


Reimagining citizenship in electoral times: Lessons from Gen Z's digital civics prototypes for Indonesia's 2024 election

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Abstract

The growing role of digital media in political participation is reshaping how young citizens understand and practice citizenship. However, limited research has examined how Generation Z conceptualises citizenship through civic technology initiatives. This study investigates how students reinterpret citizenship through civic-tech prototypes developed in the Political Science Study Program at Brawijaya University. Using Schreier's Qualitative Content Analysis, prototype documents were analysed across three domains of citizenship rights—civil, political, and social rights—based on T. H. Marshall, and Westheimer and Kahne's typology of citizens. The framework was expanded by incorporating digital participation and connective action to capture emerging forms of youth engagement. The findings reveal a shift from passive electoral participation toward digitally mediated civic engagement, emphasising open access to political information, online channels for political expression, and deliberative digital spaces. Most prototypes prioritise digital-political literacy and inclusive participation for first-time voters through accessible language, infographics, and interactive social media campaigns. However, attention to social justice and marginalised groups remains limited. These findings highlight the need to strengthen justice-oriented civic engagement in youth-centred civic technology initiatives.

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Introduction

Citizenship has long been understood as a status of full membership in a nation-state, manifested through a set of rights and obligations toward the state. Marshall & Bottomore (1950) asserted that modern citizenship was gradually developed through three dimensions of rights: civil rights in the 18th century (freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the right to legal justice), political rights in the 19th century (the right to vote, be elected, and participate in determining the direction of government), and social rights in the 20th century (the right to education, social security, and basic welfare).

However, the Marshallian concept is firmly rooted in the framework of a relatively homogeneous welfare state. Global development has challenged this framework. Isin & Ruppert (2020) argued that citizenship should be understood not simply as a legal status, but as a dynamic power relationship related to global mobility, cultural identity, and human rights across national borders. In the realm of democratic education, Westheimer & Kahne (2004) argue that the quality of democracy depends not only on citizens' compliance with the law but



also on their active participation in organisations and the government (participatory citizenship), including their concern for criticising and changing structural injustices (justice-oriented citizenship).

Over the past two decades, digital technology has created new dimensions of citizenship practices. Isin & Ruppert (2020) introduced the concept of digital act. They emphasised that citizens can now convey political claims through various online activities, from hashtag activism to data activism, transcending nation-state boundaries. In an increasingly digitalised and data-saturated society, Hintz et al. (2018) warn regarding the emerging risks of algorithmic profiling, social sorting, and data-driven surveillance. Therefore, the right to privacy, algorithmic transparency, and control over personal data are now integral to citizenship rights in the digital age.

Similar changes are evident in the way younger generations express their political identity. Loader et al. (2014) described a shift from a model of dutiful citizenship that emphasises electoral obligations and party loyalty to self-actualising citizenship. This form of citizenship is rooted in expressions of values, specific issues, and fluid online networks. Bennett & Segerberg (2012) referred to this phenomenon as connective action. Collective movements are shifting away from reliance on formal organisational structures toward collective action, leveraging digital platforms and personalised content.

Numerous international studies support these findings. Social media has been shown to lower barriers to political participation. However, disparities owing to differences in age, educational level, and socioeconomic status remain. Boulianne (2020) meta-analysis showed that digital media has a positive effect on civic and political participation. However, the effect is more vigorous on civic engagement than on electoral participation. Bimber et al. (2015) added that political interests are key determinants. Technology tends to mobilise young people who are already interested in politics, whereas those who remain difficult to reach remain so.

The phenomenon of spontaneous mobilisation via social media, as explained by Margetts et al. (2017), also poses unique challenges to the sustainability of digital movements. A momentum can emerge quickly through "tiny acts," such as likes, shares, or e-petitions. However, momentum fades quickly without organisational support or a long-term strategy. Furthermore, Corbett & Le Dantec (2018) emphasise the importance of trust as socio-institutional capital that cannot be replaced by technology alone. This capital ensures citizens' continued participation in various digital civic programmes.

In the Indonesian context, following the Reformasi in 1998, democracy opened a constitutional space for citizen participation. However, in daily practice, the relationship between the state and citizens is heavily influenced by patronage, informality, and patterns of personalised power (Van Klinken & Berenschot, 2018). Hefner (2023) highlights the dynamics of agonistic pluralism. Citizen groups interact peacefully but remain in conflict over issues of gender equality and religious freedom. Hiariej & Stokke (2022) view Indonesian citizenship as a struggle-based process, born of citizens' struggles against socioeconomic inequality and the dominance of oligarchic actors in local power.

Digital transformation in Indonesia has presented new opportunities and limitations. Lim (2013) called this the phenomenon of "many clicks but few sticks." She described online campaigns that go viral easily but struggle to sustain themselves as long-term social movements. Research by Saud & Margono (2021) also shows that digital media can strengthen youth e-participation, as seen in protests against the 2019 revision of the Corruption Eradication Commission Law. However, conventional participation is still required to ensure that these aspirations influence public policies.

In the realm of local public services, Kusumasari et al. (2018) found important findings in their study of e-health initiatives in Surabaya. The success of digital programs depends on the

synergy between the ICT infrastructure, the political commitment of local leaders, and active community involvement.

These findings demonstrate that while civic technology and social media open new opportunities for participatory democracy, Indonesia's digital citizenship ecosystem faces three major obstacles: (1) the digital divide between regions and generations, (2) identity polarisation that erodes public trust, and (3) the weak sustainability of digital movements focused on electoral moments or fleeting issues.

Academically, this literature review indicates that citizenship studies in Indonesia generally focus on the legal-institutional dimension or temporary social media activism. Relatively few studies have integrated the classical Marshallian citizenship framework and the Westheimer-Kahne typology into analyses of Generation Z's digital practices in the electoral context. Nevertheless, the 2024 election is crucial because Gen Z (along with millennials) dominated more than 52% of the electorate for the first time. Moreover, many digital civics prototypes, including applications, chatbots, hashtag campaigns, and youth-led hoax-reporting platforms, have emerged.

To date, there has been little research reimagining the concept of classical citizenship in light of bottom-up digital civic practices triggered by the electoral process. Furthermore, research analysing the role of Gen Z's digital civic prototype is not merely a campaign tool but rather a civic infrastructure that can expand young citizens' participation and foster a justice-oriented citizenry. Similarly, there is limited research examining the synergies and tensions between digital connective movements and formal electoral institutions in Indonesian democracies.

This research gap is crucial to bridge, so we can understand the extent to which digital innovations emerging in the electoral arena are truly capable of driving a shift in the meaning of citizenship toward a more participatory, inclusive, and socially just direction. Building on this gap, this study seeks to answer the fundamental question of how the Digital Civics prototype initiated by Generation Z in Indonesia's 2024 election reflects the process of reimagining citizenship. To what extent does this initiative open up new opportunities for more participatory and equitable citizenship practices in today's digital society?

To maintain conceptual consistency, this study used several key terms that need to be defined from the outset: digital civics prototypes, civic tech, digital citizenship, and reimagining citizenship. This study focuses on how citizenship is rethought and redesigned in an increasingly digitalised electoral context. The focus of this study is not on established civic practices but rather on digital civics prototypes, namely prototypes of digital citizenship initiatives developed by Generation Z students in the form of platforms, applications, online campaigns, and public aspiration channels. These prototypes are understood as expressions of civic ideas and imagination, rather than as policy interventions or practices widely implemented.

All these prototypes operate within the realm of civic technology. In this study, civic tech is defined as the use of digital technology to support citizen participation, transparency, and the interaction between citizens and democratic institutions. It also constitutes a collaborative ecosystem comprising various non-state actors.

Through this lens, the study understands digital citizenship as a citizenship practice carried out and shaped by the digital space. This encompasses rights, literacy, ethics, and sociopolitical relations, all of which are mediated by social media platforms and cultures. Therefore, the term "reimagining citizenship" refers to the reflective and creative process of reshaping citizens' roles and practices in the digital age. This is a bottom-up conceptual process that emerges from Generation Z citizenship design and discourse in the context of the 2024 Indonesian elections.

The purpose of this study is to qualitatively analyse 11 digital civic prototypes related to the 2024 election to (1) identify new discourses and practices of digital citizenship articulated by Gen Z, (2) assess their contribution to strengthening democratic participation in the electoral period, and (3) offer a conceptual framework of Reimagining Citizenship that reconciles the dimensions of classical Marshallian rights, Westheimer-Kahne's good citizen typology, and the practices of digital acts and connective action that are developing in Indonesia's online public space.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach based on the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) method, as described by Schreier (2012), because it allows for a systematic and flexible analysis of the latent meaning in the text. The research subjects were 11 digital civic prototype documents developed by fifth-semester students of the Political Entrepreneurship course in 2023 in the Political Science Study Program, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Brawijaya University. The eleven prototypes are listed in Table 1.

Table 1.

Digital Civics Prototypes on the 2024 Election

Num	Prototypes
1	SIAP 2024 (<i>Sistem Informasi Partai Pemilu / Election Party Information System</i>)
2	MUARA (<i>Muda Aktif Bersuara / Young, Active, and Vocal</i>)
3	Polthub
4	Neochoice by Neosena.id
5	<i>Sudut Pandang Sedaya (Sedaya's Point of View)</i>
6	RADAR POLITIK (<i>Ranah Pemuda Sadar Politik / Politically Aware Youth Realm</i>)
7	GAPURA POLITIK (GAPOL)
8	Kotak Aspirasi Pemilih (Voter Aspiration Box)
9	PEMILU.CORNER (Election.Corner)
10	EFO (Education for Ourvote)
11	DEMO-DU (Democracy Education for Youth)

Source: Obtained from primary data.

Each prototype was written as a proposal containing a description of the election problem; identification of target groups such as young voters, beginner voters, and vulnerable groups; a design for technology-based solutions, such as chatbots, fact-checking or hoax-reporting platforms, citizen aspiration channels, and hashtag campaigns; and an implementation and sustainability plan. These documents served as the primary corpus for analysis, ensuring that all the data were textual.

The data were collected using purposive sampling. All prototypes deemed suitable by the course lecturer were used as data sources. No additional field data collection, such as interviews or observations, was conducted because the research focused on examining the content and civic discourse in the documents. All files were compiled in a uniform digital format to facilitate processing and analysis. To maintain research ethics, individual student identities were anonymised, and the documents were treated solely as academic output.

The analysis phase began with repeated readings of all the documents to understand the context and issues raised. Next, a coding framework was developed using a mixed-concept and data-driven approach. The concept-driven categories are derived from classical and contemporary citizenship theories, namely the dimensions of civil, political, and social rights according to Marshall, the typology of good citizens by Westheimer and Kahne (personally-responsible, participatory, justice-oriented citizens), and the concepts of digital acts and connective actions to capture the digital citizenship practices of generation Z. Data-driven categories were developed from the initial readings of the documents, including civic-tech features, young voter literacy strategies, inclusion efforts for vulnerable voters, hoax-reporting mechanisms, and gamification elements to increase participation.

Table 2.
QCA Coding Frame

Main Category	Sub-Category
A. Citizenship Rights	A1. Civil Rights A2. Political Rights A3. Social Rights
B. Citizen Typology	B1. Personally-Responsible Citizen B2. Participatory Citizen B3. Justice-Oriented Citizen
C. Digital Acts & Connective Action	C1. Online Campaign / Hashtag C2. Fact-Checking / Hoax-Reporting C3. Gamification & Incentives C4. Peer Mobilisation
D. Inclusion & Accessibility Strategies	D1. Language & Accessibility D2. Digital & Political Literacy
E. Civic-Tech Innovation & Sustainability	E1. Core Civic-Tech Features E2. Sustainability & Collaboration Models

Source: Obtained from primary data.

The units of analysis were defined as text sections containing program objectives, digital features, and narratives on citizenship. Pilot coding was conducted on a small portion of the corpus to test the clarity of category definitions. The results were used to refine the definitions and eliminate overlaps between categories. The next stage was the primary coding of all data using the final coding frame. The coding process results are then abstracted into a matrix that combines each case with an analytical category. This step was taken to demonstrate the variation in findings between prototypes and facilitate the interpretation of emerging patterns across cases.

The coding process was performed by a single principal investigator (PI). To mitigate the risk of subjective bias, this study implemented two analytical safeguards: 1) establishing an audit trail that documented all coding decisions and 2) systematically recording analytical memos throughout the analysis process. This approach aligns with the principles of transparency and reflexivity in QCA, as advocated by Schreier, although it does not include statistical calculations of intercoder agreement.

Table 3.
Pilot Coding – Voter Aspiration Box

Num.	Quoted Text Unit	Main Category	Sub-Category	Analytical Note
1	“The app offers tabs for Candidate Profile, Vision-Mission, and Policy Programs.”	A. Citizenship Rights	A2. Political Rights	Expands public access to candidate information in an organized format.
2	“Users can submit questions or policy suggestions via the Voter Aspiration Box Feature.”	B. Citizen Typology	B2. Participatory Citizen	Strengthens participatory citizenship by enabling voters to directly express aspirations.
3	“The Discussion Forum opens space for public debate on campaign issues.”	B. Citizen Typology	B2. Participatory Citizen	Encourages online deliberation and dialogue among citizens on political issues.

Source: Obtained from primary data.

Analytical Memo: This prototype emphasises participation and political rights by providing an aspiration channel that allows voters to express their views directly. Meanwhile, an online discussion forum connects voters with candidates for a more open dialogue.

The results of QCA were presented through a combination of narrative descriptions and data visualisation. The visualisations included a category distribution table showing the frequency with which citizenship dimensions and digital features appeared for each prototype. The cross-prototype pattern matrix illustrates the similarities and differences in digital citizenship strategies across initiatives.

All the steps were performed to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. As Schreier suggested, the validity-as-fit principle was applied by adjusting categories to remain relevant to the data and research objectives. The analysis's credibility was strengthened by recording analytical memos and presenting original text excerpts as supporting evidence for each category. With this approach, this research is expected to provide a rich picture of how the 11 digital civic prototypes developed by students reflect efforts to reimagine citizenship among Indonesia's Generation Z during the 2024 electoral period.

Results and Discussion

This section begins with a presentation of the findings of the content analysis of the 11 digital civic prototypes developed in the context of the 2024 election. The presentation of the results is not only descriptive but also based on analytical categories that allow for the emergence of patterns and comparisons between prototypes. This was followed by a synthesis to discuss the meaning and implications of the findings.

In the initial section, the analysis results are organised into a final coding frame that summarises the main findings from the Qualitative Content Analysis process of the 11 Digital Civics prototypes. Table 4 presents the distribution of codes for each prototype based on the 15 established categories.

Table 4.

Code Distribution in Eleven Digital Civics Prototypes Based on Fifteen Analysis Categories

Prototype	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	C4	D1	D2	E1	E2	Total
SIAP 2024	2	7	1	1	3	0	2	0	0	1	2	3	3	2	26
MUARA	1	4	2	1	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	2	3	26
Polthub	1	5	1	1	4	1	2	0	0	2	2	3	2	2	26
Neochoice	2	5	1	1	3	1	2	0	0	1	2	2	3	2	24
Sedaya's POV	2	4	1	1	3	1	2	2	0	1	2	2	2	1	23
RADAR POLITIK	2	5	1	1	3	1	4	1	0	2	2	3	3	2	29
GAPURA POLITIK	2	4	1	3	3	1	4	0	3	1	3	2	3	2	32
Voter Aspiration Box	1	6	1	2	5	0	2	0	0	1	3	3	2	2	28
PEMILU.CORNER	1	6	1	1	3	0	2	0	0	1	2	3	2	2	24
EFO	1	3	3	1	3	1	2	1	0	1	3	4	2	2	27
DEMO-DU	1	3	4	2	3	0	2	1	3	0	3	3	2	2	29
TOTAL (All Codes)	16	52	17	15	39	9	26	6	9	11	26	32	26	22	306

Source: Obtained from primary data.

After identifying the code distribution for each prototype across the 15 categories, the next step was to summarise the total code for each category. Table 5 summarises the findings.

Table 5.

Summary of total codes per category (across all prototypes)

Category	Total Codes
A1. Civil Rights	16
A2. Political Rights	52
A3. Social Rights	17
B1. Personally-Responsible Citizen	15
B2. Participatory Citizen	39
B3. Justice-Oriented Citizen	9

C1. Online Campaign / Hashtag	26
C2. Fact-Checking / Hoax-Reporting	6
C3. Gamification & Incentives	9
C4. Peer Mobilisation	11
D1. Language & Accessibility	26
D2. Digital & Political Literacy	32
E1. Civic-Tech Platform Features	26
E2. Sustainability & Collaboration	22
Grand Total (All Categories)	306

Source: Obtained from primary data

Tables 4 and 5 present the results of the content analysis of the 11 digital civic prototypes. Overall, the categories with the highest frequencies were A2 (Political Rights; 52 codes) and B2 (participatory citizens; 39 codes). This indicates that most prototypes focus primarily on providing access to candidate information and on encouraging direct public involvement in the electoral process.

Category D2 (Digital & Political Literacy, 32 codes) also emerged prominently, indicating a strong awareness among prototype designers of the importance of digital political literacy for young voters. Conversely, category B3 (Justice-Oriented Citizen) recorded only nine codes, indicating that social justice issues were not a primary concern in most designs.

Civic-Tech elements (E1:26 codes) and aspects of collaborative sustainability (E2:22 codes) are frequently found. These data demonstrate the platform's technical design and the programme's sustainability model. The elements of gamification (C3:9 codes) and Peer Mobilisation (C4:11 codes) demonstrated creativity typical of Generation Z, though they were not consistently implemented across all prototypes. Furthermore, this study explored variations in the citizenship orientations of 11 digital civic prototypes. Table 6 presents the study's results.

Table 6.

Digital Civics Prototypes, Main Features, Target Groups, and Dominant Categories

Num	Prototype Names	Main Features	Target Group	Dominant Categories
1	SIAP 2024	Party and candidate database, vision-mission information, voter education	Young voters, rational voters	A2 Political Rights; B2 Participatory Citizen
2	MUARA	Equal voice campaign, aspiration channel, representation advocacy	Young voters, young women	B2 Participatory Citizen; B3 Justice-Oriented Citizen
3	Polthub	Online discussion forums, local public issues, voter deliberation	Young urban voters	B2 Participatory Citizen; C4 Peer Mobilisation
4	Neochoice	Candidate information curation, voting guide, rational education	Beginner voters	A2 Political Rights; D2 Digital & Political Literacy
5	Sedaya's Point of View	Anti-hoax education, political literacy content, public opinion	Young voters, social media users	C2 Fact-Checking; D2 Digital & Political Literacy
6	RADAR POLITIK	Hashtag campaign (#CekDuluBarupilih), educational content	Young voters, Gen Z	C1 Online Campaign; D2 Digital & Political Literacy
7	GAPURA POLITIK (GAPOL)	Candidate infographics, election pocket book (BISPAK), gamification	Beginner voters, students	D2 Digital & Political Literacy; C3 Gamification

8	Voter Aspiration Box	Public aspiration channel, candidate–voter discussion forum	Young voters, critical voters	B2 Participatory Citizen; A2 Political Rights
9	PEMILU.CORNER	Election procedural education (Form A5), technical information	Out-of-town voters, voter administration	A2 Political Rights; D2 Digital & Political Literacy
10	EFO (Education for Ourvote)	Voter education modules, videos and infographics	Beginner voters, students	A3 Social Rights; D2 Digital & Political Literacy
11	DEMO-DU	Democracy education, quizzes, digital badges, anti-hoax	High school students, young rural voters	A3 Social Rights; D2 Digital & Political Literacy

Source: Obtained from primary data.

Table 6 shows that although all the Digital Civics prototypes were developed within the same educational and electoral context, each reflected a distinct direction of digital citizenship. Most prototypes are oriented toward strengthening political rights and citizen participation, primarily by providing voter education and channels for public aspirations. Conversely, only a few prototypes explicitly promote the structural justice agenda. This mapping confirms that digital civics prototypes serve as a medium for expressing diverse civic imaginaries among Generation Z. Furthermore, the prototypes reveal dominant patterns and conceptual gaps in the development of digital citizenship in Indonesia.

Based on the synthesis of the findings, this study proposes a concise conceptual model of Reimagining Citizenship by Gen Z in Electoral Times. This model demonstrates that Generation Z's digital civic imagination is built on five main interrelated pillars: 1) open access to political information, 2) expanding channels for public participation and deliberation, 3) inclusive digital political literacy, 4) democratic ethics in electoral practices, and 5) a sustainable civic tech ecosystem based on cross-actor collaboration.

The first four pillars emerged relatively strongly in most of the prototypes. Meanwhile, the structural justice dimension (justice-oriented citizenship) appears to be a weak or systemically unintegrated pillar of this model. Thus, this model not only maps what has already been developed but also explicitly identifies the normative and political vacuums in Gen Z's imagination of digital citizenship.

The following analysis delved deeper into each main category to understand variations in the development of digital citizenship strategies.

1. *General Orientation of Prototypes*

The analysis of 11 digital civic prototypes shows that most projects were designed to strengthen the role of young voters, not merely as passive voters but as active citizens participating in the democratic process. This is demonstrated by the dominance of the Political Rights (A2) category, with 52 code units, and participatory citizens (B2), with 39 code units in the data. This finding indicates that prototype developers view the main problems in electoral democracy as limited access to information and limited channels for public participation, particularly among Gen Z.

This strong participation orientation answers the research question of how Gen Z reimagines citizenship in the electoral context: not simply by going to the voting booth, but by building two-way communication channels among young voters, election administrators, and candidates.

Three original quotes from the document are as follows:

“The Voter Aspiration Box application provides tabs for Candidate Profiles, Vision-Mission, and Work Programs to facilitate voters in a brief overview of the candidates.” (KAP, p. 2)

"Users can submit questions or policy ideas that are sent directly to candidate pairs through the Aspiration Box tab." (KAP, p. 3)

"Polthub provides an online discussion forum for young voters to discuss public issues in their area." (Polthub p. 3)

These quotes demonstrate the shift in Gen Z's digital citizenship paradigm from passive to participatory and deliberative citizenship, with space to interact with candidates and fellow voters.

2. *Inclusion and Digital Literacy as Requirements for Reimagining Citizenship*

The following findings confirm that accessibility and digital-political literacy are essential foundations for reimagining citizenship: nearly all prototypes displayed 26 codes for Language & Accessibility (D1) and 32 codes for Digital & Political Literacy (D2).

For example, Education for Our Vote (EFO) and Demo-DU have developed an election education module featuring infographics and short videos to help young voters understand the election process.

The following three quotes illustrate Gen Z's perspective on digital-political literacy:

"Educational content is delivered through short infographics and video reels to attract the attention of the younger generation." (EFO, p. 2)

"DEMO-DU provides a democracy education module for high school students covering voting rights, election stages, and voting ethics." (Demo-DU p. 2)

"GAPURA POLITICS prepared the Pocket Book for Our Elections (BISPAK) with easy language and simple infographics to make it accessible to beginner voters." (GAPOL, p. 5)

This approach demonstrates that for Gen Z, digital citizenship does not stop at the right to access information. They also ensure equal access to language, formats, and media for all voters, including novice voters and people in areas with limited internet infrastructure.

3. *Voter Ethics and Civic Responsibility Education*

Most of the prototypes also emphasised the role of responsible citizens (Personally Responsible Citizens, B1) through 15 code units focused on anti-golput (abstention from voting), anti-money politics, and healthy media behaviour campaigns.

Original Quote:

"This program encourages young voters to overcome apathy and actively voice their aspirations." (KAP, p. 3)

"GAPURA POLITICS launched the TikTok content #AntiMoneyPolitics to encourage voters to reject money politics." (GAPOL, p. 4)

"RADAR POLITICS is campaigning for the #CekDuluBaruPilih movement to prevent voters from haphazardly choosing candidates." (RADAR, p. 2)

This pattern indicates that Gen Z's reimagining of citizenship still integrates the classic ethical dimensions of citizenship integrity and individual responsibility as a foundation for quality electoral democracy.

4. *Classic Citizenship Rights: Civil, Political, and Social*

The Marshallian citizenship framework presents a distinct distribution: Political Rights (A2) = 52 codes are more dominant than Social Rights (A3) = 17 codes, and Civil Rights (A1) = 16 codes.

The dominance of A2 indicates that the most significant issues identified by students were gaps in access to candidate information, party-track records, and administrative procedures (e.g., Form A5 for out-of-town voters).

Original Quote:

"PEMILU.CORNER focuses on educating out-of-town voters on how to use Form A5 to vote." (PEMILU CORNER 3)

"The Voter Aspiration Box prioritises protecting user data privacy to safeguard their civil rights." (KAP, p. 4)

"DEMO-DU provides access to democratic education for high school students in villages." (Demo-DU p. 2)

Dimension A3 primarily emerged as an effort to reach marginalised groups and beginner voters, while dimension A1 emerged through the protection of civil rights, such as data privacy.

The findings of this study demonstrate the need to reread the classical citizenship framework in the context of the digital realm. In the context of digital civic prototypes, civil rights are no longer defined as freedom. They also include personal data protection, digital security, and resistance to disinformation.

Political rights have expanded in terms of their meaning. Previously, political rights were synonymous with the right to participate in the elections. These prototypes encouraged a shift in meaning to include the right to transparent access to candidate information, the right to express aspirations through online channels, and the right to participate in deliberative public discourse.

Meanwhile, social rights tend to be interpreted more narrowly as access to political literacy and democratic education, especially for beginner voters and marginalised groups. Social rights have not yet evolved into demands for political welfare.

Therefore, this study does not replace Marshall's framework, but instead expands it through the lens of Gen Z's digital practices. This study also demonstrated the limitations of this transformation.

5. Gamification Strategy and Digital Connectivity: Characteristics of Gen Z

Several prototypes adopted a gamification strategy (C3) with nine codes to increase engagement.

Original Quote:

"GAPURA POLITIK presents a Wordwall-based Fun Games with GAPOL feature to test voter knowledge." (GAPOL, p. 4)

"The participants who completed the educational quiz received a digital badge as a sign of completion." (Demo-DU p. 3)

Online Campaigns/Hashtags (C1) = 26 codes are widely used to raise public awareness, such as the #CekDuluBarupilih campaign by RADAR POLITIK, and infotainment content on TikTok by GAPURA POLITIK.

This strategy indicates that Gen Z's digital citizenship practices emphasise interactivity, entertainment, and peer-to-peer networking to mobilise political participation.

6. Social Justice and Representation: A Still Marginal Agenda

The Justice-Oriented Citizen (B3) category had the fewest codes, at 9, among all categories.

Original Quote:

"MUARA, through its Equal Voice campaign, highlights the importance of young women's representation in politics and public policy." (MUARA, p. 2)

This finding indicates that the citizenship dimension oriented toward structural justice and policy change has not been a primary concern for most Gen-Z prototypes. This creates opportunities to strengthen this aspect of future civic innovation.

The weak justice-oriented citizenship dimension of the Gen Z prototype can be interpreted in light of several contextual factors. First, the project was developed within a lecture framework that focused on voter education and procedural participation, rather than structural policy advocacy. Second, the prototype design focused more on quickly implemented technical solutions, such as voter literacy and aspiration channels, than on issues requiring power negotiations.

Third, critical political literacy focused on structural injustice has not yet been fully internalised in Gen Z's digital citizenship imagination. Issues such as representation of disabilities, religious minorities, algorithmic bias, and election data fairness have not yet become prominent. This finding also provides a critical research contribution by demonstrating that inclusive digital participation does not automatically foster the imagination of political justice.

7. *Sustainability and Collaboration*

Most prototypes presented plans for collaboration with the General Elections Commission (KPU), schools, and local communities (E2 = 22 codes).

Original Quote:

"DEMO-DU collaborates with teachers and the Student Council (OSIS) to ensure the sustainability of democratic education in schools." (Demo-DU p. 3)

"Neochoice plans to collaborate with the campus IT community for platform maintenance and development." (Neochoice, p. 3).

"GAPURA POLITICS targets collaboration with regional KPUs to integrate young voter education features into official programs." (GAPOL, p. 5)

The presence of this element underscores that, for Generation Z, civic tech is not merely a digital application. They also view it as a collaborative ecosystem built through a network of partnerships and cross-actor support to sustain civic innovation.

Based on the content analysis of the 11 digital civics prototypes, three main pillars of Gen Z's reimagining of citizenship can be identified: (a) open access to political information, (b) expanding channels for public participation, and (c) strengthening inclusive digital political literacy grounded in democratic ethics.

Furthermore, creative strategies, such as gamification elements, online campaigns, and cross-sector collaboration, are characteristic of Gen Z's digital citizenship practices. However, the agendas related to social justice and representation remain relatively weak. This situation indicates that there is room to strengthen advocacy and build structural justice in the development of future civic innovation.

This research begins with the central question: How do Generation Z Digital Civics prototypes represent the process of reimagining citizenship in the context of Indonesia's 2024 electoral democracy?

The results of the QCA analysis of the 11 prototypes created by Generation Z indicated a paradigm shift in citizenship. Citizens previously positioned solely as recipients of information

are now emerging as participatory actors who use digital technology to access political information, express their aspirations, and engage horizontally with voters and candidates.

This shift reinforces the argument that citizenship is dynamic and continues to evolve with social and technological change (Isin & Ruppert, 2020). The findings of this study also demonstrate how Indonesia's younger generation is attempting to adapt citizenship practices to the logic of digital platforms, while emphasising the importance of conceptualising citizenship in the era of digital connectivity.

Referring to Marshall & Bottomore (1950), citizenship encompasses three dimensions of rights: civil, political and social. The results of this study indicate that political rights (A2) is the most dominant dimension, with 52 code units. This dominance manifests in various features that promote candidates' information transparency, provide channels for public aspirations, and educate voters.

These findings reflect Gen Z's awareness of the still-limited access to electoral information in Indonesia. Consequently, their innovations primarily focus on making it easier for voters, especially novice voters and voters from other regions, to make informed political decisions.

Furthermore, the analysis shows a transformation in the meaning of classical civil rights in digital space. This is evident in the attention paid to personal data protection in the Voter Aspiration Box application and in Sedaya's POV and Demo-DU to combating disinformation and hoaxes. Thus, civil rights are now understood not only as individual freedoms but also as the right to digital security and privacy.

Meanwhile, the social rights dimension (A3) manifests as democratic education initiatives for underserved groups, such as high school students in villages (Demo-DU) and novice voters in rural areas. However, this social dimension remains relatively limited and is more focused on increasing democratic literacy than on ensuring political welfare or representing vulnerable groups.

The subsequent synthesis was conducted using Westheimer & Kahne's (2004) civic engagement typology, which distinguishes among three types of citizens: personally responsible, participatory, and justice-oriented. The study found that the first two types, B1 and B2, dominate, accounting for 52 code units. This pattern was evident in anti-*Golput* campaigns, anti-monetary political movements, rational voter education activities, and the provision of public aspiration channels that encouraged direct participation.

In contrast, the justice-oriented citizen (B3) type appeared in only 9 code units, mainly in the MUARA prototype's "Equal Voice" campaign, which highlighted the representation of young women in politics. The minimal presence of the B3 dimension indicates that Gen Z places greater emphasis on practical participation and individual ethics than on structural advocacy aimed at changing injustice and inequality in political representation.

This phenomenon can be understood as a consequence of the lecture-based project context, where the primary focus is on increasing voter participation and education rather than on policy advocacy that requires structural intervention. This also suggests that the social justice agenda has not yet become mainstream in Gen Z's digital citizenship imaginations. However, awareness of this agenda would provide opportunities to strengthen critical political literacy and justice in the future.

Regarding this study's central idea of reimagining citizenship in the digital age, particularly in relation to the concepts of digital and connective action, several significant findings warrant highlighting. The framework developed by Isin & Ruppert (2020) regarding digital acts of citizenship helps explain how Generation Z uses digital technology to express citizenship through various interconnected microactions in online spaces.

The results of this study demonstrate the presence of these forms of digital acts with several key features, including:

- 1) C1 Online Campaign/Hashtag (26 codes), such as the #CekDuluBarupilih campaign initiated by RADAR POLITIK and educational infotainment content on TikTok developed by GAPURA POLITIK.
- 2) C2 Fact-Checking/Hoax-Reporting (six codes), which is evident in the Demo-DU team's production of educational antihoax content.
- 3) C3 Gamification & Incentives (nine codes), for example, the educational game feature "Fun Games with GAPOL" and quizzes with digital badge prizes on the Demo-DU platform.

These findings demonstrate that digital citizenship practices among Gen Z members emphasise horizontal connectivity and interactive entertainment elements (playful civic engagement), in keeping with the character of the social media culture they follow. This pattern aligns with the concept of connective action introduced by Bennett & Segerberg (2012) and Stellmann & Song (2024), which emphasises the importance of connectedness through peer-to-peer networks rather than hierarchical or centralised forms of collective action.

Innovations in D1 Language and Accessibility and D2 Digital Literacy–Politics confirm that Gen Z's reimagining of citizenship is inclusive, ensuring that all voter groups, especially beginner voters, those from outside the town, and those with low literacy, can participate meaningfully.

Based on these findings, what are the implications for Indonesian electoral democracies? The results have several significant consequences for strengthening Indonesian electoral democracies. First, open access to political information has increased in recent years. Various features, such as educational materials about candidates, work program infographics, and the BISPAK election pocketbook developed by GAPURA POLITIK, play an essential role in reducing the information gap among voters.

Second, deliberative public participation is encouraged. The public aspiration channel on the Voter Aspiration Box and the discussion forum on Polthub provided new mechanisms for citizens to engage with before and during the campaign. Third, it is essential to internalise democratic ethics. The anti-money political campaign and anti-golput call proposed by several prototypes have fostered more ethical and healthy fundamental civic values in democratic practices.

Finally, our findings highlight the importance of fostering a collaborative ecosystem for civic-tech development. Most prototypes include partnership plans with the General Elections Commission (KPU), schools, and local communities (E2). These plans demonstrate young developers' awareness of the importance of cross-actor collaboration in sustaining digital citizenship innovation.

However, this study also revealed the unresolved structural challenges. The lack of public policy support for integrating these prototypes into official election organiser programmes is a significant challenge. This policy gap could limit the reach and sustainability of student-led initiatives.

Furthermore, the results demonstrate the weakness of the justice-oriented citizenship agenda in the development of digital civic prototypes. The low prevalence of the B3 (Justice-Oriented Citizen) dimension indicates that Gen Z's reimagining of citizenship still focuses on expanding access and participation but has not addressed structural injustice or political representation. This situation reflects the urgent need to strengthen critical political literacy and sensitivity to issues of gender equality, disability, and other minority groups so that civic tech innovations not only drive participation but also drive more inclusive policy change.

The results of this study highlight its limitations and the need for further research. This study has several limitations. *First*, the data for this study came from student prototypes and were analysed through document-based QCA; thus, the direct impact on young people in the

field could not be measured. *Second*, there are no large-scale implementation tests to assess the effectiveness of civic tech in increasing participation or reducing disinformation during elections.

Therefore, several research agendas have been recommended. First, a field study was conducted to test the effectiveness of prototypes among young voters. Second, co-creation with election institutions and local governments is required to integrate educational and aspirational features into the official systems. Finally, a long-term analysis is needed to explore the extent to which these innovations can persist and influence civic behaviour beyond election momentum.

This discussion confirms that Generation Z's reimagining of citizenship through digital civic innovations significantly contributes to the development of digital citizenship studies in developing democracies, particularly in the electoral context. Academically, this study advances understanding of the Marshallian concept of citizenship by extending it into the digital realm. Furthermore, Generation Z's ideas integrated the typology of civic engagement with the practice of connective action. They also posited that political literacy was a primary prerequisite for civic inclusion in the era of political *platformization*.

From a practical perspective, the findings of this study have implications for civic educators. Policymakers and election organisers can adopt a more inclusive, literacy-based, and youth-friendly approach when designing public participation programmes. In the future, the challenge is to strengthen the justice-oriented dimension of citizenship. Civic-tech innovation extends beyond mere participation expansion. This can foster critical awareness and promote social justice among all citizens.

This study also emphasised that the findings do not represent the actual citizenship practices of Gen Z nationally. This study reflects on the imagination, discourse, and design of digital civics produced within the context of academic learning. All data were obtained from prototype documents without field observations or interviews.

Therefore, this study's claims are limited to the design level of imaginaries of digital citizenship, not to empirical effectiveness or the impact on voting behaviour. This limitation allowed for a more precise analysis of how Gen Z envisions ideal citizenship in the digital age. Imagination serves as the initial stage before prototypes are tested in a broader political context.

Conclusion

This study seeks to understand how the Digital Civics prototypes developed by Generation Z students represent the process of reimagining citizenship in the context of Indonesia's 2024 electoral democracy. By applying QCA to 11 civic-technology-based prototypes, this study found that the civic practices envisioned by Gen Z moved beyond the classic role of citizens as passive voters.

- 1) Generation Z designed various digital channels and mechanisms to access political information more openly, express aspirations directly, and build horizontal discussion spaces among citizens. This shift in role marks the emergence of deliberative digital citizens, a need for a renewed concept of citizenship amid increasingly *platformized* politics. Citizens are now shifting to participatory actors.
- 2) The developed prototypes identified language accessibility, beginner-friendly formats, and digital political literacy as prerequisites for participation. This emphasises that civic practices in the digital age depend on citizens' ability to utilise technology critically. Therefore, inclusivity and literacy are foundations of digital citizenship.
- 3) Various educational programmes, such as anti-*golput* (abstention) campaigns, anti-money politics campaigns, and calls for healthy media use, demonstrate continuity with the values of personally responsible citizenship. However, the justice-oriented dimension of

citizenship, which focuses on the structural advocacy and representation of marginalised groups, remains weak. This situation suggests that Gen Z's reimagining of citizenship has so far focused on expanding access and participation rather than equitable policy transformation.

The findings confirm that this study reveals a new face in electoral citizenship among Gen Z Indonesians. They promote participatory, inclusive, and ethical citizenship in digital spaces. Insights from the prototypes also reveal areas that still need strengthening, namely, the integration of social justice values into civic innovations.

Based on the research findings and given that the analysed data are prototype documents, this study proposes five conceptual and practical recommendations that can serve as a more measurable and testable basis for future research.

- 1) Strengthening the weak justice-oriented citizenship dimension should be the focus of future research and development. Future research should examine how inclusivity is formulated or ignored in the design of digital civic initiatives. More in-depth qualitative content analyses, comparative studies between prototypes, and design-based research approaches could help evaluate the extent to which structural justice orientations are accommodated in the imagination of digital citizenship.
- 2) Given that this research ended at the design analysis stage, future research could develop a stepwise approach from imagination to limited implementation. Rather than directly measuring the impact on voting behaviour, future research could examine how prototype features are understood, accepted, and interpreted by potential users through small-scale user studies, limited trials, and exploratory interviews. This approach allows us to test the feasibility and relevance of designs without exceeding the limits of empirical claims.
- 3) Collaboration and co-creation with institutional ecosystems must be positioned as objects of study and not merely as normative recommendations. Future research could analyse policy documents, partnership schemes, and collaborative pilot projects between civic-tech developers and election organisers (the General Elections Commission (KPU), Elections Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), schools, and local communities) to understand the factors that enable or hinder the sustainability of digital citizenship innovations beyond the electoral context.
- 4) The development of civic-tech curricula and critical political literacy in higher and civic education could constitute separate research agendas. Further studies could examine how the concepts of reimagining citizenship and digital civics are formulated in syllabi, teaching materials, and pedagogical practice. They could also investigate how these learning frameworks shaped students' normative understanding of citizenship, democratic ethics, and social justice.
- 5) Document-based longitudinal and comparative research should be conducted to capture long-term dynamics. Studies can trace the sustainability of digital civic initiatives after the electoral phase ended. Furthermore, cross-regional comparative studies within Indonesia or across developing democracies could help to identify contextual factors that influence the development, persistence, or stagnation of digital citizenship imaginations.

Overall, this study enriches the literature on citizenship in the digital age by showing how Gen Z Indonesians re-imagine the role of citizens in electoral democracies. Reimagining citizenship through civic tech has been shown to encourage more inclusive and ethical participation while highlighting the need to strengthen the social justice dimension, so that digital citizenship practices not only expand access but also become a means of equitable and democratic transformation.

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