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The Digital Political Revolution: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Based Political Campaigns on Voter Perceptions and Decisions in Generation Z In Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Rapid technological advances are transforming artificial intelligence (AI) into a very powerful tool in political campaigns, almost all digital platforms make it possible to personalize content and connect directly to voters. The purpose of this study is to explain the influence of AI-based political campaigns on the perceptions and decisions of Generation Z voters in Indonesia. This research uses a quantitative approach with a survey method to 395 respondents aged 17-29 years, active in various social media and participating in the 2024 Presidential Election. The results of the study explain that the effect of artificial intelligence (AI)-based political campaigns on perceptions is 91.5% and voter decisions is 96.7%, this explains that artificial intelligence (AI)-based political campaigns have a very significant influence on the perceptions and decisions of Generation Z voters in Indonesia. The practical implications of AI-based political campaigns include being able to personalize campaigns more effectively, optimizing campaign resources, managing candidate images, increasing voter interaction, and monitoring and regulating ethics.

Keywords: Political Campaign: Artificial Intelligence (AI); Generation Z; AI Influence; Voter Perception; Voter Decision

INTRODUCTION

The digital technology revolution has transformed various aspects of society, including political campaigns. As internet and social media usage increases, politicians and political parties increasingly rely on technology to reach and influence voters. Artificial intelligence (AI) has become a central technology in political campaigns (Stier, 2019). With its capacity to personalize political messages, analyze voter data deeply, and facilitate more direct and relevant connections through digital platforms, AI enhances the effectiveness of campaigns (Baldwin-Philippi, 2019).

The practice of translating data into successful campaign tactics and tools is made possible through AI applications for political parties and candidates. This shift in

the use of AI has significantly impacted data analysis methods and the choice of the right platforms for campaigns (Mirza, 2023). Political candidates rely heavily on campaign advertisements to gain votes, with these advertisements aimed at persuading voters and shaping their views on government programs. AI-powered political campaign ads now integrate voter information, preferences, and objectives collected from social media to assess and potentially sway public opinion (Leal & Filho, 2020).

Social and political change in many countries is increasingly driven by these technological advancements, with AI emerging as a key player in shaping new social and political dynamics. The use of AI in political campaigns has gained recent attention due to its potential to profoundly influence voter opinions and choices (Juliandi, 2023). However, the deployment of AI technology also presents ethical challenges, including data privacy concerns and the risk of manipulative practices. Controlling AI use in political campaigns is crucial to uphold accountability, fairness, and transparency (West, 2023).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on AI applications in political campaigns highlights several key examples. In Brazil's 2018 election, for instance, chatbots were deployed to influence public online discourse (FGV study). The 2020 Trump election app in the United States, developed by Phunware, is another example; it served as a gamified tool, news aggregator, and virtual event platform with extensive data collection (Rivera, 2020). AI has also sparked ethical concerns globally, with deepfake technology becoming a particularly contentious tool. In India, for example, a deepfake video of BJP President Manoj Tiwari manipulated public opinion by featuring him in various languages (Xavier, 2021).

In Indonesia, AI was employed by Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka in their campaign, with an AI avatar of Prabowo gaining widespread traction on social media and shaping voters' perception (Muliawati, 2024). Content creation and promotion in political campaigns have shown a considerable impact on election outcomes (Públicas & Ruediger, 2017).

The body of literature also examines AI’s advantages and disadvantages in political campaigns. AI’s advantages include targeted voter engagement and efficient campaign resource management through data analysis and behavioral prediction (Trasys International, 2021). However, ethical issues such as data privacy violations and potential misuse of AI for manipulation raise concerns about the integrity of AI-driven campaigns (West, 2023). In Indonesia, no specific regulations yet govern AI use in political campaigns, though emerging discourse highlights the need to establish controls to protect vulnerable demographics from information manipulation (Bahri et al., 2024).

Several studies have further examined AI's impact on younger, digitally native generations. For instance, according to CSIS (2023), over half of Indonesia's voters will be under 40 by 2023. Generation Z's familiarity with digital platforms and their skepticism toward political messages make them a crucial demographic in AI-enabled campaigns. Heesen et al. (2021) highlight three critical factors affecting AI's influence on voting: AI-based information dissemination, personality profiling for personalized ads, and deepfake content creation.

Finally, Tomič et al. (2023) identify ten key implications of AI in political campaigns, from Big Data analysis and chatbots to real-time ads and personalized donation recommendations. While AI use in political campaigns is widely researched, studies on its impact on Generation Z in Indonesia remain limited, particularly concerning ethical risks, such as privacy violations and information manipulation. This research aims to address these gaps by investigating the perceptions and decisions of Indonesian Gen Z voters in response to AI-based political campaigns, contributing both theoretically and in policy recommendations for maintaining democratic integrity in a digital age.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study employs a quantitative, descriptive survey method aimed at capturing Generation Z voters' perceptions and decisions regarding AI-based political campaigns. The survey was conducted via an online questionnaire distributed through Google Forms, measuring three variables: AI-Based Political Campaigns (Variable X), Generation Z Voter Perceptions (Variable Y1), and Generation Z Voter Decisions (Variable Y2). The sample comprises 395 Indonesian Gen Z voters (aged 17-29) who participated in the 2024 presidential election, are active social media users, and have encountered an AI-based campaign ad from the Prabowo-Gibran team. A purposive sampling technique ensured participants met these specific criteria.

Instrument and Procedure

The research instrument is a structured questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale to measure agreement with statements related to the research variables. Validity and reliability tests confirmed that all questionnaire items are valid (rcount > rtable) and reliable (Cronbach's Alpha ≥ 0.7). The questionnaire was distributed over one week through social media and messaging platforms, with reminders sent to increase the response rate. Data was processed using SPSS version 27.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involved descriptive and inferential methods. Descriptive statistics summarized respondent characteristics and responses to each item. Simple linear regression measured the relationship between the independent variable (AI-Based Political Campaigns) and dependent variables (Generation Z Voter Perceptions and Decisions). R Square values evaluated the extent to which AI campaign variables explained variability in perceptions and decisions, while an ANOVA test assessed the statistical significance of the regression model.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study involved 395 respondents spread across Indonesia, with the main criteria being voters who participated in the 2024 Presidential Election, aged between 17 and 29 years, and actively using social media such as TikTok, Instagram, X (Twitter), or Facebook. The selection of respondents was carried out using purposive sampling technique by considering characteristics relevant to the research objectives. The majority of respondents were in the age range of 21-25 years (52%), followed by respondents aged 17-20 years (32%), and 26-29 years (16%). This age range was chosen because the age group is considered part of Generation Z, which is the focus of the research. 54% of respondents were female and 46% were male. This difference provides an overview of gender representation in political perceptions and decisions among Generation Z.

The education level of the respondents varied, with most of the 68% being at the tertiary education level (S1 or diploma), while 30% of the respondents had a high school educational background or equivalent, and another 2% were pursuing postgraduate education. This data shows that the majority of respondents are educated people who usually have good access to political information. Almost all respondents (95%) claimed to actively use social media every day, with the most used platform being TikTok (45%), followed by Instagram (30%), X (Twitter) (15%), and Facebook (10%). This intensity of social media use is an important factor in analyzing the influence of AI-based political campaigns on this generation. As many as 98% of respondents claimed to have seen the AI-based campaign advertisement of candidate pair Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka known as "Gemoy." While the other 2% had never seen or were aware of the existence of the campaign. This shows the level of penetration of AI campaigns among young voters and its potential to shape their perceptions and political decisions.

Descriptive Analysis of AI Political Campaign

The results of the descriptive analysis show that respondents generally have a very positive perception of AI-based political campaigns, with all statements in this variable having an average value above 4 (four). This indicates that respondents tend to agree or strongly agree that AI plays an important role in political campaigns. The relatively low standard deviation, ranging from 0.5 to 0.8, reflects

that respondents' responses are fairly consistent, although there is slight variation in responses to some statements, such as P8, indicating a greater diversity of views.

Kampanye Politik AI (Variabel X)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
P1	395	3,00	5,00	4,2405	,59215	,351
P2	395	3,00	5,00	4,2506	,60913	,371
P3	395	3,00	5,00	4,2633	,60164	,362
P4	395	3,00	5,00	4,2911	,59079	,349
P5	395	3,00	5,00	4,2278	,59074	,349
P6	395	3,00	5,00	4,1646	,53862	,290
P7	395	3,00	5,00	4,2582	,57807	,334
P8	395	2,00	5,00	4,2684	,82713	,684
P9	395	3,00	5,00	4,2785	,58615	,344
P10	395	3,00	5,00	4,2354	,59418	,353
Valid N (listwise)	395					

Table 3. Results of Descriptive Analysis of Variable X
Source: Processed by researchers

Statement	Descriptive Analysis
P1	Most respondents frequently see personalized political ads on social media, demonstrating the effectiveness of AI in reaching them.
P2	Interactions with political chatbots are quite frequent, with most respondents agreeing to have experienced them.
P3	Respondents often receive campaign messages tailored to their interests via email or messaging apps.
P4	Many respondents were familiar with campaign videos that used deepfake technology, indicating a high awareness of this technology.
P5	Most respondents often receive political content recommendations according to their preferences on streaming platforms.
P6	Many respondents are aware of political ads that change in real-time based on current news.
P7	Respondents showed strong engagement with AI-based virtual assistants from political parties or candidates.
P8	Political donation recommendations tailored to donation history were quite common among respondents.

P9	Online political surveys using AI are quite familiar to respondents, although there are variations in experience.
P10	Many respondents frequently see infographics or campaign data visualizations generated by AI, indicating an increased use of this technology.

Descriptive Analysis of Voter Perceptions (Y1 Variable)

Respondents also showed a positive perception of the influence of AI in politics, with the mean score for all statements in this variable being above 4. This suggests that Generation Z generally has a favorable view of the use of AI in political campaigns. The standard deviations for these statements range from 0.5 to 0.7, indicating moderate variation in responses. In particular, statement P17 shows greater variation, which may indicate more significant differences in perception among respondents towards certain aspects of AI campaigns.

Persepsi Pemiih (Variabel Y1)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
P21	395	3,00	5,00	4,1949	,59180	,350
P22	395	3,00	5,00	4,2835	,60506	,366
P23	395	3,00	5,00	4,2304	,60463	,366
P24	395	3,00	5,00	4,2228	,63405	,402
P25	395	3,00	5,00	4,2658	,60683	,368
P26	395	3,00	5,00	4,1772	,54632	,298
P27	395	3,00	5,00	4,2709	,58322	,340
P28	395	2,00	5,00	4,2405	,81258	,660
P29	395	3,00	5,00	4,2886	,58989	,348
P30	395	3,00	5,00	4,2405	,55223	,305
Valid N (listwise)	395					

Table 4. Results of Descriptive Analysis of Variable Y1
Source: Processed by researchers

Statement	Descriptive Analysis
P11	Most respondents were more interested in political issues after being exposed to AI-based campaigns.
P12	Respondents felt more inspired to participate in political discussions after being exposed to AI in the campaign.
P13	AI is considered effective in conveying information relevant to respondents' needs.

P14	Many respondents felt that political content personalized by AI matched their interests and priorities.
P15	Respondents trust candidates or parties that use AI in their campaigns more.
P16	AI enhances the image of candidates as more progressive and competent in the eyes of respondents.
P17	Respondents agreed that AI-based campaigns are more effective in delivering political messages.
P18	The messages delivered by AI are easier for respondents to understand and remember.
P19	Respondents were concerned about the privacy of their data regarding the use of AI in political campaigns.
P20	Many respondents were uncomfortable with AI collecting personal data for campaign purposes.

Descriptive Analysis of Voter Decisions (Y2 Variable)

Descriptive analysis for the Generation Z voter decision variable shows that their political decisions are significantly influenced by AI campaigns, with all mean scores above 4. This suggests that respondents generally agree that AI influences their political decisions. Standard deviations that mostly fall between 0.5 to 0.6 indicate good consistency in responses, although there is some variation in responses to statement P28, reflecting greater disagreement among respondents regarding the influence of AI on their voting decisions.

Keputusan Pemiih (Variabel Y2)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
P21	395	3,00	5,00	4,1949	,59180	,350
P22	395	3,00	5,00	4,2835	,60506	,366
P23	395	3,00	5,00	4,2304	,60463	,366
P24	395	3,00	5,00	4,2228	,63405	,402
P25	395	3,00	5,00	4,2658	,60683	,368
P26	395	3,00	5,00	4,1772	,54632	,298
P27	395	3,00	5,00	4,2709	,58322	,340
P28	395	2,00	5,00	4,2405	,81258	,660
P29	395	3,00	5,00	4,2886	,58989	,348
P30	395	3,00	5,00	4,2405	,55223	,305
Valid N (listwise)	395					

Table 5. Results of Descriptive Analysis of Y2 Variables
Source: Processed by researchers

Statement	Descriptive Analysis
P21	Most respondents felt that the use of AI in political campaigns significantly influenced their political choices.
P22	Campaign messages personalized by AI were shown to influence respondents' political views.
P23	Respondents are more likely to vote for candidates who use AI technology in their campaigns.
P24	Many respondents are more interested in candidates who use and understand AI technology in their political strategies.
P25	Information from AI-based campaigns helps respondents make more informed political decisions.
P26	The data analysis presented by AI in the campaign improved respondents' understanding of important issues.
P27	AI-based campaigns increased respondents' intention to participate in the election.
P28	Interaction with the AI chatbot increased respondents' interest in becoming more involved in the voting process.
P29	The use of AI in campaigns made respondents more confident in their political choices.
P30	Recommendations from the AI system in the campaign strengthened respondents' confidence in the chosen candidate.

Regression Analysis of AI Political Campaign on Voter Perception (Y1)

The results of the analysis show that there is a very strong relationship between AI-based Political Campaigns and Generation Z Voter Perceptions, which is reflected in the R value of 0.957. This indicates that the more intensive the use of AI in the campaign, the stronger the influence on voter perceptions. The R Square value of 0.915 indicates that 91.5% of the variability in Generation Z Voter Perception can be explained by AI-based Political Campaigns. In other words, the regression model used is very effective in explaining how AI affects voter perception. This means that only 8.5% of the variability in perception is due to other factors that are not explained by this model. The standard error of the estimate of 1.04005 indicates that the predictions made by this model have a relatively low level of uncertainty, indicating good accuracy in estimating voter perceptions.

Summary (Kampanye Politik AI > Persepsi Pemilih)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,957[a]	,915	,915	1,04005

a. Predictors: (Constant), X

Table 6. R Square Results of Variable X Against Y1
Source: Processed by Researcher

The ANOVA test results yielded an F value of 4233.663 with a p value of <0.001. This indicates that the overall regression model is highly statistically significant. That is, there is strong evidence that AI-Based Political Campaigns do have a noticeable influence on Generation Z Voters' Perceptions. These results reinforce the belief that AI plays an important role in shaping political opinions among young voters.

ANOVA (Kampanye Politik AI > Persepsi Pemilih)[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4579,606	1	4579,606	4233,663	<,001[b]
	Residual	425,113	393	1,082		
	Total	5004,719	394			

a. Dependent Variable: Y1

b. Predictors: (Constant), X

Table 7. ANOVA Results of Variable X on Y1
Source: Processed by researchers

The model constant of 3.185 with a p value of <0.001 indicates that when there is no influence of AI Campaign (value of X=0), Generation Z Voters' Perception remains at a moderately positive level, with an average value of 3.185. This indicates that there is a basic positive perception of political campaigns, even without AI intervention. The regression coefficient of 0.925 with a p value of <0.001 indicates that every one unit increase in the intensity of AI-Based Political Campaigns will increase Generation Z Voters' Perceptions by 0.925 units. This suggests that AI is not only influential, but has a significant and substantial impact on how young voters perceive political campaigns. The t-value of 65.067 further corroborates that this effect is highly significant.

Coefficients (Kampanye Politik AI > Persepsi Pemilih)[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	3,185	,606		5,252	<,001
	X	,925	,014	,957	65,067	<,001

a. Dependent Variable: Y1

Table 8. Results of the Coefficient of Variable X on Y2

Source: Processed by Researcher

These regression results clearly show that AI-Based Political Campaigns have a very strong and significant influence on Generation Z Voter Perceptions. With a very high R Square, the model can explain almost all of the variation in voter perceptions associated with the use of AI in political campaigns. This finding confirms that AI plays a key role in shaping political perceptions among young voters. The use of AI in political campaigns not only increases the effectiveness of message delivery but is also capable of significantly influencing voter opinions and attitudes. It enables more targeted and personalized campaigns, which in turn can increase voter engagement and participation. Thus, the application of AI in political campaigns is not just a technological innovation, but also a crucial strategy to win the hearts and minds of a younger, more tech-savvy generation of voters.

Regression Analysis of AI Political Campaign on Voter Decision (Y2)

The R value of 0.983 indicates a very strong relationship between AI-based Political Campaigns and Generation Z Voter Decisions. This means that the stronger the influence of AI campaigns, the greater the impact on voter political decisions. With an R Square value of 0.967, this regression model is able to explain 96.7% of the variability in Generation Z Voter Decision based on the AI-Based Political Campaign variable. This indicates that the model is very effective in predicting voter decisions, with only 3.3% of the decision variability caused by other factors not included in the model.

The standard error of the estimate of 0.70051 indicates that the model has high predictive accuracy, with a relatively small error rate in estimating voter decisions.

Summary (Kampanye Politik AI > Keputusan Pemilih)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,983[a]	,967	,967	,70051

a. Predictors: (Constant), X

Table 9. R Square Results of Variable X Against Y2

Source: Processed by Researcher

The ANOVA test results provide an F value of 11,479.572 with a p value <0.001, indicating that this regression model is highly statistically significant. This confirms that AI-based Political Campaigns have a very real and strong influence on Generation Z Voter Decision. This result reinforces the belief that AI is an important factor in shaping young voters' political decisions.

ANOVA (Kampanye Politik AI > Keputusan Pemilih)[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5633,224	1	5633,224	11479,572	<,001[b]
	Residual	192,852	393	,491		
	Total	5826,076	394			

a. Dependent Variable: Y2

b. Predictors: (Constant), X

Table 10. ANOVA Results of Variable X against Y2
Source: Processed by researchers

The constant value of -1.176 with a p-value of 0.004 indicates that without the influence of AI Campaign (X=0), Generation Z Voters' Decision tends to be negative. This could mean that without AI technology in the campaign, voters' political decisions may be less favorable to candidates or parties. The regression coefficient for variable X is 1.026 with a p-value <0.001. This means that every one unit increase in the intensity of AI-Based Political Campaigns will increase Generation Z Voter Decision by 1.026 units. The t-value of 107.143 indicates that this effect is highly statistically significant.

Coefficients (Kampanye Politik AI > Keputusan Pemilih)[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-1,176	,408		-2,881	,004
	X	1,026	,010	,983	107,143	<,001

a. Dependent Variable: Y2

Table 11: Results of the Coefficient of Variable X on Y2
Source: Processed by Researcher

The results of this regression analysis show that AI-Based Political Campaigns have a highly significant and strong influence on Generation Z Voter Decision. With a very high R Square value, this model shows that most of the variation in voter political decisions can be explained by the AI Campaign variable. This confirms that AI not only affects perceptions, but also directly affects voter decisions. The use of AI in political campaigns, capable of targeting voters with personalized and relevant messages, has been shown to significantly influence voters' final decisions. This emphasizes the importance of technology in modern campaign strategies, where younger voters, who are more familiar with technology, show a very positive response to AI-based approaches.

The widespread use of artificial intelligence (AI) in political campaigns has reshaped campaign strategies and influenced voter responses, particularly among Indonesia's Generation Z. This study underscores AI's impact on Gen Z voters' perceptions and decisions in Indonesia, supporting Tomič et al. (2023) findings on AI's ten key implications in political campaigns. Aligning with prior studies by

Públicas & Ruediger (2017) and Rivera (2020), our research shows that AI-driven personalization and data analysis substantially shape public opinion, validating the role of advanced technologies in shaping voter attitudes. Notably, the high R Square values—91.5% for perception and 96.7% for decision—illustrate AI's potential in influencing electoral dynamics even in developing nations like Indonesia, where digital technology adoption is growing rapidly. Beyond previous research focusing on AI's risks, such as manipulation and disinformation, this study highlights AI's potential to create a more relatable candidate image for young voters. This supports AI as a valuable tool for crafting relevant, progressive candidate profiles, as seen in Indonesia's "Gemoy" campaign, which successfully reshaped candidate Prabowo's image to appeal to Gen Z.

The findings of this research present several practical implications for politicians and political parties in Indonesia. First, AI enables more effective campaign personalization by targeting people based on preferences and interests, allowing political campaigns to tailor communications effectively. Big data analysis through AI helps identify issues relevant to groups like Generation Z, enabling campaigns to deliver focused messages that boost engagement. Gen Z, being digital natives, responds well to ads that feel customized to their interests, enhancing their connection to campaign messages.

AI also improves resource optimization in political campaigns. By projecting voter behavior more accurately, AI allows campaigns to focus resources—such as time, money, and effort—on groups or locations most likely to offer support. This not only increases campaign efficiency but also maximizes returns. Demographic and behavioral data analysis helps determine priority areas, allowing for more strategic and efficient distribution of resources. Moreover, AI supports more progressive candidate image management, crucial in a digitalized political landscape. Technologies like deepfakes allow for the creation of digital avatars that align with the expectations of younger voters. The "Gemoy" campaign in Indonesia exemplifies this by using AI to craft a more playful and relatable image for candidates, appealing to young voters' preferences for creative, interactive content.

AI also fosters increased voter interaction by providing more personal and direct engagement. Chatbots and virtual assistants powered by AI can answer voter questions, supply candidate information, and remind voters of election dates, strengthening voter-candidate relationships and potentially boosting election turnout. Lastly, while AI offers numerous advantages, it raises significant ethical concerns, especially around data privacy and potential information manipulation. Legislators should establish stringent regulations to govern AI use in political campaigns, including data privacy protections and limitations on deepfake technology. Furthermore, enhancing voter digital literacy is essential, enabling citizens to critically assess AI-generated content.

This research, however, faces some limitations. First, the purposive sampling method may not fully represent the entire Indonesian Gen Z population. The sample

size of 395 respondents, though sufficient, may also lack broad regional and demographic representation. Additionally, online data collection could introduce respondent bias, as active social media users may differ in opinions from those less active, potentially skewing results toward a more digitally connected population. Lastly, the findings primarily pertain to Gen Z voters who actively use social media and are engaged in the 2024 election, limiting generalizability to older generations or those less experienced with digital technology.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights the strong impact of AI-based political campaigns on the perceptions and decisions of Indonesian Gen Z voters. The study reveals that AI's role in political campaigns explains 91.5% of the variability in voter perceptions and 96.7% in voter decisions, showing that tech-savvy young voters are highly influenced by AI. AI has proven effective in personalizing messages, making them more relevant and memorable, as demonstrated by the Prabowo-Gibran campaign, which used AI to shape a progressive, relatable candidate image that resonated with youth. While AI offers advantages for campaign success, this research also underscores essential ethical concerns. Data privacy and potential manipulation are critical issues that require policymakers' attention to ensure a fair and transparent democratic process. Strengthening political education for Gen Z is also vital, enabling them to critically assess AI-driven content for better-informed decision-making. Overall, this study enriches the understanding of technology's role in politics and provides valuable insights for political practitioners and lawmakers on using AI responsibly for the benefit of society.

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