

# GENERATION Z PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AN APPROACH TO CONSUMER BEHAVIOR THEORY

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**Abstract :** Research aimed at finding out the causes of Generation Z playing an active role in politics was carried out using a qualitative methodology using phenomenology. By using the snowball technique in determining informants, there were eight Generation Z students who were active in organizations or became organizational administrators. After going through triangulation, the researchers concluded that social media influences political attitudes, determining factors in political choices, political participation and perceptions of Generation Z in the political field. The conclusions obtained are in line with consumer behavior theory, especially the determining factors of political choices which are divided into two, namely rational and emotional factors.

**Keywords :** Politics, Consumer Behavior, Generation Z, Participation

## INTRODUCTION

Globalization and its rapid changes have made the role of the younger generation, especially Generation Z, in the political realm increasingly prominent. It should also be noted that Generation Z, namely those born between 1997 and 2012, is finally starting to grow up and act as an active force in all aspects of life (Febrianty & Muhammad, 2023) . This phenomenon is very relevant in Indonesia considering the upcoming 2024 Presidential Election. Therefore, the gender component of political participation deserves attention, especially regarding Generation Z.

This is not only because Generation Z is a generation that has a large proportion so it is important to study, but also because Generation Z brings changes in paradigm

and political orientation. The generation born in this digital era grew up with very open and fast access to information and communication (Ambarwati, 2023) . As a result, they learn about various global issues, including gender equality issues. This influences their political positions and views.

Since political reform at the end of 1998, gender issues in politics have become a widely discussed topic in Indonesia. However, women's participation in politics is still hampered by many problems, such as gender stereotypes and low representation of women in leadership positions (Ummaya et al., 2022) .

Looking at the 2024 Presidential Election from this point of view, it is worth appreciating how Generation Z, with perhaps different gender perspectives, is participating in politics.

Generation Z consists of those born between 1996 and 2009. Population plays an important role in development planning. In 2020, the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) stated that the population aged 15-19 years, 20-24 years, 25-29 years occupied the three largest numbers with a total of 67,351 people. Next is the data "Mid-Year Population Projection by Regency/City (people) 2018-2020"

Some members of Gen Z have earned college degrees and are entering the workforce. This generation is a transition from the Millennial generation and involves very rapid technological developments (Seemiller & Grace, 2015).

Generation Z's perception of presidential candidates and elections in the results of research entitled *Generation Z's Behavior and Political Participation* shows that young high school level voters in Medan, Jayapura and Depok, Gen Z has shown political awareness which is marked by a commitment to do not accept campaign donations (monetary politics) following election issues on social media.

They seem to realize that there is something wrong with politics in this country. Deep fanaticism towards elections often ends in nothing happening, unless they start adopting hostile thinking.

This research analyzes gender dynamics in the political participation of Generation Z in Indonesia, focusing on the 2024 presidential election. This research data was obtained through interviews with several informants who were considered representative.

The method used is a qualitative approach, which is expected to provide in-depth insight into Gen Z's mindset regarding political participation and gender issues. Various studies were conducted to get answers to various questions in the literature

related to generation Z political participation, gender politics, and the current political climate in Indonesia.

One might argue that social media serves as generation Z's primary information and communication conduit (Arianto, 2021). According to Noorikhshan et al., 2023, , social media has served as a public online forum for people to discuss politics, share information, and express opinions. In this regard, a pertinent issue will be how social media shapes Generation Z's political views and participation from a gender standpoint.

In addition, this research will study how educational and socio-economic factors influence attitudes towards politics in Generation Z. Education is one factor that can be used to measure political and social awareness (Arom & Yuhan, 2020). Therefore, in Indonesia, it is interesting to observe how education and socio-economic background relate to gender factors in determining Generation Z's political attitudes.

From a gender perspective, understanding how Generation Z treats and engages in politics is very important in the context of the 2024 Presidential Election. This will not only enrich understanding of how this generation can influence election results, but also provide an idea of the direction in which Indonesian politics will move regarding issues. -issues such as gender equality and political participation.

In general, this research aims to make a significant contribution in understanding the intrinsic gender dynamics in political participation, especially in the context of Generation Z and the Indonesian Presidential Election in 2024.

Through the study of gender and political participation among Generation Z, it is hoped that it can provide a new perspective and useful suggestions for policy makers and the general public in shaping

more open and participatory politics in Indonesia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Voter behavior in general elections is the same as consumer behavior (O’Cass, 2003). The difference is, in the final implementation of consumer activities is selecting and purchasing goods. Meanwhile, for voters, they choose and vote for candidate pairs (paslon) at the ballot box.

In the context of consumer behavior, it is defined as the way individuals make decisions to utilize their available resources (time, money, effort) to purchase goods related to consumption (Devaki, n.d.).

Almost the same definition is the decision-making process and physical activity in evaluating, obtaining, using and consuming goods or services (Zak & Hasprova, 2020).

Consumer behavior can also be explained as an activity, action, and psychological process that drives these actions before buying, when buying, using, consuming products and services after doing the things above or wanting to evaluate (Naim, 2023).

Consumer behavior is influenced by external environmental factors and internal environmental factors (Indahingwati et al., 2019).

Internal and external influences can create and influence consumer needs and desires which ultimately influence the decision-making process.

External influences consist of culture, sub-culture, demographics, social status, reference groups, family, and marketing activities. Meanwhile, internal influences consist of perception, learning, memory,

motivation, personality, emotions and attitudes (Indahingwati et al., 2019).

## METHODOLOGY

Phenomenological research is used to describe experiences gained with the aim of gaining more understanding about a particular phenomenon. This makes it possible to gain insight into people's behavior, attitudes, motivations, aspirations and culture (Holloway & Galvin, 2023).

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, observations or written self-descriptions to describe the phenomena that occurred (Cilesiz, 2011).

In common usage, “qualitative research” refers to a particular perspective on human nature (Polkinghorne, 1989) but is more than just a category of research design.

From a qualitative perspective, the richness and depth of human reality is considered to be closely related to the structure and meaning of natural language (Polkinghorne, 1989). In the context of broader research strategies, qualitative is equated with a commitment to the logic of natural language as the preferred form of understanding human affairs.

This research uses data descriptions in natural language (e.g. unstructured interviews) and usually presents results in natural language (Abram et al., 2020). Descriptive and qualitative research are overlapping categories, and most descriptive research is conducted from a qualitative perspective.

The research carried out focuses on the field of experience, other types of studies can also be carried out from a qualitative perspective. In exploring the world, people approach objects with common sense or a natural attitude that views them as

phenomena that exist in the world (Williams, 2021).

Questionnaire construction is divided into two basic types: (a) those that ask about the state of the object present to various modes of conscious experience, such as perception or memory, and (b) those that ask how meaning presents itself in experience. Although there are examples of the first type—for example, Richer's (1978) study of how objects of perception are given to experience and Casey's (1976) study of the existence of objects in the imagination—most phenomenological researchers are interested in investigating the presence of meaning in experience (Polkinghorne, 1989).

The general format of research is carried out through three procedural steps, first collecting a series of genuine stories from people who have or have experienced the experience being studied. Both participate in the analysis of this description so that researchers can understand and feel the key or general elements that make up this description. Third, create a research report that describes the informants' experiences accurately and clearly (Frechette et al., 2020).

Before making a report, data triangulation was carried out by collecting and analyzing it by several researchers so as to obtain different points of view on the data collected (Rahardjo, 2010).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

After analyzing the political dynamics that influence Generation Z in Indonesia, there are four main components depicted in the model, namely Generation Z Perceptions in Politics, Use of Social Media, Political Attitudes, and Political Participation, as well as how these components interact with Choice

Determining Factors (Prasetyo et al., 2018) (Putri, 2019).

Understanding voter behavior is crucial in a political environment that is dynamic and evolving quickly, particularly with regard to Generation Z voters who are just now starting to participate in politics (Noor et al., 2023). The picture presented in this research not only depicts the factors that influence their political decisions but also provides a framework for understanding how these various elements are related and interact with each other.

The image that this research presents not only shows the variables that affect their political choices, but it also offers a framework for comprehending the relationships and interactions between these different components.

The model in Figure 1, which is based on the primary concerns of Generation Z in Indonesia, illustrates how experience, background, and social environment are significant factors in forming political opinions.

Due to their age and social background, Generation Z has had a distinct set of experiences that have shaped their political views. 'Generation Z Perceptions in Politics' draws attention to elements including voting history, personal background (including gender and education), and environmental effects.

This demonstrates that complex interactions with the environment also play a significant role in shaping political beliefs, in addition to individual cognitive processes. 'Social Media Use' has emerged as a major forum for the exchange, discussion, and assimilation of political information in the modern digital age.

The influence of various social media platforms, usage frequency, content type, and level of engagement on an individual's

political attitudes is delineated in detail in this model. This demonstrates that social media functions as a domain where political identities are contested and established, and not merely a means of communication.

Generation Z's 'Political Attitudes' are influenced by their stances on public policy, party or candidate preferences, and significant political issues. This model acknowledges that political attitudes are not formed in isolation, but rather are influenced by emotive factors, ongoing information processing, and the evolution of values. The model investigates at this juncture how members of Generation Z perceive and react to the political environment that they encounter.

Political Participation delineates the manner in which Generation Z engages in diverse manifestations of political activity, extending beyond mere participation in general elections. This encompasses participation in political campaigns, discourse on politics among social groups, and the manner in which they are impacted by prevailing political trends.

This element demonstrates that the political engagement of Generation Z is an indication of wider societal dynamics, encompassing elements that impact their choices while casting ballots. Through an examination of these elements, this study aims to offer a more comprehensive understanding of how Generation Z in Indonesia maneuvers and impacts the political sphere.

By employing a map to navigate the intricate labyrinth of Generation Z's political behavior, the illustrated model demonstrates how the interplay between rational and emotional elements will influence the trajectory of Indonesian politics in the future.

Figure 1. Research Findings Model



### Gen Z Perceptions in Politics

A comprehensive comprehension of the political perspectives of Generation Z necessitates an awareness of the distinctive experiences and circumstances that influence their thinking. Their initial voter experiences offer crucial insights into their perception of the political process and their own place within it. As Generation Z enters the political arena with a multitude of aspirations and concerns, this nascent stage of engagement is frequently marked by mystery and investigation. At this critical juncture, the fact that each electoral experience will shape their long-term political stances renders comprehension of these dynamics essential.

Individual backgrounds—including life experiences and educational attainment—color the political lens of Generation Z. Their understanding and awareness of significant issues are shaped by their organizational and educational backgrounds, whereas personal experiences frequently reinforce or contest preexisting perspectives. This highlights the significance of an educational approach that is both inclusive and diverse, as it empowers Generation Z to assess and develop well-informed political viewpoints. As stated by informant 8:

*"... in my opinion, the consideration for choosing is having a better side, being superior to other candidates who can make new changes such as planning for the future. These changes have a positive impact on progress and prosperity in the surrounding environment. For example, selecting a Paskib chairman who has a vision and mission that can bring about a better organization and in terms of candidates who have good personalities are worthy of being chosen..."*

The external environment has a significant influence on political perceptions, with family and peers playing an important role in political socialization. Interaction within these social groups can strengthen or challenge existing views, especially through discussion and debate. Media, and especially social media, act as powerful mediators of information, often serving as Generation Z's primary tool for accessing and processing political information, making media literacy skills critical for intelligent political navigation. As stated by informant 7:

*"...especially after the presidential and vice-presidential candidates were determined, interest and discussion about politics increased among friends..."*

And informant 8:

*"I also choose candidates because of the assessment factors from close friends or parents regarding their opinions which are my considerations in choosing. My friends have a lot of influence on my decision to choose a candidate..."*

Gender perceptions in politics also influence how Generation Z views and evaluates political candidates. Gender stereotypes can influence their preferences for potential leaders, while gender representation in politics can determine the extent to which they feel represented.

The importance of issues of gender equality and women's empowerment is

becoming increasingly visible, as Generation Z demands greater diversity and inclusivity in politics. As stated by Informant 2:

And informant 8:

*"...the current trend is that there will be female presidential or vice presidential candidates. Because in this country not only men can do it but also women have the ability in this matter..."*

The values and ideologies held by Generation Z play an important role in shaping their political views. Values such as justice, equality, and sustainability are often at the forefront in determining their political affiliation. As their views develop, ideology becomes a tool for understanding and navigating the complexities of politics, providing them with a framework for actively participating in political discussions and electoral processes. As stated by informant 6:

*"...because the law seems blunt upwards, sharp downwards. Moreover, now the public and students understand the law quite well. If you see something like that (injustice) you will become annoyed with yourself..."*

and Informant 2:

*"... this is due to political dramas, namely the decision of the Constitutional Court (MK) which approved presidential and vice presidential candidates who could be under 40 years old with the condition that they hold public positions directly elected by the people.*

*Apart from that, the presence of young people is a special attraction for young people to be active in the world of politics..."*

## **Use of Social Media**

The use of social media has revolutionized Generation Z's engagement with politics. This platform not only

functions as a communication channel, but also as a digital public space where young people interact with political issues, forming and sharpening their views. With easy and instant access to various sources of information,

Generation Z has a unique opportunity to be exposed to a variety of political perspectives. However, this convenience also brings its own challenges, such as sorting through excessive and often conflicting information, which requires a high level of digital literacy to effectively navigate and understand the political context.

Certain social media platforms, such as Twitter, TikTok, and Instagram, have become powerful tools in disseminating political information. Each of these platforms has unique characteristics that appeal to various segments of Generation Z.

Twitter, for example, is often used for fast-paced and dynamic political debates, while Instagram is preferred for more visual and narrative campaigns. These differences in platform use reflect how personal preferences and media consumption styles influence individuals' political understanding. As stated by informant 6:

*"...The current presidential election phenomenon makes politics quite interesting. For example, on Twitter, there are many differences of opinion, giving each other opinions about one of the candidate pairs being supported, etc..."*

and informant 5:

*"I see that there are differences in approaches between men and women in discussing politics. In my view, men, especially students, tend to be more critical and active in political discussions. However, there is an impression that women, when talking in public places such as cafes, prefer to discuss different*

*topics and are not as intense as men when discussing politics. I also indicated that women may be less active or less interested in discussing politics, especially in their circles who are more likely to follow entertainment trends on social media such as TikTok and Twitter. For example, I provide illustrations of issues that are currently viral, such as the Masterchef event, and try to relate them to a candidate. However, I admit that I only glanced at it and didn't really understand the relationship. The advertising and campaign factor on social media, especially TikTok because I see more advertisements and campaigns on TikTok..."*

Frequency of social media use also plays an important role in informing youth about politics. For those who are online frequently, social media is a primary source of political information, allowing them constant exposure to the latest news and campaigns. However, this frequency can also cause information fatigue and, in some cases, may reinforce a filter bubble where only ideas that align with their beliefs are seen and reinforced.

The types of content consumed on social media vary widely, from political news and opinion to campaign material and propaganda. Generation Z often engages in sifting through this content, seeking credible information while often expressing their own views through posts and comments. These interactions not only allow them to better understand political issues but also help in shaping their online political identity. As stated by Informant 3:

*"It's quite good to follow developments in information about the presidential election from social media such as TikTok and Instagram. because I often scroll through TikTok so news related to the presidential election always appears...."*

Not only receiving information, Generation Z is also active in creating content on social media, using this platform to express opinions, support campaigns, or even launch their own political initiatives. This active engagement shows the role of social media as a tool of empowerment, providing youth with the opportunity to become active participants in political discourse. However, this role must be balanced with awareness of ethics and responsibility in sharing and creating content, so that social media can become a constructive, not destructive, tool in the political process. As stated by Informant 8:

*"Regarding political issues, I follow developments more through the social media TikTok, because on TikTok there are lots of clips related to Mata Najwa inviting presidential candidates...."*

### **Political Participation**

The manner in which Generation Z engages in politics signifies the emergence of a novel era in civic participation, distinct from that of prior generations. Young people are expressing their views not only through traditional means such as voting booths but also via social media platforms, online petitions, crowdfunding campaigns, and petitions, all of which are accessible via digital technology. This signifies a transition from conventional modes of involvement to more dynamic and interactive modes of participation, which may directly influence the formulation of policies and the political agenda.

Political campaign participation has evolved, with Generation Z increasingly inclined to endorse causes that correspond to their personal values and convictions. They frequently engage in digital activism

and campaigns with a significant online component, including social media. Frequently, the efficacy of these campaigns is contingent upon their capacity to connect with the values of Generation Z and employ visually and narratively accessible language. This demonstrates that their political engagement transcends mere support and serves as a manifestation of both individual and communal identity.

Political discussions within social groups are especially important for Generation Z, who often find and build ideological communities through social networks. These discussions not only occur in person but also virtually, where chat rooms, forums and social media groups allow for the rapid exchange of ideas and opinions. It is here that many young people are exposed to a variety of perspectives, sharpening their understanding of politics, and often, crystallizing their positions on certain issues. As stated by informant 4:

*"...I follow the presidential election from social media and friends from around me, who always discuss the 2024 presidential election..."*

Social environmental influences, from families to educational institutions and the media, play a key role in shaping how Generation Z participates in politics. These influences not only determine how and when they participate but also what issues they choose to engage with.

For example, environmental and social justice issues often find strong resonance among Generation Z, encouraging them to take action in the forms they feel are most effective. As stated by informant 1:

*".....politics has been exciting lately due to several events that have changed the course of elections, including the decision of the Constitutional Court (MK) which*



*states that the President or Vice President can be occupied by someone under 40 years of age provided they have experience as a regional head. With this change, the election will not be boring... "*

Current political trends also influence how Generation Z chooses to get involved in politics. They are often driven by actual events and seize the moment to drive change. This includes participating in demonstrations, grassroots movements, and other political initiatives that capitalize on political and social momentum.

This engagement is often driven by a desire to see concrete and rapid change, reflecting the urgent need felt by many young people to address the challenges facing society today. As stated by informant 5:

*".....if Pak Prabowo makes an advertisement that initially appears to be a milk advertisement, it turns out that the aim is not to sponsor milk, but to campaign for the importance of nutrition for children in Indonesian society. Pak Prabowo probably hopes that children in Indonesia will get good nutrition. Meanwhile, Mr Anis wants to get free petrol, which doesn't seem to be a problem, but teacher salary increases must be calculated carefully, considering the financial conditions in Indonesia, even in neighboring countries. Every campaign needs to be analyzed in depth. For example, teacher salary increases must be considered carefully and take into account the financial conditions of Indonesia and its neighbors. So, every initiative or campaign must be analyzed well. There are various possibilities, and sometimes there are things that may be difficult to realize. It is important for us to understand every consequence of any decision or campaign taken....."*

## **Political Attitude**

Generation Z's political attitude towards politics reflects a paradox of the times – on the one hand, they are known for being skeptical and critical of political institutions, but on the other hand, they are also very proactive in advocating for social change in which they believe. A deep understanding of key political issues, such as climate change, gender equality, and social justice, encourages Generation Z to not only judge candidates and political parties based on their programs, but also the values and principles they represent. These political attitudes are often reflected through their choices at the voting booth and advocacy activities outside of elections.

Generation Z has a tendency to align their political choices with their personal and social identities. Preferences for political parties or candidates are often rooted in the extent to which they feel represented on the issues they care about. This goes beyond narrow identity politics; it is about finding representatives who truly understand and can speak on behalf of their aspirations. Their involvement in the political process, therefore, is often a personal statement as well as a political act. As stated by informant 2:

*" The existence of a young Party Chairman makes young people enter politics..... Young people are now starting to flock to the world of politics. The proof is that many young people are participating in the legislative and presidential elections..."*

Their views on public policy are also an important indicator of their political attitudes. Generation Z tends to value progressive and innovative policies, which address contemporary problems with

sustainable and inclusive solutions. They are more likely to support policies that consider long-term impacts on society and the environment, rather than policies that provide short-term gains or support the status quo. As stated by informant 5:

*".....if Pak Prabowo makes an advertisement that initially appears to be a milk advertisement, it turns out that the aim is not to sponsor milk, but to campaign for the importance of nutrition for children in Indonesian society. Pak Prabowo probably hopes that children in Indonesia will get good nutrition. Meanwhile, Mr. Anies wants to get free petrol, which doesn't seem to be a problem, but teacher salary increases must be calculated carefully, considering the financial conditions in Indonesia, even in neighboring countries. Every campaign needs to be analyzed in depth. For example, teacher salary increases must be considered carefully and take into account the financial conditions of Indonesia and its neighbors. So, every initiative or campaign must be analyzed well. There are various possibilities, and sometimes there are things that may be difficult to realize. It is important for us to understand every consequence of any decision or campaign taken....."*

The advent of social media and online discourse has provided Generation Z with unprecedented opportunities to shape and express their political views.

Digital platforms offer individuals a forum to share thoughts, contest dominant narratives, and rally backing for particular causes and campaigns. This level of engagement demonstrates that their political position is not dormant; instead, it is one that evolves in tandem with the continuous discourse with the international community.

However, the political views of Generation Z also pose some obstacles. Although technology enables individuals to stay connected and informed, it also presents the potential for division and misinformation. Generation Z must distinguish between propaganda and truth, as well as fact from fiction, in a sea of frequently contradictory information.

Partisan stances are frequently shaped within environments that demand the application of critical thinking and the capacity to transcend sensational news. They persist in their efforts to shape the political landscape in a manner that reflects their aspirations and apprehensions regarding the future, despite these obstacles.

### **Determining Choice Factors**

A complex assortment of interdependent elements comprise the determinants of choice that impact Generation Z in the political sphere. One aspect to consider is the impact of rational factors, which encompass logical deliberations such as the candidate's past performance, the programs being proposed, and the sway of family and friends who may hold firmly established political opinions.

Young electors are empowered to make informed decisions by virtue of this information and an objective evaluation of the progress made towards fulfilling campaign pledges. As reported by Informant 7:

*"In my opinion, the presidential and vice presidential candidates need to clearly convey their vision and mission and create work programs that can increase job opportunities for young people. For example, by building a startup ecosystem that encourages creativity and entrepreneurship. In this way, young*

*people will be inspired and moved to participate in the democratic party."*

On the other hand, emotional factors have just as much power in determining political choices. A viral issue, such as an interesting social media campaign or an event that gets a lot of attention, often attracts attention and influences the thinking of young voters.

A candidate's humorous attitude or thoughtful branding strategy can garner sympathy and make the candidate feel more relatable, regardless of their political platform. This shows that politics for Generation Z is not only about policy but also about personality and image.

*"...boy friends understand or understand more about political issues than girl friends. Guys often follow political developments in Indonesia. "Guys prefer Mr. Ganjar, while their female friends prefer Mr. Prabowo because of the gemoi that is going viral..."*

Gender perceptions of leadership also play an important role. Generation Z may be inclined to support or reject candidates based on gender stereotypes or beliefs about leadership abilities based on gender.

Although many of them support gender equality, unconscious bias can influence their choices, both positively and negatively. As stated by informant 9:

*"In my opinion, gender equality is neutral, for elections it may depend on the individual, such as their level of knowledge or understanding of vocal or strong political views..."*

These choice determinants do not operate in isolation. Instead, they interact with each other in often unexpected ways, forming a dynamic landscape for young voters making political decisions. For Generation Z, political choices are often a reflection of their identity, the values they

hold, and their aspirations for the future. As stated by Informant 7

*"In my opinion, ideally in the future there will be balanced gender representation between men and women in presidential elections. However, what is most important is the candidate's competency and qualifications in leading the country, not their gender. If there are female candidates who are qualified and qualified, why not? As long as the process is fair and democratic."*

When examining the factors that influence this decision, it is critical to acknowledge that Generation Z stands at a distinct juncture where conventional innovation and technological advancement converge. Individuals encounter the distinctive obstacles that arise from the constantly changing information age, in which the reliability and accuracy of data can differ significantly.

As a result, their evaluation and selection of political options may serve as a reliable predictor of broader shifts in political decision-making processes, thereby providing us with knowledge regarding the trajectory of democracy in the coming years. As reported by Informant 7:

*"...I will look at his educational background, work experience and response to current issues in Indonesia. Of course, the candidate must have sufficient competence and ability to lead the country..."*

## CONCLUSION

Based on the conducted data analysis and subsequent discussions, it can be deduced that Generation Z in Indonesia approaches political phenomena in a distinctive manner. Their political decisions are frequently influenced by a combination of rational and emotive considerations, with

social media exerting a substantial impact on both facets. By utilizing social media as a platform for self-branding in addition to as a source of information, they are able to express personal political views and create their social identity. This signifies a transformation in the ways in which political decisions are being made, with an increased emphasis on identity formation and emotive considerations.

From a theoretical standpoint, these results offer fresh perspectives on the subject of decision-making theory. It would seem that Generation Z integrates contemporary psychological and emotive elements with traditional decision-making models that emphasize information processing and logic. This highlights the necessity of incorporating the influence of digital media and sentiments into contemporary theoretical frameworks of political decision making. Furthermore, the emergence of self-branding via social media indicates that personal impression management and self-promotion are transforming into essential components of identity politics, thereby expanding our comprehension of the process by which political images are constructed.

The practical ramifications of this study's findings are numerous and significant. To begin with, political practitioners and candidates can enhance the efficacy of their campaign strategies by gaining insight into the manner in which Generation Z utilizes social media to make decisions. Furthermore, by comprehending the emotional inclinations and media inclinations of Generation Z, policymakers can enhance the development of public policies and communication tactics that effectively appeal to this demographic of electors.

Moreover, practical implications for political education are also pertinent. It may be necessary for academic establishments and non-governmental organizations to craft initiatives aimed at enhancing digital literacy and critical thinking abilities with regard to evaluating political information. This would enable Generation Z to be better suited to make political decisions that are well-informed and reflective.

These results emphasize the necessity of adjusting policies and practices in fields such as education and politics in order to capitalize on and respond to the novel ways in which Generation Z engages in the democratic process. Recognizing and comprehending the intricacies of their engagements with politics and social media will not solely confer personal advantages, but can also contribute to the enhancement of democratic conduct in its entirety.

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