CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Political marketing has become a crucial element of political activities,utilizedbypresidents,primeministers,politicalparties,governmentdepartm ents, and local councils to achieve their objectives. In recent years,socialmediahasemergedasaneffectivetoolforpoliticalmarketing.Okanand Akyuz (2015)argue that social media campaigns should be strategicallyemployed to maximize reach by engaging volunteers and encouraging them toshare content, thus creating a multiplier effect. They suggest that campaignsdesigned by political candidates and parties are easily accessible to their targetaudiences through social media, allowing for more interactive and responsivemanagementof marketing activitiesbasedon voter feedback.

Political elections are influenced by various factors, including social,economic, cultural, and individual preferences that shape voter behavior. Keyelements such as political party affiliation, candidate characteristics, policypositions,andsocioeconomicstatussignificantlycontributetoelectoraloutcome s. These factors operate at both individual and socio-cultural levels,withsocialinfluences,mediaimpact,anddemographicattributesplayingcritical roles in how voters form their preferences and make decisions duringelections. These insights are supported by a comprehensive review conductedbyKulachaietal.(2023).

Politicalideologyisrecognizedasapowerfulfactorinfluencingelectoraldecisio

ns,connectingvoterpreferencestospecificpartiesorcandidatesthatalignwiththeirvalue sandpolicyinclinations.Forinstance,conservative voters may prioritize order and economic freedom, while liberalvoters might focus on inclusivity and progressive policies (Mason, 2018).Additionally,otherstudieshaveexploredtheimpactofpersonalitytraits,emotion al intelligence, and concerns such as climate change and healthcareexperienceson voterbehavior (Şahanet al.,n.d.).

GenerationZ,definedasindividualsbornbetween1997and2012(Dimock, 2019), represents a growing and increasingly influential segment ofthe electorate. This generation is characterized by its digital nativity, socialconsciousness,anddiversecommunicationpreferences,allofwhichcontribute to a voting behavior that markedly differs from that of previousgenerations.ResearchindicatesthatGenerationZismorelikelytobeinfluenced bysocialmedia,digitalinteractions,andpersonalizedpoliticalmessages, rather than traditional forms of political communication (Cheung etal.,2020;Algharabat,2017).

The voting behavior of Generation Z underscores their distinct characteristics as "digital natives" in the digital era. This cohort is profoundly influenced by platforms like TikTok, which play a crucial role in shaping their political behaviors. Unlike previous generations, Gen Z utilizes social media not only to gather information but also for active political engagement, mobilization, and activism. Their political choices are heavily guided by their interactions on these platforms, reflecting a significant shift toward digital-first approaches in

political decision-making (Karimi & Fox, 2023).

Voting decisions are influenced by a range of social, psychological, and informational factors. According to Kulachai et al. (2023), the decision-making process for voters involves both rational considerations, such as policy stances and candidate qualifications, as well as symbolic and emotional aspects, including personal connection to the candidate and perceived trustworthiness. Social media, in particular, has amplified these symbolic aspects by providing a platform for candidates to engage directly with potential voters, personalize their image, and build emotional resonance. Kulachai et al. also emphasize that social media enables real-time interaction and feedback, which shapes a candidate's image and builds a voter's emotional investment. This immediacy can influence Generation Z voters, who are especially attuned to online engagement and are more likely to align with candidates who appear authentic and responsive on social media. In light of this, understanding how Gen Z voters interact with and are influenced by social media marketing in the political realm becomes crucial, particularly as this generation is more likely to prioritize candidate relatability and personal branding over traditional political experience.

In political marketing, the role of brand image, perceived value, andawareness has also been explored in the banking sector, revealing importantinsightsintocustomerloyaltyandtrust.ResearchonIslamicbankingbyAndes pa et al. (2023) shows that brand image, perceived value, and brandawareness directly impact customer trust, which in turn mediates customerloyalty. Although this study focuses on Islamic banking, it offers

valuableparallelsforpoliticalmarketing,aspoliticalcandidates,likebrands,mustbuildt

rustandloyaltywithvoters.Applyingtheseinsightstopoliticalmarketing suggests that

candidates need to foster a strong brand image andawareness through consistent

communication strategies, particularly on

digitalplatforms,tocultivatetrustamongGenerationZvoters.Thistrustcanultimately

enhance voter loyalty, much like it influences customer loyalty

inthebankingsector(Andespa etal.,2023).

In the context of Indonesia, understanding the determinants of

votingdecisions among Generation Z is particularly crucial, given their potential

tosignificantly impact future election outcomes. Research focusing on the

2024IndonesianelectionsrevealsthatGenerationZ'sinvolvementwassignificantly

enhanced through innovative digital communication strategies.These strategies,

implemented by the General Election Commission (KPU)

inIndonesia,leveragedsocialmediatoolstomakepoliticalcontentmoreengagingandac

cessible,therebyboostingvoterturnoutamongyoungerpeople.Suchmethodshighlight

adeparturefromtraditionalpoliticalengagementpractices,underscoringtheimportanc

eofdigitalstrategiesineffectivelyconnectingwiththisgenerationofvoters(Kurniawane

tal.,2023).

Thewideaccesstoinformationthroughsocialmediaandtheinternethas led Gen

Z to have different perspectives when choosing political

figurescomparedtopreviousgenerations.Socialmediaservesastheprimaryplatform

for Gen Z to access news, interact with political candidates,

andparticipateinpoliticaldiscussions.Thisinfluenceshowtheyformopinionsand

make voting decisions. Studies indicate that Gen Z is more likely toengageinpoliticsthroughsocialmedia,seekinformationfromvarioussources, and value authenticity and transparency in political communication(Anderson&Jiang,2018;Vromen,Xenos,&Loader,2015).

Furthermore, Gen Z tends to be more skeptical of institutions and moresupportive of movements advocating for social justice and structural change.Theyshowahighlevelofconcernforissuessuchasclimatechange,humanrights, socialjustice,andinclusion(Twenge,2017).Therefore,politicalcandidates who aim to gain support from Gen Z need to demonstrate a clearcommitmenttotheseissuesandeffectivelycommunicatethroughsocialmediaand otherdigitalplatforms(Bennett&Segerberg,2012).

SocialmediaplaysapivotalroleinshapingGenZ'spoliticalopinionsanddecisions.Forthisgeneration,socialmediaplatformslikeInstagram,Twitter,andTikTokarenotjusttoolsforsocialinteractionbutalsoprimarysourcesofinformationaboutpoliticalcandidatesandissues.Algharabat(2017)emphasizesthatsocialmediaenhancespoliticalengagementbyprovidingimmediateandaccessibleinformation,whichcaninfluencehowyoungvotersperceiveandengagewithpoliticalcontent.TherapiddisseminationofinformationthroughtheseplatformsallowsGenZtostayinformedaboutcurrentevents,candidates'positions,andpoliticaldebatesinreal-time,shapingtheir votingbehavior.

Moreover, social media facilitates direct interaction between candidatesand voters, enabling real-time feedback and discussions. According to Cheung,Chiu, and Lee (2020), this interaction helps Gen Z engage more deeply withpoliticalcontent,fosteringasenseofconnectionandcommitmenttocandidates.

Platforms such as Twitter and Facebook allow for the exchange ofopinions and critical discussions, which can strengthen or weaken a voter'ssupport based on the quality and nature of these interactions. Social mediacampaignsthatareauthenticandtransparentareparticularlyeffectiveinattracting Gen Z's attention, as they value honesty and openness from theirpoliticalfigures(Anderson& Jiang,2018).

Political branding is another crucial factor that affects Gen Z's politicalchoices. Effective political branding involves crafting a candidate's image andidentity in a way that resonates with young voters. Nwanganga et al. (2017)arguethataconsistentandpositiveimagecansignificantlyenhanceacandidate's appeal,asithelps build trustand credibility among voters. ForGen Z, who are particularly attentive to authenticity and relatability, a well-managedbrandthatalignswiththeirvaluesandaspirationscanmakeasubstantialdifference.

Visual communication plays a vital role in political branding. Elementssuch as logos, colors, and campaign design contribute to a candidate's publicimage and can significantly impact voter recall and recognition. The visuallyappealing and coherent branding strategies can help candidates stand out in acrowded political landscape, especially among younger voters who are highlyvisualandmedia-

savvy.Moreover,aligningacandidate'sbrandwiththevaluesandconcernsofGenZ,such associaljusticeandenvironmentalsustainability,iscrucialforgainingtheirsupportSury aandJha(2021).

Thepersonalityandimageofpoliticalcandidatesaresignificantdeterminants of voter choice, particularly for Gen Z, who prioritize personalattributes in their decision-making process. Gen Z tends to favor candidateswho exhibit qualities such as honesty, integrity, and empathy. Turner (2015) emphasizes that Generation Z places a high premium on authenticity and transparency, particularly in the realm of political communication. This generation is more inclined to trust and support political candidates who present themselves as genuine, consistent, and open in their messaging. In contrast to more traditional forms of political persuasion, Gen Z responds more positively to candidates who communicate in a relatable and unfiltered manner. Such traits are seen as indicators of integrity and reliability, which are crucial for capturing the attention and loyalty of young voters.

Gen Z is drawn to candidates who show a strong character and genuineconcernforsocialissues.Theempathyandtheabilitytorelatetopersonalexperiencesandchallengesareimportantfactorsforthisgeneration.Candidates who can effectively communicate their commitment to addressingsocietal problems and who exhibit competence in handling these issues aremore likely to gain favor with young voters. This focus on personal qualitiesreflectsGenZ'sdesireforleaderswhoarenotonlycapablebutalsocompassionateandrelatableTwenge(2017).

In today's fast-paced digital communication era, branding image and personal branding have become essential strategies in modern political marketing. It is no longer sufficient for political candidates to merely present their vision and

mission in a conventional manner; the image and personality they portray across various platformsespecially social mediaplay a critical role in shaping public perception and influencing voter decisions.

Branding image refers to how a political candidate is perceived by the public as a whole, including visual representation, messaging, and the values they embody. According to Houghton (2019), in the context of political communication, a candidate's image is a combination of visual representation, personal narrative, and symbolic values constructed to create emotional resonance with voters. A consistent and compelling image can enhance public trust, emotional connection, and loyaltyespecially among younger voters like Generation Z.

Meanwhile, personal branding is a strategic process by which individuals market themselves as unique and distinguishable "brands." In politics, personal branding is not only about highlighting a candidate's strengths but also about building an authentic narrative that resonates emotionally and psychologically with voters. Peters (1997) defines personal branding as the way individuals present their identity and values to be recognized, trusted, and chosen within a social systemsuch as an election. In today's political landscape, this approach is increasingly relevant, as voters often make decisions not only based on policy platforms but also on how relatable and credible they perceive a candidate to be.

Both branding image and personal branding are closely connected to the broader practice of political marketing. Political marketing today does not rely solely on traditional approaches such as offline campaigning and mass media, but

increasingly adopts brand marketing principlesfocusing on image creation, emotional engagement, and two-way communication. Schneider (2004) describes modern political marketing as being centered on the creation of a *political brand identity*, where candidates are positioned similarly to consumer brands, carrying distinct characteristics, values, and promises to the public. In this context, social media has become a vital platform for delivering personal narratives, displaying visual branding, and shaping public perception.

This study focuses on how branding image and personal branding—strategically crafted and communicated by CerintIraloza, a young candidate with no prior political backgroundsuccessfully built trust and emotional engagement among Generation Z voters. Through a qualitative approach, the study explores how these branding elements are received, interpreted, and internalized by young voters in the context of the 2024 DPD RI election in West Sumatra.

Socialmediamarketingfacilitatesreal-timeinteractionandpersonalizedcommunication,makingitaneffectivetoolforbuilding andmanagingacandidate'simage.Studieshaveshownthatsocialmediaengagementcan humanizecandidates,makingthemappearmoreaccessibleandauthentic(Enli,2017).T hisperceivedauthenticityisvitalincultivatingapositiveimage.Astrongandpositivecan didateimagecansimplifythedecision-makingprocessforvoters.Whenvotersperceiveacandidatepositively,theyaremorelike lytosupportthem.Thisissupportedbyresearchindicatingthatacandidate'simagesignifi cantlyinfluencesvoterbehaviorandelectoraloutcomes(Bossetta,2018).Schneider(20 04)discusseshowbrandinginpoliticsinvolvescreatingastrong,identifiablebrandthatv

oterscanconnectwithonanemotionallevel.Thisidentity-orientedmanagementiscrucialfordifferentiatingcandidatesina competitivepoliticallandscape.

Needham (2006) explores the connection between political branding andvoter loyalty, highlighting that a strong brand identity can lead to sustainedvotersupportovermultipleelectioncycles.Thisunderscorestheimportanceof consistent and positive image management. Marland and Flanagan (2013)provideacasestudyontheConservativePartyofCanada,demonstratinghowstrat egicbrandingeffortscancreateacompellingnarrativeandimagethatresonateswith voters, ultimatelyinfluencing their votingdecisions.

Generation Z (born 1997-2012)

WhiteandClark(2023)GenerationZisthefirstcohorttohavebeenborn entirely within the digital age, making them highly proficient with socialmediaandotherdigitalcommunicationtools.Theyconsumeinformationrapidlya ndprefervisualcontentsuchasvideosandinfographics.Thisgeneration is particularly attuned to issues of social justice and environmentalsustainabilityandexpectspoliticalcandidatestoaddresstheseconcernsd irectly.

MediaConsumption:PrefersplatformslikeInstagram,TikTok,andYouTubef ortheir dynamicandvisualcontent.

Political Engagement: Highly values social justice and environmentalissuesandprefers engaging,multimediacontent.

Segmentation of Generation Z Based on Key Characteristics

Generation Z, typically defined as those born between 1997 and 2012, has matured in an era of widespread digital connectivity and evolving social media platforms, which has significantly shaped their perspectives, values, and lifestyle choices. Researchers often segment Gen Z into subgroups to better capture their varying characteristics, including age and developmental stages, educational status, place of residence, social media engagement, and interest in social and political issues.

Age and Developmental Stage

Early Adolescents (12–17 years)   This group consists of Gen Z members still in middle or high school, influenced heavily by peers, social media trends, and popular culture. According to a study by Anderson and Jiang (2018), adolescents in this age group frequently use social media for self-expression, which plays a crucial role in their identity development. During this stage, they are particularly susceptible to digital and peer influences, as they seek belonging and self-definition (Pew Research Center, 2018).

Young Adults (18–24 years)These young adults, many of whom are in college or entering the workforce, exhibit a greater level of independence and tend to be critical thinkers. According to research by Perrin and Atske (2021), they are highly engaged with current social and political issues, using social media to voice opinions and participate in online activism. They prioritize authenticity and transparency, especially concerning social causes, and often express interest in climate change, social justice, and ethical consumerism.

Early Career Professionals (25–27 years)This subset represents the older segment of Gen Z, including those who are establishing their careers. Research by Deloitte (2022) indicates that they value financial independence, personal growth, and work-life balance, with many viewing their careers as a means of achieving personal fulfillment and societal impact. They also exhibit a strong preference for workplaces that align with their ethical values, particularly around environmental sustainability and diversity.

Education Level

High School StudentsThis group includes those in secondary education, where exposure to broader social and political topics is limited. However, according to Twenge et al. (2018), high school students are among the most active social media users, often engaging with visual content that influences their attitudes towards current trends. They are highly receptive to digital advertising and often look to influencers for opinions on lifestyle and fashion.

College StudentsCollege students in Gen Z are typically more informed about and involved in social issues, driven by academic exposure and campus environments. According to a study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (2021), these students are engaged with causes related to climate action, gender equality, and racial justice. Their college experience fosters both a sense of individual agency and a collective identity shaped by shared values within the Gen Z cohort.

Young Professionals/Fresh GraduatesFresh graduates and young professionals exhibit an increasing focus on personal and financial independence. The Deloitte Global 2022 Millennial and Gen Z Survey highlights how they actively seek roles that support their professional growth while aligning with their social values. They prioritize ethical brands and employers who demonstrate social responsibility, especially concerning mental health and work-life balance.

Place of Residence

Urban ResidentsGen Z individuals in urban areas are highly exposed to global trends and have extensive access to technology, allowing them to quickly adopt new digital tools and platforms. Research by McCrindle and Fell (2020) suggests that urban Gen Z members are early adopters of technological trends and show greater openness to diversity and social change.

Suburban ResidentsSuburban Gen Z members, while technologically connected, may experience a blend of modern and traditional cultural values. A study by the Pew Research Center (2019) notes that suburban Gen Z youth often balance their digital presence with offline relationships, exhibiting less dependence on online validation compared to their urban counterparts.

Rural ResidentsThose in rural settings may have limited access to high-speed internet and digital media, often resulting in more localized cultural perspectives. According to research by Vogels (2021), rural members of Generation Z may be less influenced by global cultural trends and more

grounded in local values and community norms. However, they remain active users of social media, primarily engaging through mobile platforms when internet connectivity permits. This suggests that while their digital engagement may differ in scope from their urban counterparts, it still plays a meaningful role in shaping their perspectives and behaviors.

Social Media Engagement

Active Users of Visual Platforms (Instagram, TikTok)This group is drawn to visually-oriented content and trends driven by influencers, which significantly shape their perceptions and values. A study by GlobalWebIndex (2020) highlights that visual platforms serve as a major source of lifestyle inspiration for this cohort, impacting fashion, beauty, and entertainment preferences.

Users of Discussion-Based Platforms (Twitter, Reddit)Gen Z members active on discussion forums are often interested in deeper discussions on political and social issues. According to Pew Research Center (2021), these platforms allow Gen Z users to engage in more nuanced debates, which is particularly appealing to those with an interest in societal impact and change.

Passive Social Media UsersPassive users consume content but rarely engage in online interactions, often relying on peer or familial influences for opinions. Studies by Anderson and Jiang (2018) suggest that while passive users are less affected by online trends, they still use social media to stay informed and feel connected to broader social dialogues.

Interest and Engagement in Social and Political Issues

Socially and Politically ActiveThis group is highly engaged in social and political issues, often advocating for causes such as climate action, social justice, and mental health. Perrin and Atske (2021) note that Gen Z's social and political engagement on digital platforms translates to real-world activism, with many participating in protests, online petitions, and advocacy campaigns.

Apolitical or Less EngagedSome Gen Z members are less interested in political discourse, instead focusing on personal pursuits and leisure activities. According to Vogels (2021), while they may not actively engage in societal debates, they often have values shaped by cultural and familial contexts, impacting their consumption and lifestyle choices indirectly.

Tailoring socialmedia marketingand politicalbranding strategies tothese generational preferences is essential for effective communication. Forinstance, Generation X might respond better to a mix of digital and traditionalmedia with a focus on authenticity and practicality. Millennials might engagemore with transparent and interactive content on platforms like Twitter andInstagram. Generation Z might be best reached through visually appealing,issue-focusedcontentonplatformslikeTikTokandYouTube(Twenge,2017).

Research by Smith and Anderson (2018) highlights the importance ofsocialmediainshapingpoliticalopinionsamongyoungergenerations,particularlyMillennialsandGenerationZ.Theirstudyfoundthatthesecohorts are more likely to participate in online political discussions and areinfluenced by peer opinions

shared on social media. Auxier and Anderson(2021) also emphasize the role of visual and multimedia content in engagingyoungeraudiences,notingthatGenerationZ,inparticular,prefersshort,visuall yrich formatsfor consumingpoliticalinformation.

AccordingtoBelchandBelch(2007),marketingcommunicationinpromotion plays a crucial role in creating awareness, generating interest, andpersuadingconsumerstotakeaction.Theydescribeintegratedmarketingcommunic ations (IMC) as a coordinated effort to unify all promotional toolsand marketing communications to deliver a consistent message about a brandto its audience. The approach aims to optimize the impact of the promotionalmix—advertising, sales promotions, public relations, direct marketing, andpersonalselling— toreinforcebrandidentityandstrengthencustomerrelationships. By ensuring all communications align, IMC helps organizationsachieve both short-term goals (like generating immediate sales) and long-termgoals(such asbuildingbrandequity) moreeffectively.

This research is expected to provide significant practical and theoreticalcontributions. Practically, the findings can be utilized by political campaignteams to design more effective social media strategies and political brandingefforts.Theoretically,thisstudywillenrichtheliteratureonpoliticalmarketing and communication, offering deeper insights into the role of socialmediainshapingvoterdecision-makingprocesses(Bossetta,2018;Koc-Michalska&Lilleker,2013).

The practical implications of this research are critical for political campaign managers and strategists. By understanding the impact of social media marketing and political branding on voter decisions, campaign teams can optimize their digital strategies. This includes tailoring content to different voter demographics, leveraging the interactive nature of social media platforms, and maintaining a consistent and appealing brand identity for candidates. Such strategies are essential for reaching and engaging a broader and more diverse electorate effectively (Bossetta, 2018; Koc-Michalska & Lilleker, 2013).

The idea that social media strategies must be dynamic and responsive to voter engagement patterns. They found that campaigns that actively interacted with followers and adapted their messaging based on real-time feedback were more successful in mobilizing support. Theoretically, this research aims to expand the understanding of political marketing and communication by integrating concepts from social media marketing into the political sphere. It will contribute to the academic discourse on how digital platforms influence voter behavior and the formation of candidate images. This integration is particularly relevant as social media continues to evolve as a dominant communication medium in politics Bode and Dalrymple (2016).

Provide additional context by discussing the hybrid media system, where traditional media and new media converge, creating a complex landscape for political communication. This research will build on such theories by specifically examining the interplay between social media marketing, political branding, and voter decision-making (Chadwick and Stromer-Galley, 2016).

CerintIrallozastandsoutasafascinatingfigureintheIndonesianpoliticallandsca pe.Asayoungmedicalprofessionalwhohastransitionedintopolitics, her career provides valuable insights into how diverse professionalbackgroundscanenrichpoliticalrepresentationandcontributenewperspec tives to policymaking. CerintIralloza's background as a doctor offers aunique perspective in her political endeavors. Her medical expertise enableshertoaddresscriticalhealthissueswithinthepoliticalsphere,suchasimproving healthcare systems, ensuring better access to medical services, andpromoting public health initiatives. This combination of skills allows her tocommunicatewithempathyandunderstandtheimmediateneedsofthecommunity,par ticularlyinhealth-relatedmatters(Tribunnews,2023).

Young politicians like CerintIralloza are instrumental in reshaping thefuture of Indonesian politics. They bring fresh perspectives and are often moreattuned to the evolving needs and aspirations of younger generations. Cerint'stransitionfrommedicinetopoliticsexemplifieshowprofessionalsfromvarious fields can drive significant change and bring innovative solutions tolongstandingproblems(TatlerAsia,2023).

Figure 1. Instagram Account

Figure 1 illustrates the visual representation of Cerint's personal branding on her Instagram account, @cerintttasya. The figure highlights how Cerint leverages social media to connect with her audience by sharing diverse aspects of her life. Her posts and stories showcase a harmonious blend of personal milestones, professional activities, and relatable hobbies, such as cooking and reading. The curated content is designed to inspire and engage her followers, featuring aesthetically pleasing visuals and motivational themes. This strategic use of Instagram not only strengthens her public image but also creates a relatable and interactive platform for her audience, reflecting the key elements of effective personal branding.
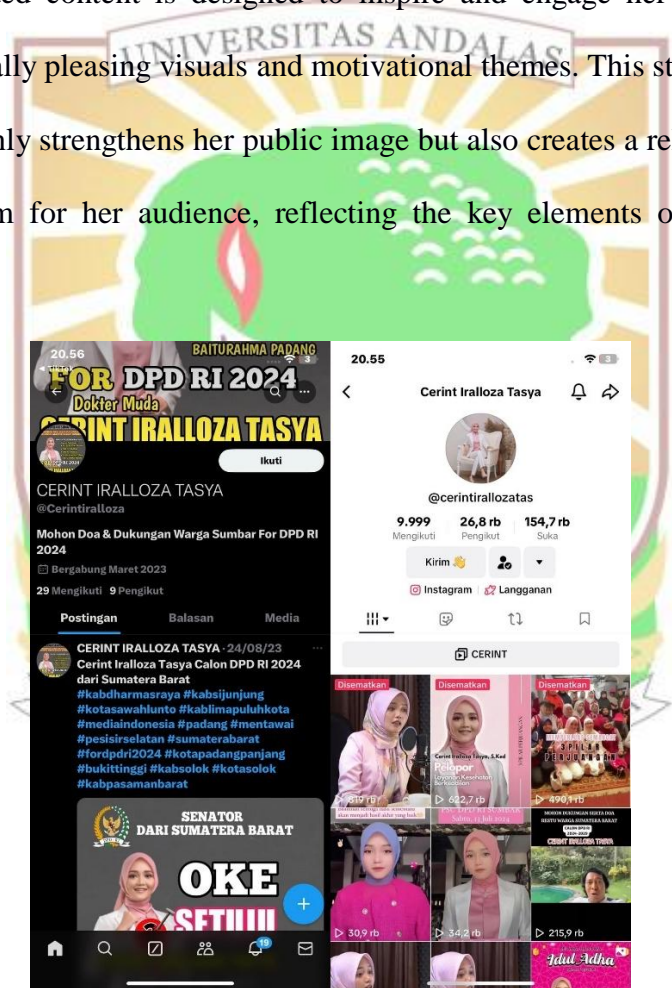

Figure 2. X (Twitter) and TikTok Account

The figure 2 highlightsCerint's use of social media platforms is strategic and   multifaceted, witheachplatformservingadistinctpurposeinhercampaignandpublicengagementeffo

rts.Twitter,@cerintirallozaisherprimarychannelforcampaign-related activities. This account is where she shares timely updates,articulatesherpolicypositions,andengagesdirectlywiththepubliconvariousp oliticalissues.ThenatureofTwitter,withitsreal- timecommunicationandbroadreach,allowsCerinttoquicklydisseminateinformation and interact with her followers. By using Twitter, she ensures thather campaign messages are heard by a wide audience, fostering a direct andimmediateconnection with potential voters.

TikTok account, @cerintirallozatas, is another critical component of herdigitalstrategy.TikTok'suniquevideoformatprovidesCerintwiththeopportunity to reach a younger and more diverse audience. On this platform,she extensively shares creative and engaging content that introduces her to thepublic,explainsherpoliticalviews,andshowcasesherpersonality.Theinteractive and informal nature of TikTok allows her to build a more personalconnection with viewers, making her campaign more relatable and accessible.Thisapproachnotonlybroadensherreachbutalsoenhancesvoterengagemen t, particularly among younger demographics who are avid users oftheplatform.

Thesignificantroleofsocialmediaincontemporarypoliticalcommunication.Hi sstudyillustrateshowplatformslikeTikTokcanrevolutionizetraditionalcampaignstrat egiesbyenablingmoredirectinteraction and engagement with voters. This aligns with Enli and Skogerbø(2013), who emphasize the shift from party-centered to candidate-centeredpolitics facilitated by social media. Their research underscores how platformslike Twitter and TikTok empower candidates to build personal

brands andestablish direct connections with the electorate, thus transforming politicalcommunicationKarlsen(2015).

Cerint's adept use of social media platforms like Twitter and TikTok iscentral to her campaign strategy. By leveraging the strengths of each platform,sheeffectivelycommunicateshermessages,engageswithabroadaudience,and builds a personal connection with potential voters. This approach not onlyenhanceshercampaign'sreachbutalsofostersamoreinteractiveandparticipatorypoliticalprocess.

Basedontheexplanationofthebackgroundandphenomenon,thisresearch is titled *"Exploring The Determinants Of Gen Z Voter Decision In West Sumatra."*

B.   ProblemFormulation

Fromthebackgroundpresentation,theformulation ofthe problemcanbestatedasdescribedbelow:

What are the key factors that influence Gen Z in their voting decisions,specifically in the context of CerintIraloza ' s (Gen z Candidate on DPD RI)voters??

How do social media, political branding, candidate personality, and relevantissuescontribute to thevotingdecisionsof Gen Z?

C.   ResearchObjectives

ToidentifyandanalyzethekeyfactorsthatinfluenceGenerationZinchoosingapoliticalfigure,specificallyfocusingonthevotersofCerintIllorenza.Thisincludesexami

ningtheimpactofsocialmedia,politicalbranding, candidate personality traits, and relevant issues that resonate withGenZ voters.

To explore and understand how social media, political branding, candidatepersonality, and relevant issues contribute to the voting decisions of Gen Z.The study will investigate the role of social media platforms in politicalengagement,theeffectivenessofpoliticalbrandingstrategies,theinfluenceofc andidatepersonalitytraitslikeauthenticityandintegrity,andthesignificanceofsocial,en vironmental,andeconomicissuesinshapingGenZ'spoliticalchoices.

D.   ResearchBenefits

Academic

Contributestotheexistingliteratureontheinfluenceofsocialmediamarketingan dpoliticalbrandingonelectiondecisions,particularlywithinthecontextof   DPDRI elections.

Provides insights into the mediating role of candidate image formation in theelectoralprocess.

Enhancesunderstandingofgenerationaldifferencesinperceptionsandresponse stopolitical marketing strategies.

Practical

Offersguidanceforpoliticalcampaignteamsoneffectivesocialmediamarketin g andbrandingstrategies.

Assistspoliticalcandidatesinunderstandinghowtheirimageisformedandhowit affects voterdecisions.

Providescampaignmanagerswithinformationtodevelopapproachestailored togenerationaldifferences in elections.

Social

Raisespublicawarenessabouttheimpactofsocialmediamarketingandpolitical brandingon theelection process.

Facilitatesintergenerationaldialogueonviewstowardspoliticalcandidatesand marketing strategiesused.

E.   Scope ofResearch

Subjectsof Research

Votersfromvariousgenerations(GenerationZ,Millennials,GenerationX,and Baby Boomers)in WestSumatra.

Campaignteamof CerintIralloza andpolitical marketing experts.

Location of Research

WestSumatra,as the regionwheretheDPDRI election takesplace.

Topics Explored

Influenceof socialmedia marketing on electiondecisions.

Influenceof politicalbrandingon election decisions.

Mediatingroleofcandidateimageformationintheinfluenceofsocialmediamar keting andpoliticalbranding.

Generationaldifferencesinperceptionsandresponsestosocialmediamarketing , politicalbranding,and candidateimage.

Research Methods

In-depthinterviewswith votersand campaign teammembers.

Focusgroup discussionswith voters fromgenerationsZ.

Directobservation of campaign activitieson social mediaand in thefield.

Limitations of Research

Focusesonasinglecandidate(CerintIralloza)andoneregion(WestSumatra),so findingsmay notbe fullygeneralizableto othercontexts.

Theresearchisexploratoryanddescriptive,nottestinghypothesesquantitativel y.

F.   Systematicsof Writing

The systematic discussion is explained in several chapters describedbelow:

CHAPTERIINTRODUCTION

In this introduction, it is explained about the background, problem formulation, research objectives and benefits of research, problem limitations, writing systematics.

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses the theoretical foundations in the form of Candidate Image, Candidate Image, social media marketing, and brand image and also discusses previous research, conceptual frameworks, and hypothesis development.

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter describes the research design, population and sample, operational definition of variables, types and sources of data, data collectionmethods, data

analysis methods.

CHAPTER IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is a chapter that discusses the characteristics of respondents, data analysis, hypothesis testing and discussion.

CHAPTER V FINAL PART

This section contains the conclusions of the research, then theimplications of the research, then the limitations faced in the research,andfinallythesuggestionsthat theauthor describesintheresearch.