



Political Education Strategy for Millennial Voters in Higher Education

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Abstract. This paper aims to produce concepts in the form of normative and theoretical ideas based on facts regarding the role of the millennial generation as novice voters who are faced with the 5.0 era as the evolutionary era of human civilization, where the community is expected to be able to solve social challenges and problems in the 4.0 industrial revolution era which is centered on technology. The author raises this topic because political decisions can affect all aspects of life, so the political awareness of this society must start from the younger generation as the holders of the baton. In addition, the participation of the younger generation in politics, especially the implementation of their voting rights, tends to be not maximized, so it needs to be strengthened in all aspects of both formal and non-formal education. This study shows that the strategy in implementing political education in universities for millennial voters is by; integration of the independent curriculum for independent campus learning and its implementation in the Tridharma of Higher Education, development of student organizations to facilitate political education, maximizing political practice through succession to internal campus organizations, forming democratic ambassadors through election events in each faculty who act as volunteers, to produce intelligent and rational voters.

Keywords: Political Education · Millennial Voters · Higher Education

1 Introduction

Society 5.0 can be called a form of evolution of human civilization, where it is hoped that the community can solve challenges and various social problems in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 which is centered on technology. The point is that in the Industrial Revolution the basis of development is measured through technological progress, on the contrary, in Society, the basis of development is measured through human civilization.

The Indonesian state to achieve every phase of civilization relies on leaders who are expected to bring change for the better, as well as progress in various aspects of life. This is certainly related to a democratic system to carry out the constitutional process through efforts to elect leaders. Democracy itself is a state principle whose implementation is different in each country. The spirit of democracy is highly respected because it contains the principle of protecting human rights, including guaranteeing political freedom.

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The world of politics in Indonesia, especially the process of selecting leaders at both the central and regional levels, has regulations (laws) that regulate it. Initially, in choosing state officials, it was only limited to legislative institutions, namely the DPR RI, Provincial DPRD and Regency, and City DPRD. However, over time and based on the Third Amendment to the Constitution (3rd amendment in 2001), direct presidential and vice presidential elections were also carried out starting in 2004. This provision is contained in Article 6A Paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia which “The President and the Vice President are elected in one pair directly by the people”. In addition to elections at the central level, in this case, the legislative and presidential elections, Regional Head Elections (Pilkada) are also held to elect Governors, Mayors, and Regents which are also carried out directly by the people in their regions. Meanwhile, in general, the implementation of the General Election and Regional Head Elections adheres to the principles of Direct, General, Free, Confidential, Honest and Fair, which is abbreviated as Luber-Jurdil.

Meanwhile, democracy according to Hans Kelsen is the will stated in the legal order of the country that is the same as the will of the legal subjects. Direct democracy is the highest degree, which is marked by the fact that the preparation of regulations and also the main executive and judicial functions are carried out by the people, namely in grand meetings (general meetings) [1]. Thus, democracy can also be said to be the form or mechanism of the state government system as an effort to realize the people’s sovereignty over the state, which is run by the ruler or government. William Andrews said the same thing [2], that the modern democratic state stands based on general agreement (the majority) of the people about the desired form of state. States are needed so that their interests can be protected through the establishment and use of ideal mechanisms.

Discussing political issues, there is an interesting term, namely “Direct Democracy” which functions to realize people’s sovereignty, where every citizen can express directly what is their opinion and even their wishes. This form can be said to be proportional because voters can deal directly with their representatives who will sit in parliament or at the top of the leadership later [3].

It is a common thing before the General Election and Regional Head Election, one of the topics discussed is the existence of Beginner Voters. They are Indonesian citizens who at the time of voting have reached the age of 17 years or more, or are married and have the right to vote based on the provisions of the Election Law. The characteristics of novice voters include; having never made a vote at a polling station, having no experience in voting, are not rational, full of turmoil and enthusiasm, wanting to know, and the important point is to be the target of election participants because they have a large enough number.

It is undeniable that novice voters are the target of election contestants, both political parties and their supporters. Election voters are considered vulnerable to influence and easy to direct and attract other friends. Most of the novice voters fall into the category of pseudo-backgrounds, who still follow suit like their peers, so they are prone to be influenced by their way of thinking. As the next generation, they must learn and be understood about the importance of elections to encourage a high sense of participation, because it is the first experience of participating in a democratic party that will determine the fate of the nation in the future.

Simultaneous elections will soon be held in 2024 to be exact on February 14. Two years from now, Indonesia will hold this democratic party, which will make the enthusiasm of politicians to compete to attract votes, especially for those who are beginners. Several surveys illustrate that the millennial generation, including Generation Z, is estimated to be the group with the largest portion in the election. Millennial voters are in the age range between 17 and 37 years, and it is predicted that this young voter will experience an increase. Referring to the 2019 election, KPU data shows the number of young voters reached 70 million to 80 million people out of a total of 193 million voters. This means that 35% to 40% of millennial voters have great power and influence on election results. However, other problems may occur where young voters have the opportunity to become contributors to Golput or not use their voting rights later in the 2024 election [4].

Meanwhile, based on data obtained from Kompas media, voters from the millennial generation and generation Z are predicted to dominate the 2024 election, were from the 2019 simultaneous election DPT voters aged 20 years reached 17,501,278 people, while those aged 21-30 years amounted to 42,843.792 people. Therefore, in the 2024 election later, the number of millennial and generation Z voters will increase by around 60 percent of the total vote[5].

In addition, based on a survey by the Research and Analytical team of Kompas Gramedia Media together with R&D, it shows that millennials are very enthusiastic, namely those with a birth range of 1981-1996 and generation Z who was born in 1997-2012 to take part in the 2024 simultaneous elections later. Based on the survey, as many as 86.7% stated their willingness to participate in the election later. While 10.7% are still weighing and another 2.6% refuse to follow suit. A telephone survey was also conducted to 3,224 respondents aged 17 to 40 years and spread over 80 electoral districts in early 2022, where the sample was taken using a random method and yielded a confidence level of up to 95%, while the margin in error was approximately 1.79 % of the election.

The enthusiasm of millennials and Generation Z in participating in elections appears in all electoral districts, where from 80 electoral districts grouped in 6 regions, it shows that the respondents' desire to participate is above 85%. For example, Bali 92%, Java 85%, Kalimantan 90%, Maluku and Papua 90%, Sulawesi 91% and Sumatra 86% [6]. The establishment of a voting schedule in the 2024 election provides certainty for candidates and contestants to formulate election strategies, especially in attracting novice voters or millennial voters.

Understanding this selector is very important, especially setting up the device to reach it. It is a distinct advantage of the existence of digital media in the form of social media, which is considered to be a powerful forum for attracting millennial voters as a community communication platform. The campaign strategy using social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Telegram, and so on is expected to be a liaison between candidates and constituents. Millennial voters can become popular among contestants, so they need to be equipped with a qualified political education so as not to bring harm to themselves and even extend to the country.

2 Research Method

The type of research used is normative research, supported by field data. According to Soerjono Soekanto, normative legal research includes research on legal principles, systematics, levels of vertical and horizontal synchronization, historical research, and comparative law [7]. Sudikno emphasized that, that normative or library research can stand alone and can also be supplemented by field research. The data obtained were arranged systematically to obtain a comprehensive picture, then processed using descriptive analytical techniques [8]. This technique is done by outlining or providing an overview and explanation, then analyzing it based on applicable theories and principles, making predictions and studying implications, and then concluding.

3 Result and Discussion

The lack of concern for politics by students is due to the assumption that students must be neutral in politics, even silenced by campus activities. Therefore, considering the importance of the role of students in determining the direction and future of the nation, they are required to have an understanding and education related to the world of politics. Usually in the world of campus, student participation in the presidential election of the Student Executive Board (BEM) is grouped into 3 possibilities, namely because of an invitation from a friend, the desire to demand a role for the elected, and bound by a binding regulation as a necessity.

Regarding the younger generation as millennial voters, especially in Higher Education, the focus is on Generation Z, namely those born in the range 1997 to 2012. The year of birth of Generation Z has several versions but for sure they have been exposed to access to technology and the internet from an early age. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency, the number of Generation Z in Indonesia reaches 74.93 million people, or 27.94 percent of the total population. Of course, these assets must be optimally empowered through political education. Therefore, the author describes several political education strategies for millennial voters in universities as follows:

3.1 The Integration of the Independent Learning Curriculum of the Independent Campus (MBKM) and its Implementation in the Tridharma of Higher Education

The Independent Learning Campus Independent Activity (MBKM) is a policy handed down by the Ministry of Education and Culture by providing a forum for students to hone their abilities according to their talents and interests, by going directly into the field and the world of work to prepare for their future careers. Learning in MBKM provides challenges as well as opportunities for developing creativity and capacity and even student needs, to create independence and find knowledge through realities and dynamics in the field. This method presents real problems and social interactions, so it is hoped that it can create higher education graduates who can compete and have strong character and independence.

This activity also provides opportunities for lecturers (educators) to support the activities of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education. In this regard, the provision of education in this case political education which is the task of lecturers to students is easier and more focused. As it is known that MBKM has 9 programs in it, namely;

- a. Student Exchange
- b. Internship/Internship
- c. Assistance in Teaching in Education Units
- d. Research/Research
- e. Humanitarian Project
- f. Entrepreneurial Activities
- g. Independent Study/Project
- h. Building a Village/Thematic Real Work Lecture
- i. Spare Components/KOMCAD

Through the above forum, political-related learning to students can be done through Internships at political institutions, both central and regional, as well as a form of implementation of service activities and even lecturer and student research. Not only that, through the Village Building program, students can learn how to run the government and power which is part of the political concept. Students and lecturers can learn together about how to grow democratic cultural life in the village, both in terms of substantial and procedural.

Through the implementation of this service, the village becomes an arena for democracy as well as a place to learn practical politics, both through national, regional, and village political agendas. Political education in the village, initiated by universities through the independent learning program, will certainly color the lives of students starting with the formation and implementation of small discussion groups, which begin with discussions from tolerance to tolerance in political activities. It should be remembered again that building state democracy begins with reviving village democracy so that it becomes a miniature state in political learning for students in the community and the field.

Likewise with internships in political institutions, such as the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) and the General Election Commission (KPU) to the National and Political Unity Agency (Kesbangpol). Political agendas such as general elections, regional elections to village head elections not only shape power, but also shape character attitudes in democratic life at the national, regional, and village levels. The colors of democracy are depicted from the political behavior of the people to the political actors themselves.

Students as future assets of the nation, need to be given political weight starting from giving direction and purpose in life to their role in carrying out political activities. Through internships at institutions, students indirectly learn to shape character by internalizing democratic values rooted in community culture, especially how to address problems by collaborating with every activity of political actors in the field. Lecturers who act as field supervisors reinforce their students in the field, including conducting research regarding the implications and effects of implementing democracy on the regional and national scale.

Therefore, political education for students can be realized through collaboration between universities and institutions, and villages, to optimize the implementation of the Tridharma PT which is integrated with the MBKM program as a unit. The main goal is to increase student knowledge, especially science in the world of politics, as well as the ability to carry out practical activities in the concept of building a complete democracy.

3.2 Developing Student Organizations and Maximizing Political Practices Through Internal Campus Succession

The movement of students before and after Indonesian independence has different characteristics, but has one vision, namely fighting for the interests of the people [9]. Student action is a practical political history of students in showing their identity as a strength, both moral and community service. The action arose among students and could not be separated from the strong relationship or relationship that always unites students, namely extra-campus organizations that provide opportunities for these activities [10]. Several things can involve the campus in the affairs and political life around it, namely:

- a. Campus efforts in realizing the role of a reformer in improving the living conditions of the community.
- b. The fact that the campus is a political resource, which provides a variety of potential both leadership and expertise, where political power requires it. It is this power that drags the campus into the current political process.
- c. The character and independence of the campus that grows through the process of scientific work, and critical thinking that encourages its citizens to assess and digest their surroundings.

In essence, the campus as a gathering place for the community with all its activities certainly has rules for life in its organization. Likewise, students as a large community in the campus environment have a forum or unit in developing their lives, including carrying out all activities, both training their abilities, including carrying out a planned business through internal organizations. This organization has various goals, both to create an atmosphere and directed learning process, to develop the potential to have intelligence, self-control, skills to what is needed by the community, nation, and state. The nursery in the formation of this activity and leadership is usually through the Student Executive Board, Faculty Student Associations to the Department level.

It is through these platforms that political education can be facilitated, by carrying out comprehensive development and assistance to student organizations. Various methods can be used to provide space for students to study political activities, and to later become millennial voter who is not only smart but can realize a good order of democratic values and understand the phenomena and dynamics that exist in society. Forms of education that can be obtained and become a space for political learning for students include;

- a. Managing intra-campus organizations such as BEM, Senat Fakultas, and HMJ by implementing a democratic culture starting from the process and determination of the candidate for chairman by prioritizing deliberation, equal rights, clean politics, and obeying all applicable rules.

- b. Promote a democratic culture in the process of socializing the candidate for chairman which is based on solidarity and honesty as well as togetherness.
- c. Support the process of electing the chairman by prioritizing equal rights, respecting each candidate, and the freedom of others in making their choice.
- d. implemented a polite democratic culture in determining the elected head of the organization by taking into account aspects of openness and transparency, consistency, and carrying out applicable procedures.

The important thing to do is to involve students in the election process to provide practical political lessons so that they understand the value of democracy and are more responsive to social problems. Student organizations are more empowered, especially to introduce political conditions and processes among students based on facts or realities on the ground. The aim is to raise political awareness for them to participate and contribute to the larger democratic process.

Through organizational means, the political process is clearly illustrated in front of students and then added with the provision of socialization and education by the person in charge of each Semi-Autonomous Body (BSO) on the importance of addressing the democratic process on campus. Through this forum, students through the BSO coaches are given weighting both candidates and voters in their respective majors on political values. Students are made aware of how they should be intra-campus members and more broadly community members who must participate in the country's political system. This understanding of students starts from the importance of caring for and fostering organizations, especially their position, function, and role in providing provisions outside of lecture activities, especially regarding political values.

3.3 Establishing Democracy Ambassadors Through Election Events in Every Faculty Who Act as Volunteers, to produce Intelligent and Rational Voters

Political education for students today needs to be carried out continuously and even massively to remind and even make them aware of their duties and responsibilities as novice voters living in the millennial era. This understanding is important to instill, to determine the dynamics of Indonesian politics in the future, which can be told by word of mouth like a normal story to other people. Therefore, the strategy that needs to be done is to organize and schedule the election of "Ambassadors of Democracy", to invite the nation's generation to understand and not be antipathetic to politics.

Looking at the data, most of the students are at a young age who have political rights and are referred to as millennial voters. Organizing this event (election of ambassadors) is a means of providing various information and education, especially regarding politics, both to fellow students and to the wider community. This ambassador will later be tasked with promoting the importance of democratic parties both in general elections, local elections, and village elections and conveying to all circles, especially to all students, about the political emergency to be maintained by upholding democratic principles and values.

Through this event, students will gain long experience and knowledge, especially regarding elections, where the material can be provided through education and training

(Diklat) organized by various groups and electoral organizations including universities. By following this selection process, students will indirectly learn the concepts and meanings contained in democracy and then internalize the values into actual practice.

An ambassador for democracy who is elected at this university will also position himself by taking a role in criticizing and even advocating for his friends to work together to create a democratic government, by participating in giving voting rights and using the opportunity to determine the direction of the country's development.

There are so many choices of ambassadors on campus, but at this time it still doesn't accommodate the ambassadors for democracy, which of course we can do in the future. Bearing in mind, this ambassador is not a competition to show off advantages but carries the mission of the country. Therefore, not only assisting novice voters in channeling their rights but also participating in easing the duties of election management bodies in general, as well as educational institutions in particular.

The importance of the presence of democratic ambassadors on campus is to social democratic parties including the election of leaders of intra-campus organizations, and the political process in general. Therefore, this activity not only puts forward a broad insight into politics but also teaches students to be smart in socializing with the surrounding environment. In addition, it is they who will act as volunteers, who will give birth to intelligent and rational voters among millennial voters in the university environment.

The election of these ambassadors can also revive the spirit of young people in participating in the democratic process in Indonesia, especially for millennials as novice voters. The concept of this event can be carried out using a formal or informal approach through the HMJ group or in general through BEM. Those who are elected will display the style and method of declaration to invite novice voters to actively participate, as well as become ambassadors who will inform election activities and regional elections that will be faced shortly.

4 Conclusion

To maximize political education for students as millennial voters in higher education, it is necessary to revitalize the conventional curriculum which is integrated with the independent learning program for independent campuses and its realization through the Tridharma of Higher Education. Furthermore, to develop student organizations to facilitate political education and maximize political practice through succession to internal campus organizations. In addition, it is necessary to form and organize elections for democratic ambassadors in every faculty to the university level, who act as volunteers or volunteers, to produce intelligent and rational voters among millennial voters.

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