A2/17/11/2023).*

Apart from their individual character, Generation Z also knows the problems that exist in Indonesia. Indonesia has very complex problems such as corruption, the environment, health, and others. In addition, when it comes to the SDGs, the biggest problems in Indonesia are stunting, education, and health.

Table 2 Key Findings of Cognitive Aspects (source: research results,2023)

Purposing of using YouTube	
No	Key Findings
1	Entertainment
2	Listening to music
3	Looking for information
4	Cooking tutorial
Responses about YouTube being a medium to improve political insight	
1	Easy to access
2	The platform is valid

| 3 | Clearer explanation |
| 4 | Imagined in terms of delivery |

Initial interest in politics in the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan Program

1	Self awareness
2	Media packaging of politics
3	All platform discuss politics

Information or knowledge gained

1	Vision and mission
2	Ideas
3	Experince track record
4	Problem solving
5	Individual character
6	Problem with SDG's focus

Generation Z extensively utilizes YouTube for entertainment, music, information, and cooking tutorials. Despite primarily using YouTube for entertainment, they remain committed to their roles as conscientious citizens, actively engaging in the upcoming general election. Recognizing the pivotal importance of the 2024 general election, Generation Z acknowledges its significance in shaping Indonesia's future and desires substantial positive changes in the country. They are beginning to contemplate their voting rights to ensure a thoughtful choice and avoid undesirable outcomes (Setiawati, 2023).

Living amidst technological advancements and social media, Generation Z emphasizes the importance of media packaging to capture their attention. They understand that media plays a crucial role in simplifying complex political content and presenting information dynamically. YouTube, evolving into a key platform for youth to voice political opinions, has democratized political discourse traditionally held by powerful politicians in parliament (Alim & Dharma, 2021). New media is perceived as enhancing democratic participation and fostering more equitable citizen involvement in politics. YouTube, in particular, provides Generation Z with the opportunity to access political information and knowledge (Alim & Dharma, 2021).

Furthermore, Generation Z places trust in platforms like Mata Najwa and Narasi Berita, ensuring the accuracy of information aired. Narasi TV on YouTube, founded by Najwa Shihab, conducts assertive interviews with influential figures, earning Generation Z's trust in the information presented. Watching Mata Najwa on YouTube sparks political interest among Generation Z, considering it a guide to political issues in Indonesia, as they recognize their future leadership role (Damayanti et al., 2021). Political broadcasts on YouTube, especially the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program, are seen by Generation Z as crucial for understanding the vision and mission of each presidential candidate, evaluating individual characters, and assessing problem-solving approaches. The cognitive aspects of media significantly aid audiences in acquiring information, knowledge, and skills.

Affective Aspect: Emotional Response and Engagement

The affective aspect of the study reveals Generation Z's emotional responses to the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program. Their engagement leads to satisfaction, excitement, and emotional involvement, especially when the program aligns with their interests. Joy and

enthusiasm arise when topics are relevant, yet they may experience emotional reactions if presidential candidates' responses differ from expectations. Generation Z attributes their political involvement more to fervent netizens supporting their preferred candidate than official leaders. Political judgments are shaped by assumptions and perceptions crafted by passionate netizens, contributing to emotional experiences, as expressed by an informant who found joy and emotion in watching political events on Bacapres Bicara Gagasan due to intensified netizen reactions.

> *"I'm happy while watching, and if I get emotional, it's not because of the officials, but because of netizens who are fanatics about one of the presidential candidates" (Interview A5/23/11/2023).*

Some Generation Z members did not only feel happy and emotional while watching politics in the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program; they also did not feel sad or emotional. They only know the ideas presented by each presidential candidate. This is in line with the informant's statement that when watching the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program, he did not feel happy, sad, or even emotional.

> *"I just usually don't feel happy or emotional" (Interview A3/19/11/2023).*

Even though they are happy and emotional, and some are not happy or ordinary, Generation Z is still interested in following and watching politics. Since it is not long before the general election in 2024, they definitely feel the need to do more research and investigation. They want to make sure that they are choosing the best for Indonesia's leaders for the next five years. Because seeing and witnessing this politics is something new for them and shows that politics is not as bad as they imagined. By following and watching politics on Bacapres Bicara Gagasan, Generation Z can understand and relate to what is being said about politics. If the media packages it well, Generation Z will also be interested in following and watching politics. In addition, because the platform always raises political issues and attracts people's attention, Generation Z likes Najwa's perspective and news narrative. This is in line with the expression of informants who stated that they would follow political issues made by Najwa because the packaging is always different from other YouTube channels. In addition, Generation Z will be interested in watching and following politics if political news or information is aired on podcasts and talk shows. However, if it is aired formally on national television, the majority of Generation Z will not follow it.

> *"In the future, I will still be interested, but specifically in Mata Najwa, if the content from other YouTube channels is still being considered. Especially if formal TV is not the first time to follow it" (Interview A7/23/11/2023).*

When following and seeing politics through the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program, Generation Z is interested in participating in politics again. However, they feel unsatisfied with the political knowledge they gained from the program. This is due to the need to get more information about how much each presidential candidate believes in society from the perspective of their ideas. This also includes having to know the ideas of the vice presidential candidates. Generation Z believes that horizons should be broadened and should not be complacent, especially when it comes to politics. They have only participated in politics recently, so their understanding of politics is only half, and the political shows on the program are a small part of the scope of the political world. In addition to following the news or television shows, they should read to better understand politics. All people should be aware of the political parties that support presidential and vice presidential candidates, even if they have already made their choice of presidential candidate.

Table 3 Key Findings on Affective Aspects (source: research results,2023)

Pleasant, ordinary, or emotional experience	
No	Key Findings
1	Happy
2	Emotional
3	Ordinary
Interest in watching more about politics	
1	Some interest
2	Not interested
Satisfaction with the political insights gained	
1	Not satisfied
2	Satisfied
3	Quite Satisfied

Generation Z perceives following the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program as an enjoyable and enlightening experience, marking their initial exposure to politics as exciting and less challenging than anticipated. This engagement serves as an educational opportunity in preparation for the 2024 general election. Emotional responses arise from how presidential candidates address questions, with some experiences deemed normal curiosity.

While eager to know candidates' ideas, Generation Z remains interested in political developments, seeking a thorough understanding of presidential and vice-presidential candidates. Their motivation stems from a desire to avoid errors in selecting Indonesia's leaders for the next five years, prompting additional investigations into candidates and political party supporters. Despite incomplete satisfaction with political knowledge gained, Generation Z acknowledges the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program as one of many electoral initiatives. They emphasize the continuous pursuit of political knowledge, recognizing the vastness of the political world and the program's informative value.

Interacting on social media facilitates easy access to political information, enriching their understanding. Generation Z, cautious of social media content, engages in further investigations through search engines or the internet to verify accuracy. This cautious approach reflects efforts to regulate viewing frequency, ensure information accuracy, and seek diverse sources to satisfy their curiosity (Evita, 2023) (Christin et al., 2021).

Personal Integration Aspects: Beliefs and Political Assessments

The aspect of personal integration in this study is related to increasing individual credibility, confidence, stability, and status. This is obtained from the desire for self-esteem in meeting the needs of the audience to increase self-confidence and understand more about their own decisions from their experience watching the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program. Generation Z can understand which direction each presidential candidate is focusing on, what their commitments are despite some crucial statements, and the character of each presidential candidate by following and watching the program. Although they can already judge, they still need more information. This is in line with the informants' statement that although they can judge the quality of each presidential candidate by following the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program, they still need some in-depth information.

"I can judge, but I still need other information to be able to judge more deeply" (Interview A2/17/11/2023).

They have been able to assess each presidential candidate, but some of them still have not made a choice of presidential candidates. Because after watching the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program, they feel more confused, and actually, the three presidential candidates have an equal position and the possibility of being elected is still equal. This is in line with the expression of the informant, who stated that he could not make a definite choice, and because the three presidential candidates have the same potential, he chose based on his vice presidential candidate. The broadcast of the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program, which only shows presidential candidates, is only to strengthen the views and assessments of each presidential and vice presidential candidate.

"I don't know which one to choose because, in my opinion, the three presidential candidates are still equal and equally likely to be chosen, and I choose based on the vice president" (Interview A7/23/11/2023).

Generation Z, who had already voted initially, remained confident in their initial choice until they watched and followed the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program. Although they still believe in their initial choice, they still need more information related to these three presidential candidates to increase their confidence. Some of Gen Z even changed their choice from their initial choice. This shows that Generation Z must follow and understand politics for the 2024 general election to have a good record. From the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program, the political insights that Generation Z gets are from the delivery of ideas or vision and mission, important Indonesian problems, the nature of each presidential candidate, and problem solutions.

In addition, political parties have a huge influence on presidential candidates. The president and vice president are part of a political party, and of course, the struggle of the political party to support each presidential candidate is a reference for the policy agenda that the president sets. This is in line with the expression of the informant, who stated that the insight gained is how each presidential candidate seeks a solution to important problems based on the basis of the state or only the principles they believe in themselves. Not only that, it turns out that the influence of political parties is so great on presidential and vice presidential candidates that the essence of Indonesia's prospective leaders is determined by their political party supporters.

"Ideologically, the state better understands how each candidate seeks a way out on the basis of the state or their principles; the essence of the leader candidate is determined by the party because the party has quite a big influence on the president" (Interview A4/20/11/2023).

In addition, generation Z gained knowledge about the backgrounds of previous presidential candidates through the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program. This knowledge is very important because, as members of Generation Z, they are responsible for determining how the future of Indonesia will run. Generation Z's choice depends on whether the experiences they have learned about match their perceptions or not.

Table 4 Key Findings on Personal Integration Aspects (source: research results,2023)

Can assess each presidential candidate	
No	Key Findings
1	Can assess
2	Slightly assess
Confident and trusting of the choice of presidential candidate	
1	Not sure and trust

2	Confident and trust the initial choice
3	Confused
Political insights gained from the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program	
1	Submission of ideas
2	Problems in Indonesia
3	Character of each presidential candidate
4	Problem solving
5	Political value
6	Political background

In the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program on YouTube, personal integration emerges as a crucial factor influencing Generation Z's political insight. The research findings highlight Generation Z's ability to assess each presidential candidate, express their beliefs, and make thoughtful choices after engaging with the program. The program fosters a more cautious approach in choosing candidates, providing Generation Z with previously unknown political insights. These insights encompass idea delivery, Indonesia's challenges, problem-solving approaches, political values, and backgrounds, with the candidates' experiences considered paramount and rhetorical abilities deemed secondary (CNN Indonesia, 2023). The motivation for personal integration stems from an intrinsic belief in the importance of learning to become a valuable individual, reflecting an internalized desire not imposed by external forces (Ayunatasya, 2021).

Potential Long-Term Impact and Variations in Social Media Exposure

Beyond the immediate influence of the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program, several informants indicated a growing interest in following political issues beyond the 2024 election. This suggests a potential long-term shift in political mindset among Generation Z, where political engagement is no longer viewed as distant or irrelevant, but instead becomes a part of their social consciousness. The program acts as an entry point to a more sustained form of political curiosity, particularly when political content is accessible, relevant, and engaging.

This qualitative finding aligns with the study of Achmad & Dwimawanti (2024), which found that media social usage significantly influences political participation among Generation Z in Central Java, especially in the 2024 general election. Their research concluded that active use of digital platforms is closely associated with higher levels of political awareness and willingness to participate in electoral activities. Similarly, Suryawijaya et al., (2024) emphasize that the emotional and ideological closeness Gen Z feels through social media interactions fosters a stronger sense of political identity and belonging. Moreover Haris et al., (2024), in their study on Instagram's role in Gen Z political participation, highlight that frequent exposure to political discourse, memes, and short video formats amplifies not only awareness but also motivation to take political action, including voting, discussing, and even criticizing political issues.

This research also reveals a clear distinction between Gen Z individuals who actively consume political content versus those with limited exposure. Informants who are highly engaged (e.g., actively follow political content, verify information, and engage in discussion) demonstrate:

- Deeper emotional involvement,

- More critical assessment of presidential candidates,

- And stronger motivation to stay informed post-election.

In contrast, less exposed individuals typically respond in a neutral or passive manner, often lacking critical reflection. This underscores the point that digital media exposure shapes not only the quantity but also the quality of political insight construction among Generation Z.

Conclusion

Generation Z, through the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program on YouTube, acquires diverse political insights related to the 2024 elections, each presidential candidate's ideas, and problem-solving approaches. They also gain an understanding of critical issues in Indonesia, including corruption, environment, health, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The cognitive aspect is evident as they actively verify political information by searching for accuracy through the internet or search engines, showcasing a comprehensive understanding.

Engaging with the program provides Generation Z with a fun, exciting, and emotional experience, influencing their assessment of presidential candidates. Their emotional responses affect candidate evaluations, highlighting the role of the affective aspect in shaping political insights. The affective aspect also contributes to their realization that following politics is more approachable and enjoyable than initially perceived.

Generation Z evaluates presidential candidates based on ideas, character, commitment, and problem-solving skills from the Bacapres Bicara Gagasan program, aiming to enhance credibility, confidence, stability, and status. Personal integration influences their perception of gained political insights, with varying levels of satisfaction; some are content, while others seek continuous improvement. In conclusion, platforms like YouTube play a crucial role in enhancing Generation Z's political participation and providing valuable opportunities for political information acquisition.

Recommendations

To enhance the impact of similar programs in the future, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. For digital media producers and political communicators: Expand programs like Bacapres Bicara Gagasan with more interactive features such as polls, Q&A sessions, and live commentary to foster two way engagement. Incorporating Gen Z language, pop culture references, and narrative storytelling can also make the content more relatable.

2. For policymakers and election organizers (e.g., KPU): Collaborate with popular digital platforms and influencers to implement digital-based political education, particularly in the form of short videos, gamified apps, and talk shows. These formats have proven effective in increasing Gen Z's interest and comprehension of political issues.

3. For educational institutions and civic organizations: Integrate political media literacy into school and university curricula to help Gen Z evaluate content critically and avoid misinformation. This will strengthen both cognitive and affective aspects of their political insight.

4. For future research and media developers: Encourage longitudinal studies that track the long-term behavioral impact of digital political programs and how exposure affects voting behavior and political trust over time.

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