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## First Voters Perception On Political Advertising In The Media In Influencing Interest In Political Participation In The 2024 Election

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan (1) pemahaman pemilih pemula pada pemilu; (2) persepsi pemilih pemula pada iklan politik di media; (3) dampak iklan politik terhadap hak pilih mereka pada pemilu 2024 mendatang. Metode penelitian menggunakan deskriptif kualitatif, dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui FGD (Focus Group Discussion), kepada sepuluh pemilih pemula yang bertempat tinggal di Jakarta. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan: (1) Sebagian besar pemilih pemula telah memahami politik, bahkan ada yang sudah memiliki keputusan akan memilih kandidat yang sesuai menurut pandangan mereka. Namun mereka menyatakan masih perlu mempelajari visi dan misi kandidat yang akan maju pada pemilu mendatang; (2) Terkait dengan persepsi pemilih pemula pada iklan politik di media menurut mereka iklan politik dapat menambah pengetahuan serta dapat mengenal lebih dalam tentang kandidat. Visual dalam iklan politik menurut pemilih pemula sudah cukup baik meskipun masih banyak yang perlu diperbaiki agar iklan sesuai dengan kebutuhan pemilih pemula; (3) Bagi pemilih pemula iklan politik mampu mempengaruhi keputusan mereka dalam partisipasi politik, meskipun ada juga dari mereka menyatakan bahwa iklan politik bukanlah satu-satunya aspek yang dapat mempengaruhi partisipasi mereka pada pemilu, karena aspek lain seperti pilihan keluarga, teman dekat, serta opini orang sekitar juga memiliki pengaruh yang cukup besar terhadap keputusan seseorang melakukan partisipasi politik.

Kata Kunci: *Iklan Politik, Pemilih Pemula, Pemilu, Persepsi*

## Abstract

This study aims to describe (1) first voter's understanding of elections; (2) perceptions of first voters on political advertisements in the media; (3) the impact of political advertising on their voting rights in the upcoming 2024 election. The research method uses descriptive qualitative, with data collection techniques through FGD (Focus Group Discussion), of 10 first voter who live in Jakarta. The results of the study show: (1) Most first voter have understood politics, some have even made a decision to choose the candidate that is appropriate according to their views. However, they stated that they still needed to study the vision and mission of the candidates who would run for the next general election; (2) Regarding the perceptions of first voters on political advertisements in the media, according to them, political advertisements can increase their knowledge and get to know more about candidates. According to the first voters, the visuals in political advertisements are quite good although there is still much that needs to be improved so that the advertisements are suitable for the needs of the first voters; (3) For the first voters, political advertisements are able to influence their decisions on political participation, although there are also those who state that political advertisements are not the only aspect that can affect their participation in elections, because other aspects such as choices of family, close friends, and opinions surrounding people also have a considerable influence on a person's decision to participate in politics.

Keyword: *Political Advertisements, First Voters, Election, Perception*

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia will face elections in 2024. The upcoming elections will simultaneously elect the president/vice president, members of the DPR, DPD, Provincial DPRD and Regency/City DPRD. With simultaneous elections, the election challenges faced by the government are quite large, including technical readiness in compiling a list of voter participants and supporting tools for elections that must be well distributed; The government must also ensure that the public will have a contribution in the next election. The government must also be able to persuade by mobilizing and conducting outreach and educating the public about the importance of being part of elections as a form of a democratic society. The participation of first voter in election involvement, especially first-time voters, is also a challenge that the government must face because young voters are a group of voters who have potential and are quite influential in the upcoming election process.

The 2024 election will not be much different from previous elections, because political campaigns will still color the battle between candidates who will run for office in the election. Direct campaigning, namely by visiting potential voters, has become a characteristic for candidates who will run for office. Apart from direct campaigns, candidates also campaign through the media, one of which is using advertising media. The political battles of the candidates who will fight in the election will be seen through the political campaigns and advertisements they offer, both through electronic media and advertisements through print

media such as posters and billboards. The issues observed also vary, such as political messages, symbols used, and the characteristics of the candidate's image displayed (Kain & Balch, 2006).

Political advertisements are considered capable of persuading potential voters because of the number of promises they offer. Through political advertising, we can see the content of the message in the form of the candidate's vision and mission, their profile, and their achievements (Abadi, et al: 2021). The hope of this political message is to try to convince the public that the candidate is the right person they can choose and can be trusted to carry out their mandate as a representative of the people or even at the highest level, namely a president. According to Abadi, et al (2021), media and politics have become part of people's lives. Apart from being able to influence individual beliefs, the media is considered to be able to provide information and knowledge that can shape individual perceptions and beliefs in understanding and participating in politics. Previous research on the influence of political advertising on voter perceptions was conducted by Anshori (2018), who explained that political advertising has quite a large influence on the public (41%) in their decision to choose candidates who enter the political market.

Currently, the need to self-promote candidates running in elections, both as legislative members and presidential candidates, has become a top priority. Candidates who have minimal promotion will have less opportunity to be recognized by the public compared to those who promote themselves through a number of media. The choice of political media can also determine whether candidates can be widely reached by the public. Political advertisements on television, for example, are the most popular advertisements because of their very wide reach. However, according to Abadi, et al (2021), political media, especially political advertisements on television, have advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of political advertising are considered to be that it can increase people's political insight, get to know and know potential participants, know the vision and mission, increase community participation. However, television political advertisements have shortcomings, including the relatively short duration of the advertisement, some contents and messages that are unclear, obstacles in terms of interpreting the purpose of the advertisement, and the truth of the content displayed.

In the current era of new media, television campaigns are no longer the only popular media, because currently people do not only use television media as a channel for their political pursuits. New media such as social media Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are considered quite strategic by the candidates because social media in Indonesia is widely accessed by the public. From data released from We Are Social, the number of

active social media users as of January 2023 reached 167 million people (Widi, 2023), and as many as 153 million were young users or around 79.5% of the total population (Yonathan, 2023). From this data it can be concluded that first voter are quite potential voters and will have influence in the upcoming elections.

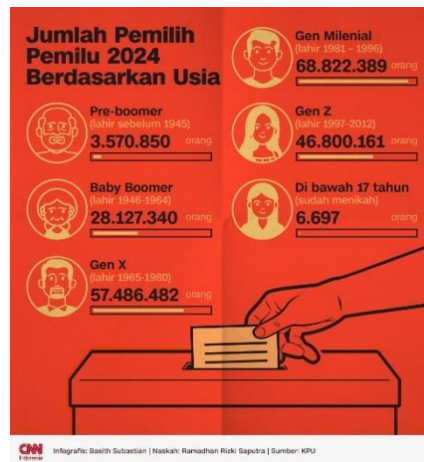


Figure 1. 2024 Election Voter Data (Source: CNN Indonesia, 2023)

From the data above, it can be seen that voters in the 17-30 year age range were 63,953,031 people (31.23%) and voters in the 31-40 year age range were 42,398,719 (20.70%). If combined, the total number of voters from the young age group has almost reached 52 percent. This means that votes from first voter have great potential and influence in the upcoming 2024 election.

First voter are also known to have enthusiasm in facing the 2024 elections. In a research conducted by the Kompas Gramedia Research and Analytics Team together with Kompas Research and Development on 3,224 respondents aged 17-40 years and residing in 80 electoral districts (dapil), it shows that Millennials born in 1981-1996 and generation Z born in 1997-2012 expressed their willingness to participate in the 2024 elections. Meanwhile, 10.7% are still considering it and only 2.6 percent are not willing to participate in the elections

A number of studies show that novice voters have quite large potential in the history of elections in Indonesia. Like research conducted by Batawi (2013), which examined the Political Awareness of Beginner Voters in the Pilkada, the results of this research showed that the majority of respondents (60%) felt happy that they had joined the ranks of novice voters. This means that they have the awareness that they will participate in elections and become their strength as citizens of society, nation and state. This research also explains that the supporting factor that makes them interested in elections is their critical attitude in understanding political awareness which they usually do at school, such as the freedom to express opinions and provide ideas and solve problems.

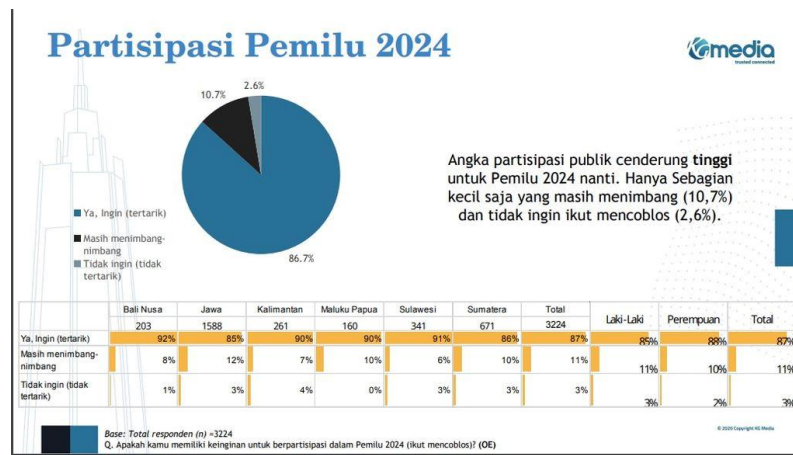


Figure 2. First voter's Participation in the 2024 Election (Source: Rahayu, Kompas.id, 2023)

Research that focused on first-time voters was also conducted by Akhrani, Imansari & Faizah, (2013), in this research it was explained that first-time voters will be encouraged to participate in politics if they feel they have confidence in politics. Based on hypothesis testing, the results of this research show that  $r=0.296$ ,  $n=105$  and  $p=0.002$  which can be interpreted as meaning that the higher a person's political confidence (beginner voter), the higher the level of political participation.

Seeing the importance of first voter as a potential group in elections, more in-depth research is needed on the extent of first voter's understanding of politics, including: How do the first voters understand elections? How do the first voters perceive political advertisements in the media? And what impact will political advertising have on their voting rights in the upcoming 2024 election?

### Political Media

Politics in a country is the process of making decisions, forming a government and managing policies that can regulate the lives of the country and its citizens. Politics has a role in a country, where through politics, people can organize themselves to overcome differences of opinion and interests. Solid majority rule government is characterized by legislative issues within the participatory mode: actually it is self-government by citizens instead of agent government within the title of citizens (Rawnsley, 2005).

In an effort to support politics, the role of political media becomes an inseparable part when carrying out political activities. For candidates who will run in the election, the main role of political media is as a tool to communicate messages, build the candidate's self-image to influence voters. Candidates who are successful in using political media are those who can manage their communication strategies well and communicate effectively with voters.

The need for media in politics is often carried out by candidates to carry out political

campaigns. Political campaigns can be carried out using various types of media to convey campaign messages. Television, for example, remains the main media in political campaigns, especially in countries with large audiences such as Indonesia. Radio also remains an option because it can be a medium that can reach people who live in areas that are difficult to reach with television channels. In the current digital era, the use of social media and other online platforms has become a preference for political candidates in carrying out modern political campaign strategies. Paid advertising on social media is often the candidate's choice in conveying the candidate's vision and mission to gain public support.

### Political Advertising

Political advertising is something that candidates must do, especially when they are running for election. Political advertising is "a communication process in which a source (usually a candidate or political party) has the opportunity to expose itself through mass channels to a political message with the intended effect of influencing voters' political attitudes, beliefs, and/or behavior" (Kaid in Hisan & Azhar, 2020). Political advertising is actually a form of communication that is targeted at motivating potential voters and advancing a party or candidate in legislative elections, influencing public opinion, winning public support so that their thoughts or actions are in accordance with the wishes of political advertising of parties and candidates (Sosiawan, 2015).

Through political advertising, candidates can convey their vision and mission, their promises and build their image in an effort to influence voters. The public can understand who the candidate is, their background and why the candidate deserves to occupy that position. Political advertising is also believed to be able to provide information to voters about political issues and political promises made between candidates so that voters can make accurate decisions. McNair (in Retnowati, 2013), political advertising can influence the audience in two aspects. The first aspect, politics can convey information about the candidate's vision, mission and platform in detail. Second, political advertising is like business in that it aims to persuade/persuade. Apart from persuasion, in political advertising, it does not always have an impact on the number of voters who decide to choose a candidate, but there are also those that actually cause anxiety, one of which is the results of a study conducted by Jeff (2021), political campaign advertisements distributed through media such as television can actually have an effect. anxiety for society, especially about the political conditions of a country.

According to Jamieson (in Boer in Hisan & Azhar, 2020), there are three types of political advertisements/campaigns: First, candidate advocacy advertisements: praising (qualifications) of a candidate, the approach is through retrospective policy satisfaction,

namely giving praise for their performance and achievements in the past then, or the benevolent-leader appeals approach (the candidate really means well, can be trusted, and identifies himself as always being with/being part of the electorate. Second, attacking advertising), focuses on the failures and bad past of competitors, the approach is by following the flow the opponent's game, when attacked, will attack back; Third, advertising is comparing (contrasting): attacking but by comparing data about the quality, track record and proposals between candidates.

However, according to Nimmo (in Chaarnailan & Nasution, 2018), political advertising will be effective if it prioritizes audiences who do not have a high affiliation with certain political figures or parties. This is because if voters already have strong affiliations, it will be difficult to influence them.

### Political Participation

According to Budiharjo (in Anshori, 2018), political participation is the participation of citizens in legitimate political activities to influence government decisions and policies. Political participation is the activity of citizens as individuals with the aim of influencing government decision making, including selecting state leaders and directly. Maran (in Anshori, 2018), "the most well-known form of political participation is by voting, electing candidates for people's representatives, or electing the head of state". Participation can be classified into 2 (two), namely direct participation, namely participation that occurs when individuals carry out certain activities during the participation process. This participation occurs when people can express their views, discuss key issues, challenge the wishes or words of others. Next, indirect participation, namely participation that occurs when individuals delegate their rights to participate to others.

Citizen political participation is an important issue that a democratic country must have. citizens, including first voter, because young voters are potential voters and have quite a big influence in the democratic process. Within first voter, there are first-time voters. Suryatna (2011), novice voters who exercise their right to vote for the first time in a general election usually do not have broad political insight to decide which candidate they will choose. In such a situation, first-time voters are always the targets and goals of any candidate to gain their support. For first-time voters who are still exercising their right to vote, exposure to political advertising is a way to get to know the profiles, visions, missions and programs of candidates before they make their political choices.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative methodology with a descriptive approach. The method used in this research is a focus group discussion (FGD) by conducting systematic and focused discussions to discuss three main issues, namely first voter's understanding of elections, how first voters perceive political advertising in the media, and the impact of political advertising on voting rights. them in the upcoming 2024 election. FGD discussions were conducted with ten of young peoples aged 17-23 years who live in Jabodetabek. In general, they are also first voters who fall into the category of first-time voters, because during the previous election period they had never participated in the general election held in 2019.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### First voter's Understanding of Elections

The first question asked was the meaning of elections. All FGD participants know what elections are, namely an activity to elect the right person to lead a region or country for the development or progress of that region or country. Meanwhile, according to them, the purpose of the election itself is to elect someone who can lead a region or country. However, one respondent answered that the purpose of the election was a reflection of a democratic country and an opportunity for citizens to exercise their voting rights. The aim is to evaluate to select worthy leaders in the future.

When asked how they felt when they were able to take part in the election for the first time, there were various different feelings. There were those who were enthusiastic because it was the first time they could participate, use their own voting rights, see the different contestants. However, there are also those who are just normal, because they have participated in elections for regional heads and seen results that were not appropriate. There are also those who are a bit anxious, because they are afraid of choosing the wrong voters, because they haven't followed it intensely.

Meanwhile, male respondents already have an idea or picture of the political party or contestant they will choose, but this can still change and they will continue to monitor developments. Meanwhile, female respondents on average answered that they still had no idea, some were even not interested in following further.

### First voter's Perceptions of Political Advertisements

Some respondents understand what political advertising is. According to them, political advertising is marketing media or information media about political parties or

contestants, so that people can get to know political parties or contestants better and persuade them to vote. There are even those who say it is a medium for interaction with the public, especially for first-time voters because many people use social media.

The most interesting thing about political advertising is based on the opinions of respondents who mostly answered photos or visuals of the contestants themselves. This is so that voters can know who or what the person is like. Apart from that, respondents also saw differences between political advertisements in conventional media, such as banners and political advertisements on social media. For social media, they pay more attention to the content of messages or texts on social media. Funny or humorous things can also be attractive for political advertising.

Regarding visuals in political advertisements, all respondents answered that there must be a photo of the contestant if it is a contestant advertisement. Contestant photos must be formal, neat, pleasing to the eye, not many other graphics, have numbers (to make it easier when choosing), and if there is text it must be relevant to the photo or other visuals.

Meanwhile, what should be in political advertising, according to FGD participants, is the vision/mission (be it the vision/mission of contestants or political parties), not mentioning/vilifying other candidates, how to fulfill promises, a work program that is in line with people's wishes, a tagline so that people remember . not long-winded, simple. It would be better if there are real results/portfolio that have already been done.

#### The Impact of Political Advertising on First voter's Political Participation

All respondents answered firmly that they would definitely vote, using their voting rights as a responsibility or contribution as citizens, helping to reduce abstentions. Some even answered that this election was not an ordinary event because it cost a lot of state money.

The FGD participants hope that the 2024 General Election will be able to run without games, ballot fraud, run well, competition will be positive, open, healthy, honest, peaceful, without mutual suspicion, and can produce better elected leaders than the current one.

### CONCLUSION

The results of this research show that the first voters understand and understand what elections are and their objectives. Meanwhile, their participation in the 2024 elections is very large. So far they have seen and paid attention to political advertisements in both conventional media and social media. They themselves hope that from these political advertisements, they will be able to find out more about political parties or contestants in the 2024 election. So it can be concluded that political advertising can influence first voter

in choosing political parties or contestants in the 2024 elections. There is also a limitation of this research, namely that the FGD participants were only represented by ten first voter in Jakarta, so it was not enough to represent first voter as the main voters. The researcher's suggestion is to increase the number of FGD participants or add a survey via questionnaire to first voter as first-time voters in the 2024 elections.

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