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To What Extent Political Education Can Influence Young Voters' Perceptions?

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ABSTRACT

This paper sought to examine the influence of the political education program on young voters' perceptions in responding to a threefold issue: democracy, election, and political parties. By applying a quantitative method, this research employs a regional survey to gather data through a series of intensive training for university students with 17 to 24 in age. There are 37 questions, of which 68 valid respondents shall answer before the training (pre-test) and after the training (post-test). The finding reveals that intensive political education has an authoritative influence in transforming young voters' perceptions of those issues. It can be proven that most young voters' perceptions increased from pre-test to post-test. When positive perceptions reached 56.76% in the pre-test, they changed dramatically to 94.59% in the post-test. Conversely, negative perceptions declined from 43.24% in the pre-test to 5.41% in the post-test. This indicates that young voters believe in the fruitfulness and effectiveness of the political education program in constructing the way of thinking and behaving comprehensively toward those three issues. Therefore, this paper not only recommends but also strongly demands that all stakeholders organize such a political education earnestly for young voters to generate future generations who participate in consolidating the democratic fate.

Keywords: Young voters, political education, perception, democracy, Indonesia

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini merupakan sebuah usaha mengkaji pengaruh program pendidikan politik terhadap persepsi pemilih pemula dalam merespon tiga isu, yaitu demokrasi, pemilu, dan partai politik. Dengan menggunakan metode penelitian kuantitatif, studi ini menggunakan teknik survei yang dilakukan secara regional untuk mengumpulkan data melalui serangkaian pelatihan yang intensif terhadap mahasiswa dengan usia antara 17 dan 24 tahun. Ada 37 pertanyaan di mana 68 responden yang valid harus menjawab sebelum pelatihan (pre-test) dan setelah pelatihan (post-test). Temuan studi ini menunjukkan, bahwa program pendidikan politik yang dilakukan secara intensif memiliki pengaruh yang luar biasa dalam merubah persepsi pemilih pemula terhadap tiga isu tersebut. Ini dibuktikan dengan hasil survei, bahwa mayoritas persepsi responden mengalami peningkatan dari saat pre-test ke post-test. Ketika persepsi positif hanya di prosentase 56,76% saat pre-test, persepsi tersebut meningkat tajam ke prosentase 94,59% saat post-test. Sebaliknya, persepsi negatif turun dari prosentase 43,24% saat pre-test ke prosentase 5,41% saat post-test. Hal ini menunjukkan kenyataan, bahwa pemilih pemula yakin terhadap keberhasilan dan efektivitas program pendidikan politik dalam membentuk cara berfikir dan bertindak yang komprehensif terhadap tiga isu tersebut. Oleh karena itu, artikel ini tidak hanya merekomendasikan tetapi juga meminta secara kuat terhadap sejumlah pihak yang terkait untuk menyelenggarakan program pendidikan politik secara serius terhadap para pemilih pemula agar dapat melahirkan generasi masa depan yang memiliki komitmen untuk mengonsolidasikan nasib demokrasi.

Kata Kunci: Pemilih pemula, pendidikan politik, persepsi, demokrasi, Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian democratisation can be traced back to the period of parliamentary democracy between 1949 and 1957 (Feith, 1962). The second moment of democratisation took place on 1998 with the downfall of President Soeharto through a reformation movement. Schuck (2007) posited that the collapse of such a dictatorial rule occurred for three reasons: the high degree of nepotism by Soeharto and his cronies, the vast dissatisfaction among the inhabitants, the leading elites in Golkar encouraging the reformation movement where the protests emerged from the grassroots-level.

Some scientists put forward that despite many developments in Indonesian democratisation, the weaknesses occur in five arenas: civil society, political society, rule of law, state bureaucratic performance and economic society alike (Abuza, 2007; Bünte & Ufen, 2009; Ufen, 2009; Aspinall, 2010; Liddle & Mujani, 2013). Hence, Magnis-Suseno (2013: pp.30-35) argues that democracy in Indonesia still copes with five main challenges: anti-pluralism, ongoing impunity of perpetrators of violations of human rights, extreme regionalism or regional separatism, social injustice and rampant corruption embracing bribery. Moreover, Ramage (2007) confirms that Indonesia in 2006 was "a normal country and quite strong on the politics, security and democracy". Merkel (2007) classifies Indonesia as "the domain democracy". 'Veto powers' such as the military, guerrillas, militia, entrepreneurs, landlords, or multi-national corporations take certain political domains outside the elected representatives. Meanwhile, Mietzner (2009) identifies Indonesia as "low-quality democracies" and Tan (2012) labels it between 1998 and 2008 as "the reign of the parties". Moreover, due to the increase of oligarchic power and the feeble legal officials in various political aspects, Winters (2013) calculates that the prospect of democratic consolidation in Indonesia is equally grim.

Other scientists are optimistic that Indonesian society will encourage democratic and plural cultures. Hefner (2000; 2009a; 2009b) is confident that sociologically and anthropologically Indonesia still commands significant resources for democratic citizenship, civil decency and pluralist participation, although a number of "uncivil societies" have been emerging in political life. This simple and valuable wish will remain a powerful force in public politics and religion for years to come. Similarly, Mujani (2003) concurs that Islam and Muslims did not have a negative association with the components of democracy. Almost all components of Islam have a positive relationship with secular civic engagement, political engagement and political participation. Furthermore, Abdulbaki (2008) also stated that neither Islam nor Islamic activism constitute an obstacle to democracy. Thus, Diamond (2010) states that Indonesia from 1998 to 2009 is a free country and a more vigorous, stable and legitimate democracy.

Mujani & Liddle (2009) postulates the dominance of secular parties in Indonesia is a good sign for short-term democratic stability. Thus, Liddle (2013) underlines that if Indonesians do increase and distribute political resources more equally, an imagined democracy will be achieved. Moreover, Aspinall (2013) investigates Indonesian democracy by comparative views on state disintegration and democratic integration. Indonesian experiences in the case of Aceh, East Timor, and Papua display that state structures which accommodate ethnic and regional diversity may be a source of state fragility during democratisation, but it can be a source of democratic robustness indicating that Indonesia has obtained democratic progress and state survival. Therefore, Mietzner (2013) is optimistic that Indonesian democratic journey has been a surprising success, but there is no guarantee that the country's democracy will survive in the future if its parties remain financially unsustainable as reform of party financing is essential.

Mietzner (2014a) mentions three main reasons that Indonesia's democracy will survive. First, although significant discontents were had in the 2014 election, political and economic conditions have been stable. Most people were satisfied with the way in which the government and the democratic system were working. Second, Jokowi is a humble official who did not originate from the country's conventional elite. His experiences also demonstrate that he embodied the desire of ordinary voters to be ruled by one of their own. Third, there is a common tendency that people prefer to choose the leaders who promised to undertake the hazardous trial of restoring Indonesia's pre-democratic order. Globally, Mietzner (2014b) compared Indonesia's successful democratic transition to the failed one in Egypt.

The Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) report demonstrates that Indonesia between 2007 and 2022 was classified as a flawed democracy. This state still has free and fair elections, despite many problems such as infringements on media freedom. In addition, basic civil liberties are respected. Nonetheless, weaknesses remain significant in some aspects of democracy, including problems in governance, an underdeveloped political culture and low levels of political participation. Freedom House's annual report reveals that from 2006 to 2013 Indonesia was categorised as "a democratic state". During this period, Indonesia was classified as the most consolidated democracy in Southeast Asia. Its position declined to "a semi-democratic state" from 2014 to 2022 due to the weakening of the rate of civil liberties.

Based on such situation, one of the most critical actors in consolidating democracy is young voters. They are potential assets for future leaders. They will lead a nation for at least two or three decades later. We, indeed, need to educate them to recognize the previous history of the state's founding fathers. Therefore, providing a political education for young voters is inevitable; they have a comprehensive understanding of democracy, electoral systems, and party systems. These three issues are rudimentary, which young voters shall

know from various perspectives (Al-Hamdi & Sofyan, 2022). By having the three issues, such voters have mature thoughts in responding to political dynamics and do not neglect the democratization process inside the country.

Numerous references to young voters are spreading in the literature source. This paper limits relevant sources in the Scopus database. By using the word "young voters", 62 documents were found in Scopus from 2000 to 2022. Figure 1 demonstrates an overlay visualization which denotes a network visualization. There is a different color among particles which symbolizes publication trends. The magnitude of each particle is also different. Blue denotes the earlier trend, while green and yellow represent recent trends (van Eck & Waltman, 2020).

It can be known that Figure 1 reveals that the discussion on young voters in recent years tends to investigate the issues related to the election, political participation, voter turnout, education, social media, political interest, electoral geography, and political geography. It implies that the latest issue of young voters has a rigorous tie with the election, political education, and voter turnout. It is consistent with the existing literature presented here.
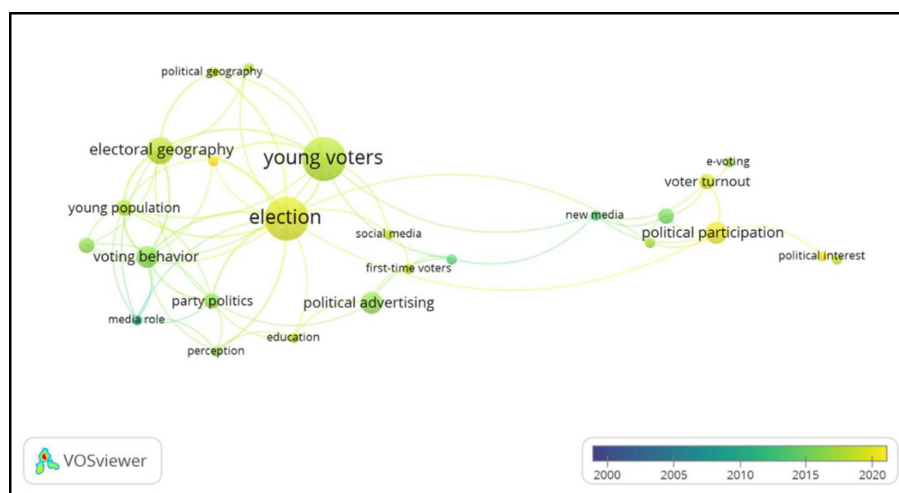
Figure 1. Overlay Visualization related to Young Voters
Source: It was processed by the VOSviewer platform.

A national survey in the United States shows the importance of civic education in secondary schools, which denotes an essential positive correlation between taking a civics course in high schools and extracurricular participation and the increased voter turnout among pupils (Siegel-Stechler, 2108). Still, in the United States, using data from a 2012 CIRCLE survey of 18-24-year-olds, Clark (2016) postulated that young voters who report

a high number of quality civic education experiences and a highly democratic school climate demonstrate a decreased likelihood of extreme political alignment.

Moreover, a survey of 297 South Korean students shows that using radio and the internet for political information can minimize cynicism. The use of radio increases inefficacy. In the meantime, the use of newspapers lowers inefficacy. This signifies that media content-related negativism can increase cynicism and decrease inefficacy (Lin & Lim, 2014). In the meantime, most young Indonesian voters have poor political knowledge of electoral systems. The gender gap is still existing in both political knowledge and preferences. It can be seen from the research conducted by Prihatini (2018), which found that roughly 75% of respondents incline to vote for male over female candidates.

Other studies tend to illustrate young voters' perceptions, positions, and responses toward any political issues from distinctive perspectives. Among numerous scholarly papers, some are displayed here. Do young voters vote for young leaders? Sevi (2020) proved that merely a small number of young voters would vote for such leaders. It indicates that the preference of young voters are diverse and not because of being closer to them in age. Thus, there is no guarantee that popular candidates align with their electability. Afterward, based on 219 national election surveys, it can be known that young voters have the power to influence older citizens in the electoral competition. It indicates that young voters can set trends to fuel electoral volatility (Rekker, 2022). In a different context, young voters are much less prospective to be designated for contact when campaigns depend on microtargeted data. In contrast, older voters are more likely to be contacted under geographic and microtargeting strategies (Endres & Kelly, 2017).

A survey was conducted in the Astrakhan region of the Russian Federation among young voters aged 18 to 19. The finding indicates that young voters prefer to promote e-voting because it is more convenient for voters with health problems, busy times, and no free time. By applying e-voting, postal voting, and three-day voting, the voter turnout of young voters is increasing (Marmilova, Kashirskaya, Karabasheva, & Kudryashova, 2021). Furthermore, a study by Levine, Clark, Haygood, & Muenchen (2011) demonstrated that during the 2008 American presidential election, young voters could interpret presidential candidates' campaign messages using the word *change*. It indicates the effective strategy of those candidates in delivering their messages to mainly young voters. Moreover, an experiment on how anti-immigrant right-wing populist advertisements influence young voters was carried out on 162 pupils across Europe by Schmuck & Matthes (2025). The finding reveals that the symbolic and economic threat ads can induce highly negative attitudes of young voters toward immigrants. Nonetheless, the economic threat ad was merely effective for young voters with lower compared to higher educational degrees.

A study by Tariq, Zolkepli, & Ahmad (2022) in Pakistan explains that political effectiveness cannot influence offline political participation and can mediate between social media usage and offline political participation. Meanwhile, based on a comparative study, young voters in Chile and Spain demonstrated their distrust of the existing democratic system inside the state. While unconventional political activities increase (offline and online), unfortunately, voter turnout decrease. In addition, although many students use social media to follow politicians' activities, this use is still low compared to other public figures (Sola-Morales & Hernández-Santaolalla, 2017). In addition to that, in dealing with the 2008 Malaysian election, young voters tended to vote for candidates based on their profile, images and personal features, visions and missions, educational backgrounds, and 'clean' in all aspects (Noordin, Sawal, Ibrahim, Hussin, Zakaria, & Nordin, 2010).

A regional survey was also conducted in Indonesia, illustrating that young voters adequately perceive the 2014 electoral integrity. A good perception is merely for political parties and the electoral mechanisms. Furthermore, young voters believe only the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) did not trust two institutions: political parties and the legislative wing (Al-Hamdi, Suranto, Widodo, Sulaksono, & Darumurti, 2014). Based on the 2019 Indonesian presidential election, affective intelligence engages young voters as they react to the symbolic communications of the presidential candidates and start to decide their judgments based on trust (Susila, Dean, Yusof, Setyawan, & Wajdi, 2019). Moreover, employing binominal logistic regression analysis, married young citizens are more likely to vote than those who are not married. Nevertheless, the marriage gap exists in the parliamentary and presidential elections because marital status reduces in regional elections (Halimatusa'diyah & Prihatini, 2021).

Differentiated from earlier studies, this paper will analyze the influence of the political education program on young voters' perceptions. The perception in this paper can be understood as a belief, view, and position constructed based on information, knowledge, and experiences someone has. More precisely, such an influence is assessed by the perceptions in a threefold issue: democracy, election, and political parties. It aims to figure out and excavate such perceptions to design effective political education for young generations. The program consists of a sustainable training for three times. During this training, survey is conducted twice, before (pre-test) and after (post-test) to figure out the influence of the training after respondents joined the program.

Young Voters: Concept and Its Characteristics

According to Generation Theory, there are five human generations based on the year of birth. First is the Baby Boomer generation, born between 1946 and 1964. Second is the X generation, born from 1965 to 1979. Third is the Y generation, born from 1980 to 1995, frequently called as the millennial generation. Fourth is the Z generation, born in 1996-

2009, also recognized as *iGeneration*, Net Generation, and Internet Generation. Fifth is the Alpha generation, born from 2010 to the present (Codrington & Grant-Marshall, 2004).

Refers to such a theory, based on a recent national population census in 2020, the highest population in Indonesia today is Z Generation, with 27.7%. The millennial generation follows it at 25.87%, X Generation at 21.88%, the Baby Boomer generation at 11.56%, and the post-Z Generation at 10.88%. However, there is slightly different characteristic of the Z Generation between Codrington & Grant-Marshall and BPS RI where BPS identifies the Z Generation as humans born between 1997 and 2012. If the data refer to the BPS classification, 74.70 million people can be detected as Z Generation (Badan Pusat Statistik RI, 2021). It is a massive number and potential to be mobilized by any political candidates and parties to gain their sympathy and votes.

Based on Law number 7/2017 on General Election Chapter IV on the Rights to Vote Article 198 Verse 1, Indonesian citizens who have already reached 17-year-old or are in marital status or have been married on the D-Day of voting have the right to vote. What is the relation of this concept with young voters? According to Manik & Budhiati (2015), young voters can be understood as anyone who has the right for the first time in his/her life to vote in an election, whether legislative, executive, or regional elections. Thus, most students in universities and a few pupils in schools can be detected as young voters. In the upcoming election in 2024, the Z Generation will dominate as the most significant voters in Indonesia.

Why do all political actors consider young voters as one of the main targets of the political campaign? Some motives can be presented here. First is an enormous number of them in each election. Second is that they are citizens who have a chance to vote in the election for the first time. It is the right time for political parties to intervene in feeding any information, including introducing the party platform. Third is that because of future leaders, young voters need considerable knowledge to strengthen their consciousness on the importance of electoral and party systems in the democratic state (Manik & Budhiati, 2015; Al-Hamdi, 2014). Therefore, excavating young voters' perceptions of democracy, elections, and political parties is inevitable to provide a relevant and comprehensive perspective on such issues.

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper applies qualitative research by employing the survey as a data gathering (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Berg & Lune, 2012; Creswell, 2013; Al-Hamdi, Sakir, Atmojo, Suswanta, & David, 2021). The survey is carried out twice, before and after the training. The former is for the pre-test, and the latter is for the post-test. The function of the pre-test and post-test is to determine to what extent political education influences young

voters in responding to three main issues: democracy, election, and political parties. The participants of this program were students from different campuses geographically in Yogyakarta Special Territory (*Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta*, DIY). More specifically, the students shall be in Bachelor of Art (BA) or diploma degree, be 17 to 24 in age or marital status, and be able to join all sessions fully. These participants were decided to be valid respondents. From three times of training between February and April 2022, 68 respondents were valid to be a sample of this research.

There are 37 questions in the google form format that participants should answer them. Participants must choose one of five options in different scales.

Scale 1 for answer: strongly disagree

Scale 2 for answer: disagree

Scale 3 for answer: doubtful

Scale 4 for answer: agree

Scale 5 for answer: strongly agree

Those 37 questions are grouped into fourfold issues, i.e., democracy, election, political party, and the management of political education. To simplify our analysis, a scale of 1-3 is classified into "negative perception", while a scale of 4-5 is categorized into "positive perception". It is essential to highlight the profile of 68 respondents here, which can be explained in the form of gender, campus diversity, organizational status, and educational background.

Gender and age. The percentage of gender among respondents reveals that women dominated men by 52% and 48%. In the age aspect, respondents with 20-year-old were rising more than others with 31%, followed by respondents with 21-year-old (25%), 19-year-old (19%), 22-year-old (13%), 18-year-old (9%), and 23-year-old (3%).

Campus diversity. Most respondents were coming from Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, with 36.8%. It was followed by UIN Sunan Kalijaga (8,8%), Universitas Jenderal Ahmad Yani (7.4%), Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta (7.4%), Politeknik ATK (5.9%), Universitas PGRI Yogyakarta (5.9%), Institut Teknologi Dirgantara Adisucipto (5.9%), Stikes Wira Husada (4.4%), Universitas Alma Ata (4.4%), Universitas Gadjah Mada (4.4%), Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta (2.9%), Universitas Wangsa Mangga (1.5%), Institut Teknologi Yogyakarta (1.5%), Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an An-Nur (1.5%), and Universitas Aisyiyah Yogyakarta (1.5%).

Organizational status. Most respondents were activists of the Student Executive Body/BEM, with 32.35%. It was followed by activists of Muhammadiyah Student Association/IMM (13.23%), Student Activity Unit/UKM (8.82%), Student Election Commission (8.82%),

Islamic Student Association/HMI (7.35%), Indonesian Moslem Student Movement/PMII (7.35%), Student Representative Council or Senate/DPM (4.41%), Department Student Association/HMJ (2.94%), Muhammadiyah Student Association/IPM (1.47%), and Indonesian National Student Movement/GMNI (1,47). 11.76% of respondents cannot be classified as organizational activists.

Educational background. All respondents were BA degree students from different disciplines. Social and political sciences dominated with 80.86% (26.47% respondents of social-political sciences, 20.59% respondents of law science, 13.23% of respondents of educational science, 11.75% respondents of economics and business, and 8,82% respondents of communication science). In addition, 19.11% of respondents came from natural sciences (13.23% from technology science, 4.41% from nursing science, and 1.47% from forestry).

Considering those various background of respondents in terms of gender, age, campus, organizations, and educational major, the selected respondents more or less can represent the diversity of young voters in Indonesia. Nevertheless, the targeted respondents were limited merely in Yogyakarta Province, not all regions across the country. Thus, the paper's finding can be examined further by other relevant research in different provinces and counties.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All respondents of the research as explained in the research method represent young voters' features. They are between 18 and 23-year-old and registered in various higher education institutions. Most of them are activists with different backgrounds of educational major. These denote to the fact that respondents are well educated young voters with different understanding on this political training. Thus, it is irresistible to be investigated quantitatively their perceptions on four issues.

There is a fourfold issue that is analyzed in this paper: democracy, election, political parties, and a political education program for young voters. There are some questions in each issue that participants should answer, whether in the pre-test (before training) or post-test (after training). Questions in pre and post-tests were the same to figure out to what extent the influence of political education on young voters' perception of those four issues. Here are the findings and their analysis.
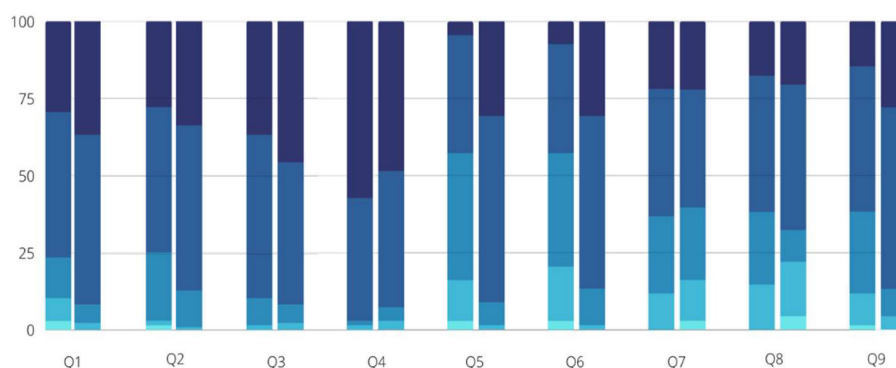
Figure 2. Young Voters' Perception of Democracy
Source: Compiled by the Authors.

Figure 2 consists of nine questions determining young voters' perception of democracy issues.

1. On the pre-test, most respondents believed that democracy is the best system for a state rather than the caliphate, empire, and communist systems (76.5%). Meanwhile, the post-test reveals the increasing perception of 91.2%

2. On the pre-test, most respondents believe that a democratic system would positively impact people's prosperity (75%). In the meantime, the post-test denotes the increasing perception of 86.7%.

3. On the pre-test, most respondents believed that a democratic system would provide freedom of speech, freedom of expression, and freedom of association (89.7%). Meanwhile, the post-test signifies the increasing perception of 91.2%.

4. On the pre-test, most respondents believed that the democratic system presents political rights, i.e., the right to vote and to be voted, to people (97.1%). Nevertheless, the post-test implies a decreasing perception of 92.6%.

5. On the pre-test, only 42.6% of respondents have good knowledge of democracy. Afterward, 41.2% were doubtful, and 16.1% disagreed and strongly disagreed. In the meantime, the post-test result demonstrates a spectacular improvement to 91.2%.

6. On the pre-test, merely 42.7% of respondents who have good knowledge of democratic development in Indonesia. Moreover, 36.8% were doubtful, and 20.5% disagreed and strongly disagreed. Meanwhile, the post-test result shows an impressive improvement of 86.8%.

7. On the pre-test, most respondents argue that Indonesian democracy cannot positively impact people's prosperity (63.3%). Nonetheless, the post-test denotes the declining perception of 60.3%.

8. On the pre-test, most respondents argue that Indonesian democracy cannot provide people freedom of speech, expression, and association (61.7%). Meanwhile, the post-test implies an increasing perception of 67.7%.

9. On the pre-test, most respondents argued that Indonesian democracy could provide people with political rights, namely the right to vote and to be voted (61.8%). Meanwhile, the post-test exposes the increasing perception of 86.7%.

Considering those nine points, it can be seen that, generally speaking, political education significantly influences young voters toward democracy issues. 7 of 9 pre-test results demonstrate positive perceptions, while two others reveal negative perceptions (answers no. 5 and 6). Meanwhile, the post-test result signifies all positive perceptions. Although the post-test result was all positive, the two answers' percentages decreased slightly (answers no. 4 and 7). It reveals the critical perception of young voters that democracy in Indonesia was incompatible with people's welfare. In this context, political education can provoke the critical thinking of participants.
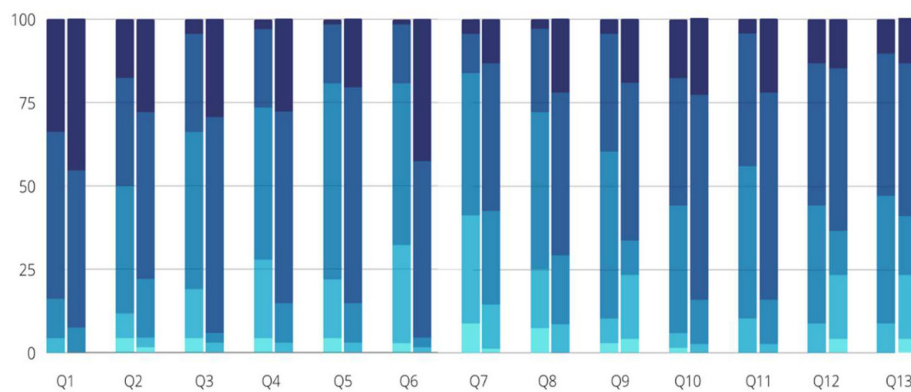

Figure 3. Young Voters' Perception of Election
Source: Compiled by the Authors.

Based on Figure 3, it can be known 13 different questions which discover young voters' perceptions towards election issues.

1. On the pre-test, most respondents believe the electoral system is sound in a democratic state (83.8). Meanwhile, the post-test demonstrates the increasing perception of 89.6%.

2. On the pre-test, most respondents believe that the electoral system will generate expected leaders (50%). However, 38.2% were doubtful, and 11.8% disagreed and strongly disagreed. In the meantime, the post-test result improves to 77.9%.

3. On the pre-test, only 33.8% of respondents know the electoral system well. The post-test eventually denotes the remarkable increase of 94.1%.

4. On the pre-test, only 26.4% of respondents have good knowledge of Election Management Bodies (EMBs). The post-test ultimately signifies an outstanding improvement of 85.3%.

5. On the pre-test, only 19.1% of respondents have good knowledge of law enforcement in the Indonesian election. On the post-test, there was a tremendous improvement of 85.3%.

6. On the pre-test, only 19.1% of respondents have good knowledge of electoral dispute resolution in Indonesia. On the post-test, there was a tremendous increase of 95.5%.

7. On the pre-test, only 16.2% of respondents have good knowledge of the vote conversion method into the parliamentary seat. On the post-test, there was a significant increase of 57.3%.

8. On the pre-test, merely 27.9% of respondents argue that the electoral system in Indonesia can run very well. On the post-test, there was an improved perception of 70.6%.

9. On the pre-test, only 39.7% of respondents argue that the electoral system in Indonesia would produce the expected leaders for the people. On the post-test, there was a rocketing perception of 66.3%.

10. On the pre-test, most respondents argued that the electoral system in Indonesia cannot realize well (55.8%). In the meantime, the post-test denotes the increasing perception of 83.2%.

11. On the pre-test, 44.1% of respondents argue that the Election Commission (KPU) and Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) can perform as the EMBs well. Meanwhile, the post-test denotes increasing perception to 83.9%.

12. On the pre-test, most respondents argue that law enforcement in Indonesian elections cannot run well (55.8%). In the meantime, the post-test demonstrates the improving perception of 63.2%.

13. On the pre-test, most respondents argue that electoral dispute resolution in Indonesia cannot run well (52.9%). On post-test, there was an increasing perception of 61.8%.

From the 13 points above, it can be emphasized that the political education program has a meaningful effect on young voters' perceptions of election issues. On the pre-test, 9 of 13 answers were negative perceptions. The post-test result eventually denotes entirely positive perceptions in all answers. Even the notable change of perception occurred in at least four answers (no. 6, 5, 3, and 4, as explained above).
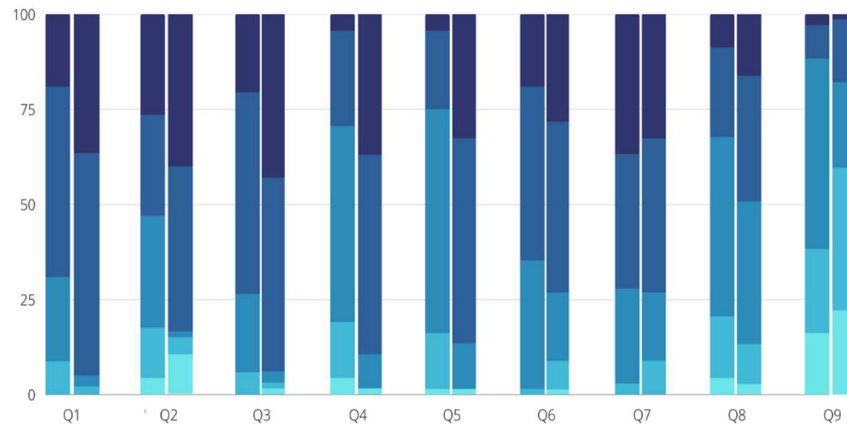
Figure 4. Young Voters' Perception of Political Parties
Source: Compiled by the Authors.

Figure 4 involves nine questions analyzing young voters' perceptions of political parties.

1. On the pre-test, most respondents believe that one of the political parties' functions is articulating or advocating people's interests toward the government (69.1%). This perception increased to 94.5% in the post-test.

2. On the pre-test, most respondents believe that one of the political parties' objectives is reaching power (53%). This perception increased to 83.8% in the post-test.

3. On the pre-test, most respondents believe that political parties are one of the fundamental actors in the democratic system (73.5%). This perception increased to 94.1% in the post-test.

4. On the pre-test, merely 29.4% of respondents have good knowledge of the functions and objectives of political parties. 51.5% were doubtful, and 19.1% did not know about political parties. This perception improved drastically to 89.7% in the post-test.

5. On the pre-test, only 25% of respondents have good knowledge of political parties in Indonesia. 58.5% were doubtful, and 16.2% did not know them. However, the post-test result denotes that most respondents (86.7%) have good knowledge of such an issue.

6. On the pre-test, most respondents (64.7%) argue that political parties in Indonesia have a poor performance in executing their functions to articulate people's prosperity toward the government. Meanwhile, the post-test result demonstrates the increasing perception of 73.5%. It implies critical views of young voters toward the poor performance of political parties in Indonesia.

7. On the pre-test, most respondents argue that political parties tend to pay attention to their internal interests rather than people's wishes (72.1%). On the post-test, their views move to 73.5%. It indicates a critical response from young voters.

8. On the pre-test, 32.3% of respondents agree that the "multiple party system (more than three parties) is relevant for the Indonesian party system". There were 47.1% of respondents in a doubtful position and 20.6% in disagree and strongly disagree positions. The post-test result shows an increasingly positive perception of 50% who agree on a multiple-party system in Indonesia. Meanwhile, 36.8% were doubtful. Merely 13.1% rejected this idea. It implies that most young voters prefer to agree with the idea of realizing a multiple-party system in Indonesia.

9. On the pre-test, only 11.7% of respondents agree that "political parties shall be dissolved and, in turn, replaced by other political institutions". 50% were doubtful, and 38.3% denied this notion. The post-test result demonstrates a slight increase of 19.1% who accepted this notion. There were 22.1% in a doubtful position. It can be known that most respondents (58.9%) rejected the idea of the dissolution of political parties. It means that young voters still agree with the existence of political parties in Indonesia.

Considering those nine main points above, it can be underlined here that the political education program has a powerful influence on young voters' perceptions of political parties. Two perceptions moved from negative in the pre-test to positive in post-test (answers no. 4 and 5). They are related to the knowledge of the function and objective of political parties and their dynamics in Indonesia. It implies that the training can enhance young voters' knowledge of political parties. Answers no. 6 and 7 indicate critical views of young voters toward political parties. In the meantime, answers no. 8 and 9 signify young voters' acceptance of the application of a multiple-party system in Indonesia. Furthermore, they support the presence of political parties as the main actors inside the democratic system despite many critiques addressed to those parties that should be reformed.
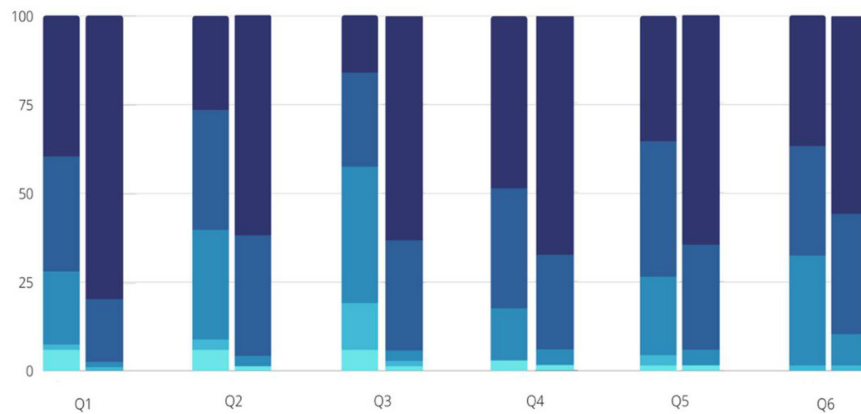
Figure 5. Young Voters' Perception of the Political Education Program
Source: Compiled by the Authors.

It can be seen that Figure 5 comprises six different questions which elaborate on young voters' perceptions toward the realization of the political education program where they already participated in all sessions fully.

1. Most respondents confirmed that the training enhanced their knowledge of democracy, elections, and political parties. The increasing perception was detected from 72.1% in the pre-test to 97% in the post-test.

2. Most respondents confirmed that the training could influence their beliefs and views toward democracy, elections, and political parties. The positive improving perception was identified from 60.3% in the pre-test to 95.6% in the post-test.

3. Most respondents proved that after joining this training, they could enhance their knowledge of those three issues rather than before. The positive perception drastically increased from 42.7% in the pre-test to 94.1% in the post-test.

4. Most respondents accepted the need to organize political education for young generations to improve their knowledge of elections. The positive perception rose from 82.3% in the pre-test to 94.1% in the post-test.

5. Most respondents agreed to recommend this program to other young generations to participate. Their acceptance increased from 73.5% in the pre-test to 94.1% in the post-test.

6. Most respondents accepted that they would promote this program in their organizations to organize such a political education program as the moral responsibility of young generations to support the democratization fate in Indonesia. The positive perception increased from 67.7% in the pre-test to 89.7% in the post-test.

It is essential to be highlighted here that most young voters agree on the necessity to organize the political education program for young generations because of its powerful advantages. Organizing such training change and influence young voters' views. The impact is that young voters have multiple abilities to criticize all circumstances related to democracy, elections, and political parties. Even young voters intend to recommend this training to other young generations because they commit to reinforcing the organization, they involve in to manage a similar program. It is part of their attention to consolidating democracy in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

This paper sought to answer the central question: To what extent political education training can influence young voters' perceptions? To answer this question, the paper will examine young voters' perceptions toward a fourfold issue: democracy, election, political parties, and the political education program. Generally speaking, it can be postulated here that the political education program has a powerful influence on changing young voters' perceptions as long as the training is planned and organized intensively for at least two or three days. The speakers and facilitators are experts. In contrast, the target is missing if the program is merely a ceremonial event for a half day, like a public seminar managed by most government agencies.

Most young voters' perceptions increase from pre-test to post-test. 35 of 37 answers rose in the percentage rate, while two other answers declined slightly. The two answers are related to young voters' perceptions of the democratic system, which presents political rights for people, and the fact that Indonesian democracy still cannot induce positive effects on people's prosperity. Nonetheless, such a perception remains positive. The problem is just the declining percentage slightly in the issue of democracy, where from 97.1% to 92.6 in the answer of no. 4 and from 63.3% to 60.3% in the answer of no. 7. It essentially denotes young voters' critical perceptions in responding to current situations of democracy in Indonesia.

It also matters to be highlighted here that 16 of 37 answers (43.24%) indicated negative perceptions in the pre-test. After post-test, 35 of 37 answers (94.59%) changed to positive perceptions. In the meantime, two other answers in the post-test remained to designate the negative perception despite the increase in the percentage rate. Both answers are found in the issue of political parties. First is the issue of the relevance of a multiple-party system in Indonesia. In the post-test, 50% of respondents accepted this idea, while 13.1% denied it. 36.8% of others were doubtful. It indicates that acceptance answers are higher than denial positions. Second is the issue of the dissolution of political parties and the need to replace them with other political institutions. In the post-test, most respondents

(80.1%) denied this notion, which denotes the acceptance of political parties in Indonesia despite of to be reformed.

More specifically, most negative perceptions in the pre-test can be found in the election issue. There were 9 of 13 detected perceptions. However, all answers changed to positive perceptions in the post-test. It implies that young voters are concerned about criticizing various impediments in electoral issues. Meanwhile, most positive perceptions in the pre-test can be identified in the issue of the management of the training program. It signifies the enthusiasm of young voters on the significant advantages of political education not merely to enhance their knowledge on those three issues but also to provide a comprehensive framework in the way of thinking and behaving, mainly in the issues of democracy, election, and political parties. That is why young voters believe such a political education is essential. To sum up, it can be denied that this program more or less can influence them to take part earnestly in consolidating a democratic path in the future.

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