

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF BEGINNERS IN THE 2024 GENERAL ELECTION IN CIREBON CITY

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ABSTRACT

Political participation involves political awareness and faith in government, which is directly connected to the concepts of democracy and legitimacy. The relationship between political participation, democracy and legitimacy is very close. This research highlights the preparation of Cirebon City for the 2024 General Election with a focus on the participation of new voters. This research aims to explore the experiences and perspectives of new voters through interviews, documentation, and observation to understand their political participation in depth. In addition, this study also aims to record the efforts of the Cirebon City KPU in overcoming obstacles to the participation of new voters. This research uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological paradigm approach. Descriptive data, both written and oral, were collected directly from first-time voters through interviews, documentation, and observation. Descriptive research, as Whitney describes, plays an important role in building a systematic, accurate and factual narrative. The results of this study describe the phenomenon of political participation of novice voters in Cirebon City and reveal the relationship between various aspects that influence it. The research also notes the efforts of the Cirebon City KPU in overcoming obstacles to the participation of first-time voters, including the use of social media, especially TikTok, to effectively disseminate information and attract the attention of first-time voters. This research shows that the political participation of novice voters in Cirebon City has a close relationship with the concepts of democracy and legitimacy. The Cirebon City KPU's efforts in using social media as a means of communication have made a positive contribution in increasing the participation of novice voters ahead of the 2024 General Election. The narrative generated from this research not only describes the phenomenon of political participation, but also provides a deeper understanding of the various aspects that influence the participation of novice voters.

Keywords: Elections, Politics, Democracy

Introduction

Political participation involves political awareness and faith in government, which is directly connected to the concepts of democracy and legitimacy. The relationship between political participation, democracy and legitimacy is very close. Political participation, especially in a democratic context, plays an important role in determining the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of society (Arniti, 2020). For example, political participation has a significant impact on the legitimacy of elected candidates in the 2024 general election. Each novice voter has their individual preferences and interests in choosing leaders in the election. Moreover, novice political participation in the 2024 election can be considered as a way for people to control how the government runs. Novice political participation is an important part of a democratic system and ensures citizens' political rights are fulfilled.

One method to measure the participation, democratization, and legitimacy of the citizens of the Republic of Indonesia is through evaluating the political behavior of novices. Novice political behavior can be observed in various contexts, one of which is the level of participation and enthusiasm of youth in visiting polling stations (TPS). This interest is an important indicator for analyzing novice political participation in Cirebon City, including in the context of the 2024 presidential election. Data from the General Election Commission (KPU) of Cirebon City shows that the participation of novice voters in the 2024 presidential election has fluctuated.

In every election process, there are often challenges that need to be overcome. For example, in the 2024 presidential election in Cirebon City, some challenges include the complexity of the election process and the lack of socialization from the Regional General Election Commission (KPUD) regarding the procedures for the 2024 presidential election. Regarding the presidential election, provisions have been regulated in the General Election Commission Regulation Number 25 of 2023 concerning Voting and Vote Counting in General Elections. This regulation is the legal basis for organizing presidential elections and aims to ensure quality elections, by ensuring healthy competition, participatory, evenly representative, and having a clear accountability mechanism. General elections can only be conducted in a manner that is direct, public, free, secret, honest and fair.

In organizing the 2024 elections, it is expected that the community will participate in politics constructively. This political participation is manifested through the electoral process, which is a principle of democracy (Wardhani & Sukma, 2018). Given that development does not solely depend on the efforts of the government alone, it also requires the support of the entire community, especially in casting their votes.

Furthermore, the author feels interested in conducting further research on the political participation of beginners in the 2024 General Election in Cirebon City. This research aims to gain a deeper understanding of how young voters engage in political activities in the city. This research will investigate (I) How is the political participation of beginners in Cirebon city, (II) Factors that influence the level of political involvement of beginners and, (III) What are the efforts in overcoming obstacles. This effort is expected to provide a broader understanding of the dynamics of politics at the local level and the potential contribution of young voters in shaping the political future of Cirebon City. Furthermore, the author feels interested in conducting further research on the political participation of beginners in the 2024 General Election in Cirebon City. With the title "Beginner Political Participation in the 2024 General Election in Cirebon City"

Research Method

Cirebon City is gearing up for the 2024 General Election, with a new group of voters ready to voice their aspirations. This research, with a focus on novice political participation in Cirebon, dives into the reality of the field through a qualitative approach. Qualitative methods, as explained by Moleong (2008), open the gates to understand individual experiences and perspectives in depth (Silmi, 2017). Descriptive data, both written and oral, were collected directly from novice voters through interviews, documentation, and observation. Descriptive research, as Whitney describes, plays an important role in building a systematic, accurate and factual narrative. This narrative not only describes the phenomenon of beginner political participation, but also reveals the relationship between various aspects that influence it. The phenomenological paradigm is the foundation of this research. Its objectivity lies in understanding the situation faced by first-time voters, a reality that is unique and rich in meaning. This research is not just a collection of data, but an attempt to understand the voices and experiences of first-time voters in Cirebon.

This research is not just looking for a causal relationship, but diving into the situation of novice political participation in Cirebon City. Unlike quantitative research that focuses on numbers and statistics, this qualitative research is like a lens that captures reality in detail and rich in meaning. The main objective of this research is to provide an objective picture of the state of novice political participation in Cirebon. The results are not formulas or generalizations, but rather narratives that tell the experiences, motivations, and obstacles faced by young voters in the democratic process. Qualitative data was collected through various methods, such as in-depth interviews with young voters, direct observation in the field, and analysis of related documents. This data was then carefully interpreted to produce an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of political participation among young people in Cirebon. The research was conducted on an ongoing basis, with data analysis continuing until saturation was reached. This ensures that the research results obtained truly reflect the reality on the ground. More than just statistical data, this research is expected to make a valuable contribution to our understanding of youth political participation in Cirebon. The results can serve as a foundation for various parties, such as the government, election organizers, and civil society organizations, to formulate appropriate policies and programs to increase the political participation of the younger generation in the future (Fathurokhman, 2022).

Result and Discussion

Novice political participation is an example of a democracy that allows people to directly participate in elections. In this case, citizens play an important role in choosing the state officials who will lead the government and the actions they will take.

Political participation is the desire of an individual to have a role in political life through administrative involvement to exercise voting rights, involve himself in various organizations, discuss various political issues with others, participate in various initiatives and movements, join political parties or independent organizations, participate in educational campaigns, share information, and provide environmental services as he can.

A person can be actively involved in political activities according to David Keth: (1) There is a statement of thoughts and feelings (2) There is motivation to contribute (3) There is responsibility. Referring to these views, it is clear that the spirit of democracy demands a wide space for participation and has constructed our democratic system on direct democracy, where people directly participate to determine their political choices without being represented.

Participation of Beginners in Cirebon City

Beginner voters in Indonesia account for 50% of total voters across Indonesia, with 24.8% of them in the Cirebon area, West Java. The results of the data from the Recapitulation of Voters by Generation in the 2024 Election Permanent Voter List (DPT) compiled by the General Election Commission (KPU) of Cirebon City show:

NO	KELAYAKAN	KELOMPOK	JARIH MILYAR	UMUR RATA-RATA	UMUR MINIMUM	UMUR Maksimal	GENERASI	NO. SUKSES	Grand Total
1	KELOMPOK	1945-1950	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1951-1956	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1957-1962	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1963-1968	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
TOTAL		4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000
2	MILLENNIAL	1969-1974	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1975-1980	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1981-1986	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1987-1992	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
TOTAL		4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000
3	GENERATION Z	1997-2002	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		2003-2008	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		2009-2014	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		2015-2020	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
TOTAL		4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000
4	PRE-BOOMER	1946-1951	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1952-1957	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1958-1963	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1964-1969	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
TOTAL		4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000
5	BOOMER	1946-1951	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1952-1957	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1958-1963	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
		1964-1969	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
TOTAL		4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000
Grand Total		16.000	16.000	16.000	16.000	16.000	16.000	16.000	16.000

Figure 1
group born between 1997 and 2012

Generation Z, the group born between 1997 and 2012, now controls a very significant number of voters. In Cirebon City, their population reaches 74,349, making them a central force in the dynamics of local elections. Based on data compiled from the Permanent Voter List (DPT) for the 2024 elections, Generation Z not only participates, but also dominates the number of voters in the city.

In addition to Generation Z, Millennials also played an important role in the election with a voter turnout of 73,303, putting them in second place. Meanwhile, Generation X was no less important, registering 68,807 votes, showing that they also had a considerable influence on the election results. Despite their smaller numbers, the Baby Boomer and Pre-Boomer Generations still made meaningful contributions. The Baby Boomer Generation recorded 32,992 votes, while the Pre-Boomer Generation, which is the oldest group, contributed 2,954 votes in this election.

Overall, the total number of voters participating in the 2024 general elections in Cirebon City reached 252,285. From the data, it is clear that Generation Z has a key role in increasing the participation of first-time voters, showing a very high level of involvement in the democratic process in Cirebon City. Their presence not only adds significantly to the number of voters but also reflects the spirit of the younger generation in actively participating in elections, signaling a dynamic change in voter demographics that has the potential to influence the outcome and direction of future policies.

Factors Affecting the Level of Political Involvement of Beginners

As discussed in the previous sub-chapter, the role of novice voters in the 2024 general election in Cirebon City is very dominating. This phenomenon shows that the participation of novice voters is the key to the success of general elections. Based on Davis Keith's theory, some of the implications of this participation can be explained as follows (Ibori, 2013).

Novice voters in Cirebon City show a high level of political awareness, which is reflected in their active participation in political discussions and forums. They are not only physically present, but also emotionally and intellectually. This participation is characterized by significant contributions of ideas and opinions, which shape the direction of political dialogue in Cirebon City. This high level of emotional and intellectual

engagement signifies that novice voters are not only passively following the electoral process, but also striving to influence the outcome in a constructive way.

The strong drive of young voters to engage in the political process is a key factor in their influence. This desire may arise from a hope for real change in local government or being inspired by public figures who motivate them to act. The presence of inspirational figures and issues that are relevant to young people ignite their passion to actively participate in elections. These motivations show that young voters are not just passive participants, but also have a strong desire to see concrete improvements in the existing government system. They are often driven by issues such as climate change, education, and social equality, which directly affect their future. In addition, the role of social media and digital platforms in disseminating information and building communities also strengthens their motivation.

Young voters have greater access to information and multiple perspectives, allowing them to make more informed decisions. They are also more easily connected to social movements and political campaigns that align with their values and concerns. As such, these motivations not only demonstrate their enthusiasm, but also reflect their aspirations and hopes for a future of governance and public policy that is more inclusive and responsive to people's needs. Overall, the strong motivation of young voters to engage in the political process is a reflection of their commitment to change and desire to shape a better future (Wibowo et al., 2020). This is a positive indication that the younger generation is ready to take an active role in democracy and ensure that their voices are heard and taken into account in the policy-making process (Khakim, 2023).

Efforts to Overcome Obstacles to the 2024 General Election in Cirebon City

The results of the observations showed that many participants experienced distractions that prevented them from voting. One of them is the large size of the ballot paper and how to fold the paper after voting. There are several other obstacles as conveyed by the KPU. According to him, many novice voters are less likely to explore information they are more likely to be given information. Like the socialization carried out by the Cirebon City KPU which has begun to be active in various social media. KPU Cirebon City has known how to socialize effectively and efficiently, namely by choosing the right social media and relying on the "For Your Page" (FYP) algorithm. As a result, the dissemination of information is right on target. The selection of social platforms/media is very effective in providing information for first-time voters in Cirebon City. The social media used is TikTok. There is a significant difference in using social media X or Instagram. When the KPU of Cirebon City uses X or Instagram, the results are less effective judging by the number of impressions and interactions in the post comment column. Unlike the case with TikTok social media based on the FYP algorithm. After choosing TikTok social media, socialization can be said to be successful because there is interaction in the comments column.

According to the KPU, this is a unique new finding. Socialization in common villages is no longer relevant. In addition, KPU conducted early political education by visiting campuses in Cirebon City, one of which was UGJ and Mahardika. KPU also visited high schools to provide education on how to vote and recognize ballot papers. This was considered a success because almost all novice voters from generation Z cast the largest votes.

KPU Cirebon City uses social media such as TikTok, which is based on the "For Your Page" (FYP) algorithm, to reach out to new voters. They create interesting content that can

invite interaction in the form of comments. This shows that the KPU is trying to understand and touch the emotional and intellectual aspects of the novice voters, by choosing a platform that is familiar and popular among generation Z. Davis Keith's theory emphasizes the importance of the inclusion of thoughts and feelings in the participation process.

By using TikTok, KPU Cirebon not only provides information but also creates a relevant and interesting experience for voters. This helps build deeper emotional and intellectual engagement with first-time voters, which is important to increase their participation in elections. KPU Cirebon City held socialization on campuses and schools to provide early political education. They teach how to vote and introduce the shape of the ballot paper. This provides beginner voters with the necessary knowledge and skills to participate in elections. It also increases motivation to contribute when individuals feel capable and ready. By providing early political education, KPU Cirebon equips beginner voters with knowledge and skills that increase their confidence to participate. This is in line with Davis Keith's theory, which states that motivation to contribute is key in increasing participation. When novice voters feel ready and understand the election process, they are more motivated to get involved (Lestari et al., 2023).

KPU Cirebon has changed their socialization methods from the usual ones in villages to social media and campuses, so they are more effective in reaching voters. They have also seen an increase in participation from first-time voters who are generation Z. Shared responsibility means that all parties, including the EMB and the community, must work together for the success of the election. KPU Cirebon demonstrates this responsibility by constantly seeking new and more effective ways to educate and engage voters. This approach shows that the KPU understands their role in creating an environment that supports voter participation, as well as inviting the community, especially first-time voters, to take an active part in the electoral process. This reinforces the concept of shared responsibility in Davis Keith's theory.

In order to overcome obstacles in the 2024 general election in Cirebon City, the KPU has implemented an approach that is in line with Davis Keith's theory. Through the inclusion of thoughts and feelings, motivation to contribute, and shared responsibility, the KPU managed to increase the participation of novice voters with more modern and relevant methods, such as the use of TikTok and political education on campuses and schools. This shows the comprehensive and adaptive efforts of the KPU in facing election challenges in the digital era.

Conclusion

This research highlights Cirebon City's preparation for the 2024 General Election with a focus on the participation of new voters. Using qualitative methods, this research explores the experiences and perspectives of new voters through interviews, documentation, and observation to understand their political participation in depth. This research aims to provide an objective picture of newbie political participation in Cirebon and reveal the factors that influence such participation. In the context of the 2024 General Election, the younger generation, particularly Generation Z and Millennials, play an important role. Generation Z in Cirebon reached 74,349 voters, dominating the permanent voter list, while Millennials followed with 73,303 voters. The high participation of these first-time voters shows strong

political enthusiasm and awareness, with significant contributions in political discussions and forums.

This research also notes the efforts of the KPU of Cirebon City in overcoming obstacles to the participation of novice voters. The KPU uses social media, especially TikTok, to disseminate information effectively and attract the attention of novice voters. In addition, the KPU also conducts socialization on campuses and schools to provide early political education, which increases the readiness and motivation of novice voters. Overall, this study makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of beginner political participation in Cirebon and can serve as a foundation for policies and programs to increase the political participation of the younger generation in the future. KPU's efforts in approaching young voters through digital platforms and political education show effective adaptation to the changing times and needs of young voters.

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