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Educational Intervention Program for Young Voters: Improving Political Knowledge and Voting Behavior in the 2020 Simultaneous Local Elections

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Educational Intervention Program for Young Voters: Improving Political Knowledge and Voting Behavior in the 2020 Simultaneous Local Elections

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ABSTRAK

Rendahnya tingkat pengetahuan politik pemilih muda, yang mana berdampak pada partisipasi politik, masih menjadi fenomena yang terjadi hingga saat ini. Pengaruh pengetahuan politik terhadap perilaku pemilih muda juga masih menjadi perdebatan dan minim bukti empiris, khususnya pengetahuan politik dan perilaku memilih yang ditingkatkan melalui program edukasi tertentu. Oleh karena itu, dibutuhkan sebuah program edukasi yang efektif mampu meningkatkan pengetahuan politik dan keinginan pemilih muda untuk berpartisipasi dalam pemilihan umum. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui efektivitas program edukasi untuk meningkatkan pengetahuan politik dan perilaku memilih pada pemilih muda di Pilkada Kalimantan Selatan. Kami menggunakan desain penelitian eksperimen kuasi dengan memberikan penyuluhan berupa program intervensi edukasi secara daring terhadap 41 partisipan. Seluruh partisipan mengikuti 3 fase pengukuran, dimulai dari fase pra-program edukasi, pasca-program edukasi, dan pasca-pilkada. Program edukasi diberikan secara daring dengan materi terkait alasan menggunakan hak pilih, informasi calon kandidat, pertimbangan memutuskan pilihan, teknis pemilihan, waktu dan tempat pelaksanaan pilkada. Hasil analisis menemukan adanya pengaruh program edukasi pada peningkatan pengetahuan politik dan perilaku memilih pemilih muda. Dengan demikian, program edukasi ini secara signifikan dan efektif dapat meningkatkan pengetahuan politik dan perilaku memilih pemilih muda.

Kata kunci: Pengetahuan politik, perilaku memilih, perilaku, pilkada serentak, program edukasi

ABSTRACT

Young voters' low level of political knowledge, which impacts political participation, is still a phenomenon today. The influence of political knowledge on young voters' behavior is still being debated, and there is little empirical evidence, especially regarding political knowledge and voting behavior enhanced through specific educational programs. Therefore, an effective education program is needed to increase political knowledge and the desire of young voters to participate in general elections. This study aims to determine the effectiveness of educational programs in increasing political knowledge and shaping voting behavior among young voters in South Kalimantan Local Elections (Pilkada). We used a quasi-experimental research design by providing extension activities as an online educational intervention program to 41 participants. All participants took three measurement phases, starting from the pre-education program, post-education program, and post-Pilkada phase. The education program was conducted online by providing materials related to the reasons for using the right

to vote, information on candidates, considerations for making choices, election techniques, and time and place for the election. The results of the analysis found that educational programs influenced the political knowledge and voting behavior of young voters. Thus, this educational program can significantly and effectively improve young voters' political knowledge and voting behavior.

Keywords: Political Knowledge, voting behavior, behavior, local election, educational program

INTRODUCTION

Voters' political participation rate is often used as an indicator of the success of general elections, especially by the government and organizers, including the General Election Commission (KPU) in Indonesia, when holding the Local Elections (Pilkada). From 2015 to 2019, KPU set a target of 77.5% Pilkada participation (Rif'an, 2020). However, in the two simultaneous local elections in 2015 and 2020, the target was always not achieved, with the participation rate being 69.67% and 76.09%, respectively. One age group feared to have low enthusiasm for participating in the Pilkada were young voters. In contrast, in 2019, the Ministry of Home Affairs released a study showing that 55% of the 196.5 million voters were young voters (Fitriyah, Alfirdaus, and Manar, 2021). In 2020, in addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, the political behavior of young voters was also an essential concern in the implementation of the simultaneous local elections as the campaign targets of participants and organizers. It is, therefore, interesting to investigate whether voting behavior can be improved through educational programs (Glasford, 2008; Reichert, 2016).

Various educational programs to increase political participation have been pursued in various regions, such as casual talks, socialization, and competitions involving young voters (Riski, 2019; Blitar City Government, 2020). Especially for young voters, KPU Goes to Campus is an example of an educational program aiming to educate first-time voters, socialize the procedures for holding simultaneous elections with health protocols, and emphasize the importance of identifying the candidate to be elected (KPU Kediri, 2020). Another political education program was implemented by Alfiyah and Tini (2021) but aimed at changing the

mindset of political participation (cognitive aspect), not voting behavior (behavioral aspect). This paper considers that these programs still have weaknesses, namely the absence of evaluation reports following up on the participation of young voters in general elections and the face-to-face method. The question arises, “Does the education program implemented impact increasing participation in elections, especially Pilkada?” For this reason, empirical evidence is needed to explain the effectiveness of an educational program.

Several other studies have limitations regarding political participation that only explain correlational relationships, not causal (cause-and-effect) relationships, using an experimental approach. For example, two studies have found a correlational relationship between political education and political participation (Martini, Azwar, and Pringga, 2018; Julianto, Jaminie, and Prakoso, 2019). Other studies also used a correlational approach to explain the role of ethnicity (Senjaya, 2019), political communication (Goda and Wijaya, 2016), and candidate characterization (Seran, 2018) on political participation. Another research explained the determinants of voting behavior from the perspective of sociology, psychology, and rational choice (Sirait, 2020; Yustiningrum and Ichwanuddin, 2016). Research also described case studies of voter behavior in certain regions in Indonesia (Alfaruqy, 2019; Azis, 2015). This study tries to explain how to increase political participation in voting behavior, especially in the younger generation, through online education programs. This study used a quasi-experimental method to investigate the relatively low political participation, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study was conducted in the province of South Kalimantan, considering that the participation rate fell by 2%. Although not included in the lowest regions in Indonesia, the downward trend was an unanswered question amid the increasing trend of participation in Pilkada in general. The 2015 South Kalimantan Pilkada only reached 66.34% of the central target. Meanwhile, the South Kalimantan KPU set a target of 79% (KompasTV Banjarmasin, 2020). These results illustrated that the level of voters' political participation was lower than the target of

the organizers and became one of the constant experimental locations to achieve the research objectives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Political Knowledge

Political knowledge is essential for a well-functioning democratic atmosphere (Anspach, Jennings, and Arceneaux, 2019). Dolan and Hansen (2020) define political knowledge as a critical concept in political life. It is the key to a person's ability to engage in political life and advocate for their interests. This knowledge includes familiarity with the political system and its institution's knowledge of political and legal figures (Lestari and Arumsasi, 2018) and the ability to make informed political choices for political interests (Stockemer and Rocher, 2016). Political knowledge directs individuals to engage in political actions, including voting in elections (Anson, 2018; Lestari and Arumsari, 2018; Limilia and Ariadne, 2018).

Political knowledge is influenced by various factors, such as gender (Fraile and Gomez, 2017; Dassonneville et al., 2018), awareness of the importance of political participation, and descriptive representation (Limilia and Ariadne, 2018; Dassonneville et al., 2018; Granger, Neville, and Turner, 2020), cognitive skills, information availability, learning motivation (Barabas et al., 2014), news elaboration and accuracy, social media (Park and Kaye, 2019), and environmental and socio-economic policies (Fraile, 2013). Previous research has shown that the political knowledge of young voters was 20-30% lower than that of older voters, and a higher level of education can eliminate the gap significantly, thereby increasing knowledge by 15% (Stockemer and Rocher 2016). However, the effect decreases again after the election (Van der Meer, Walter, and Aelst, 2015). This study wants to find out the difference in young voters' political knowledge levels before the education program, after the education program, and after the Pilkada. We assume that there will be an increase in political knowledge after participants take part in the education program. Hypothesis 1: There is an increase in

political knowledge of young voters before the education program, after the education program, and after the Pilkada.

Voting Behavior

Political behavior itself is defined as an activity that influences government action, either directly (affecting the making or implementation of public policy) or indirectly (affecting the selection of policymakers) (Bode 2017). This activity also includes voting behavior (Bode 2017). Voting behavior is the act of a person choosing one of the candidates competing in a general election (Sirait 2020). One of the things related to political behavior is political knowledge, namely political, factual information, which is the basic concept in studying public opinion and political behavior (Barabas et al., 2014). Various studies have found influencing factors of voting behavior through several approaches (sociology, psychology, and rational choice). The factors are political knowledge (Grobshäuser and Weißeno, 2020; McAllister, 2016; Yamamoto, Kushin, and Dalisay, 2018), political efficacy (Muralidharan and Sung, 2016; Gil de Zuniga, Diehl, and Ardevol-Abreu, 2017), and trust in politics or government (Lee and Schachter, 2019).

Voting behavior is an activity of citizens' participation in general elections in certain areas in the form of determining the decision to vote or not to vote and the reasons (Priambodo, Purwoko, and Kushandajani, 2014). The factors that influence voting behavior are divided into three approaches, namely sociological, rational, and psychological approaches (Yustiningrum and Ichwanuddin, 2016). The sociological approach states that a person's voting behavior is a group experience that follows the political direction of his social environment. Regional factors, socio-economic background, ethnicity, religion, occupation, education, and social class identification can determine voting behavior (Ferdian et al., 2019). Through a rational approach, voting behavior is influenced by a person's motivation based on calculating profit and loss from the decision to vote. A person may vote for a position or political party capable of fulfilling economic goals (Azmi, Astuti, and Fitriyah, 2016). Psychological factors can influence voting behavior through

psychological encouragement or closeness, which ultimately forms a person's political orientation (Haryanto, 2014). A person's perception and assessment of candidates, themes raised for campaigns, and party identification (partisanship) are also essential factors in voting behavior.

One of the groups of voters that the government pays attention to is young voters who are identified with an unstable mentality and have relatively low political knowledge. Therefore, educational programs must improve and direct their voting behavior to be more thoughtful and rational (Suryanef and Rafni, 2016). Generally, first-time voters are young, ranging from 17-21 years old (Wardhani, 2021). In this study, we do not focus on first-time voters in general but rather on voters in the young age category, some of whom might have used their right to vote in the 2019 Presidential Election and others who used their right to vote in the 2020 Pilkada for the first time. There is a particular factor that can influence the voting behavior of first-time voters, namely political knowledge (Damanik 2018; Agus et al., 2020). Julianto, Jaminie, and Prakoso (2019) research revealed an influence between political education and public participation in elections. Damanik's findings (2018) explain that political participation can be formed through social contacts and discussions, while the findings of Julianto, Jaminie, and Prakoso (2019) explain that the desire to participate in political activities will be higher if people live up to the values contained in political knowledge. Political education was significantly related to the voting behavior of first-time voters in vocational high school (*Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan/SMK*) students (Martini, Azwar, and Pringga, 2018). Based on this explanation, we construct two arguments: educational programs can improve voting behavior among young voters and the relationship between political knowledge and voting behavior. Hypothesis 2: There is an increase in the voting behavior of young voters before the education program, after the education program, and after the election. Hypothesis 3: There is a relationship between political knowledge and voting behavior.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental method known as a pre-post intervention study (Harris et al., 2006). According to Sugiyono (2020), quasi-experiments can be used in experimental research, which is challenging to get in a control group. We perform within-subject design, an experimental research design that provides all treatment conditions in the same group (Hastjarjo, 2014; Gravetter and Forzano, 2018). Specifically, we intervene in a sample group and conduct pre-post test measurements to see changes in political knowledge and voting behavior.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants in this study were the 2019-2020 class of the Psychology Study Program, Faculty of Medicine, Lambung Mangkurat University, with 135 initial participants selected using purposive sampling. However, 91 participants were eliminated because they did not complete the survey until the last stage, namely the third survey (phase 3). Forty-four participants were eliminated again, 3 of whom were not eligible to vote. The final sample analyzed was 41 participants with details of 23 from the class of 2019 (56.1%) and 18 from the class of 2020 (43.9%), with an age range of 17–20 years (Mean age = 18.62; SD = 0.782), consisting of 34 women (83.3%) and seven men (16.7%). The majority of the participating ethnic groups were Banjar (70.7%), followed by Javanese (17.1%), and others (12.2%), with the majority being Muslim (80.5%), followed by Protestant Christian (14.6%), and Catholic (4.9%). Of the 41 participants, 16 (39%) stated that it was their first time in the general election, while 25 others (61%) stated that they participated in the 2019 presidential election. We ensured that the number of samples had exceeded the minimum number of 36 people from the G*Power calculation, in which power = 0.80, effect size = 0.25, number of comparisons = 3, and number of measurements = 2.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

Fig. 1 explains the research preparation stage, namely (1) initial problem assessment (baseline study), (2) preparation of educational extension programs and the design of pre and post-test questionnaires, (3) pre-test implementation, (4) implementation of educational extension programs, (5) implementation of post-tests, and (6) implementation of follow-up. The first stage was an initial assessment through interviews with nine students of the Psychology Study Program. The initial assessment result was confusion regarding voting procedures during the pandemic, a lack of knowledge of the competing candidates, indications of not using voting rights, and the need for extension activities on voting behavior. In the second stage, the preparation of the extension program was adjusted to the results of the initial assessment and the preparation of a questionnaire for pre-test needs. Participants were invited to participate in community service programs in the form of education on voting behavior during the pandemic. Participation was done voluntarily. October 10, 2020, was set as the schedule for the educational program. In the third stage, before implementing the education program, participants were asked to fill out an online survey link using [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com) to measure the pre-test of political knowledge and voting behavior (phase 1 measurement: before the education program). In the fourth stage, we ran an educational program consisting of online presentations through zoom meetings from the research team.

The presentation's content consisted of: (1) Why should you vote?; (2) Whom are you going to vote for?; (3) What are the considerations for voting?; (4) When to vote?; (5) How to vote; (6) Where to vote? The content was related to the issue of the COVID-19 pandemic because Pilkada was held during the pandemic. The research team delivered the presentation and ended with a question-and-answer session. In the fifth stage, participants were asked to complete a post-test up to 2 hours after the educational program activities were implemented (phase 2 measurement: after the education program). To complete the findings, the writers carried out the sixth stage, which was a follow-up to measure the significant change in voting behavior in the use of voting rights

in the 2020 Pilkada on December 9 (phase 3 measurement: after the Pilkada took place). Phase 3 measurements were carried out one month after the Pilkada.

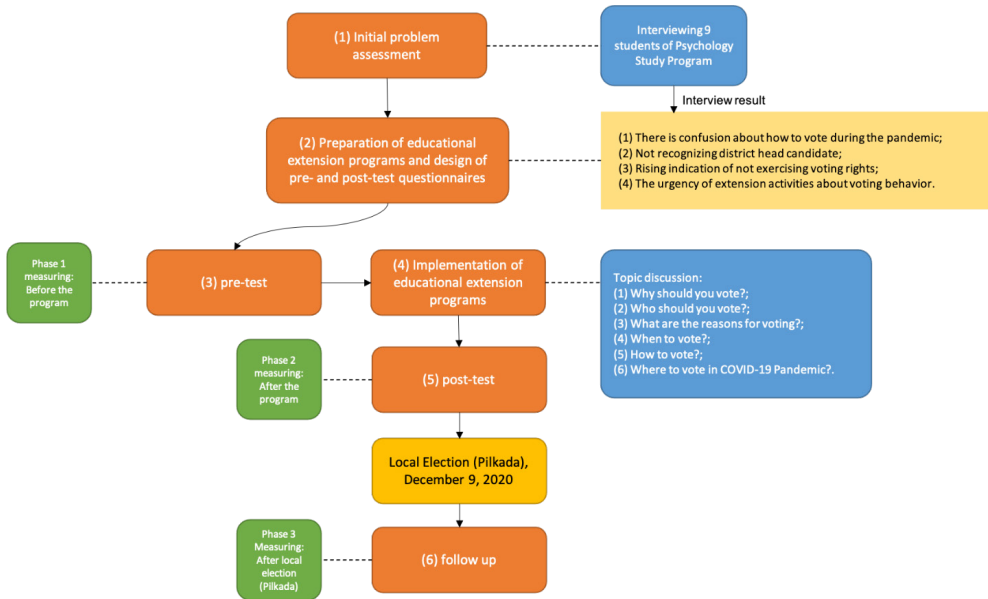


Fig. 1. Research Procedure Chart

Measurement

Political knowledge was measured by asking ten questions related to knowledge of the 2020 South Kalimantan Pilkada. The questions are related to the candidate’s name, vision and mission, candidate’s work program, implementation of simultaneous Pilkada, election date, regencies/cities that also held Pilkada, the age requirement for voters, and health protocol rules, and the voting process. Answer options were known = 1 and don’t know = 0. The same measuring instrument was measured before participating in the education program (phase 1), after participating in the education program (phase 2), and after the 2020 Pilkada (phase 3). Then all participants’ answers were totaled to get the final score. The reliability value at α phase 1 = 0.571, α phase 2 = 0.750, and α phase 3 = 0.706.

Voting behavior is measured by asking about participants' intentions to use their voting right before joining the education program (phase 1). The next phase also measured the intention after participating in the educational program (phase 2). Both phases 1 and 2 had the same question, "Currently, do you plan to participate in exercising your right to vote during the 2020 Pilkada?" There were four answer options available with two score points: Yes, definitely vote (score = 1), Do not know/do not answer (score = 0), Will not vote (score = 0), and not sure to vote (score = 0). Meanwhile, after the 2020 Pilkada (phase 3), we measured the use of participants' voting rights (past behavior) with the question, "Did you participate in exercising your voting rights during voting in the 2020 Pilkada?" The answer choices were Yes to vote (score = 1), did not vote (score = 0), and did not answer (score = 0).

Data Analysis

We used ANOVA Repeated Measure analysis to test hypothesis 1, the difference in political knowledge from interval data between 3 measurement phases in the same sample group. In hypothesis 1, we supplement the test results with post hoc to see the difference between the two groups. We tested hypothesis 2 with Cochran's Q test to see differences in voting behavior in the form of dichotomous data between the three measurement phases. We completed the test with McNemar's test to see differences in voting behavior between the two different phases. The analysis of hypothesis 3 used a logistic regression test to determine the model of the relationship between political knowledge and voting behavior with a nominal data scale. All data analysis was carried out using the SPSS 23 program.

RESULTS

In our statistical analysis using ANOVA Repeated Measure to test hypothesis 1, we found a significant difference in political knowledge between phase 1: before the education program ($M=4.37$ $SD=1.785$), phase 2: after the education program ($M=7.95$ $SD=1.702$), and phase 3:

after the Pilkada ($M=7.24$ $SD=1.714$) ($F(2, 84)=79.776$, $p<0.001$, partial $\eta^2=0.666$, to see the picture of the average value see Fig. 2. Based on Bonferroni's post hoc test, it was found that the average score of political knowledge between phase 2 (after the education program) was significantly higher than phase 1 (before the education program) (Mean Diff. = -3.585 , $p < 0.001$). The post hoc results also found that the average score of political knowledge in phase 3 (after Pilkada) was significantly higher than in phase 1 (before the education program) (Mean Diff.= -2.878 , $p < 0.001$). Although the average value of phase 2 was higher than phase 3, there was no significant difference between the two values in the post hoc (Mean Diff. = 0.707 , $p = 0.051$). These results indicate that participants' political knowledge has increased after participating in the given educational program (Hypothesis 1, confirmed).

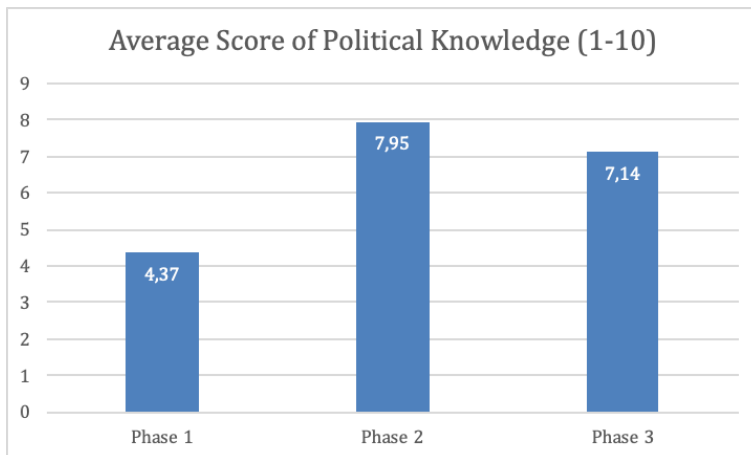


Fig. 2. Comparison of the average score of political knowledge by phase

In hypothesis 2, we used Cochran's Q analysis. We found a significant difference in voting behavior between phase 1 before the education program, phase 2 after the education program, and phase 3 after the Pilkada ($Q(2)=9,294$, $p<0.05$). Then we added the McNemar test by determining the difference in the voting behavior score in phase 1 (as a reference score) with the other two phases in pairs. As a result, we found a change in the percentage level of voting behavior through the

use of voting rights in phase 2 compared to phase 1 ($\chi^2(1)=7,000$, $p < 0.05$). We also found a change in the percentage level of voting behavior in phase 3 compared to phase 1 ($\chi^2(1)=6,250$, $p < 0.05$). Changes in the percentage level of voting behavior in phases 2 and 3 were not significantly different ($\chi^2(1)=0.818$, $p=0.549$). Our findings show that young voters are more likely to exercise their right to vote after attending an education program (hypothesis 2 confirmed). A comparison of the frequency of voting behavior scores is provided in Fig. 3. It shows that voting behavior before participating in the education program (58.5%) increased after participants took part in the education program (75.6%) to the post-Pilkada phase (82.9%). There is an increase of 24.4% from before participating in the education program until after the Pilkada (actual voting behavior).

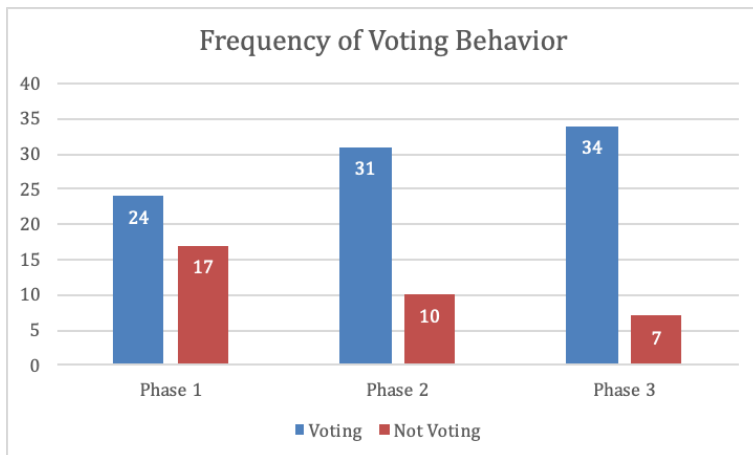


Fig. 3. Frequency of Voting Behavior in three Phases

In hypothesis 3, the logistic regression test was carried out three times according to the 3 phases of the available data. In testing this hypothesis, the predictor variable was political knowledge, while the criterion variable was voting behavior with a dichotomous score (0 = not voting, 1 = voting). The results of the phase 1 logistic regression test found that political knowledge was not significantly related to voting behavior ($B = 0.403$, $SE = 0.209$, $Wald = 3.722$, $p = 0.054$, Nagelkerken $R^2 = 0.134$).

In phase 2, different things were found. Political knowledge was significantly related to voter behavior ($B=0.879$, $SE= 0.368$, $Wald=5.712$, $p<0.05$, Nagelkerken $R^2=0.334$) and increased by $Exp(B)=2.409$ (95% C.I. = 1.171, 4.953) when political knowledge rose by 1 point. In the last phase, we found that political knowledge was not significantly related to voting behavior ($B=0.159$, $SE= 0.241$, $Wald=0.435$, $p=0.510$, Nagelkerken $R^2=0.018$). These indicate that in the initial and final phases, the participants chose to use their voting rights regardless of the political knowledge they had at that time. For additional information, all regression models in phases 1, 2, and 3 have met the requirements of the model feasibility on the results of the Hosmer and Lemeshow test ($p> 0.05$). Thus, hypothesis 3 was confirmed in phase 2 but not confirmed in phases 1 and 3.

DISCUSSION

This study aims to determine the effect of educational programs on increasing political knowledge and voting behavior among young voters in the 2020 Pilkada in South Kalimantan. The hypothesis test results found that there was a significant difference or increase in political knowledge before the education program, after the education program, and after the Pilkada (hypothesis 1 was accepted). Significant differences were also found in the voting behavior of participants before the education program, after the education program, and after the Pilkada (hypothesis 2 was accepted). Young voters tended to use their right to vote more in the 2020 South Kalimantan Pilkada after participating in the education program. In hypothesis 3, we found a relationship between political knowledge and voting behavior during phase 2 (after implementing the education program). Hypothesis 3 was not proven in phases 1 and 3.

In the analysis results, it was found that educational programs could improve the behavior of young voters that ultimately exercise voting rights in the Pilkada. This finding is in line with Martini, Azwar, and Pringgga's (2018) research, which found that political education in vocational high school (SMK) students were related to voting in the Pilkada.

Political education also influenced public participation in voting in the 2015 Pilkada in Gunung Tabur Village, Berau (Julianto, Jaminie, and Prakoso 2019). According to KPU data, the voter participation rate in the 2020 Pilkada increased by 7% compared to the 2015 Pilkada, with the primary factor being the socialization and education of voters (Halim, 2021). Voter education involves many parties outside or within the network with educational programs such as KPU Goes to Campus, the *Rumah Pintar Pemilu* (Election Smart House), and exhibitions and festivals. Compared to previous correlational research, the novelty of our findings is that our findings explain causality, which confirms that providing online political education is proven effective in increasing voting behavior.

In addition, the analysis results also show an increase in political knowledge on the subject because of the educational program. Previous political knowledge was 4.37; then, it increased to 7.95 after the program and decreased to 7.24 after Pilkada. This situation is in line with the results of research from Stockemer and Roscher (2016), which found that educational programs positively impacted increasing knowledge, especially for young voters up to 15%. The increase in education is in the improvement of the human cognitive realm. Chen and Chan (2017) have confirmed that political cognition influences political participation. Political education programs for young voters will increase their understanding of the importance of exercising their right to vote (cognitive aspect); this is one of the considerations for individuals to vote in the 2020 Pilkada.

We encounter this phenomenon of political participation in society, especially among young voters who initially tend to be indifferent to political dynamics. The Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) survey results show that social media is the young voters' most frequently visited media. Up to 60.6% of social media content provides political education, so their political knowledge will increase through reading news and political discussions (Irwanto 2018). In addition, education through socialization and social media has proven to be a contributing factor to the relationship between political knowledge and political participation

(Nurrahmi, 2017). Our research shows an increase in voting behavior by 24.4% by providing educational materials with detailed information on the implementation of Pilkada during a pandemic to information about the selected regional head candidates. We believe that the key to the success of this educational program lies in the match between the participant's needs and the educational materials. The information shared in the educational program are the reasons for exercising their right to vote, information on the selected candidates, considerations for making choices, technical methods of election, time and place of implementation, and, more importantly, convincing participants to be able to exercise their right to vote amid a pandemic with safely.

The analysis shows that political knowledge was significantly related to voting behavior only in phase 2 (after the education program). In contrast, there was no significant relationship in phases 1 (before the education program) and 3 (after the Pilkada). This finding is in line with previous research, which states that political knowledge is related to voting behavior (Singh and Roy, 2014; Pierce and Lau, 2019; Shino and Smith, 2020). Individuals who are more politically knowledgeable are more deeply involved in the voting decision-making and increase the tendency to vote directly (Singh and Roy, 2014). Political knowledge, in general, makes individuals vote for the right candidate's behavior representing their values and preferences (Pierce and Lau, 2019). Geers and Strömbäck (2019) revealed that political knowledge related to voting behavior was not stored political knowledge but political knowledge acquired during the campaign. Thus, we considered that in phase 2 (after the education program), the choice of their desire to vote was determined by the political knowledge they had just gained after participating in the activity.

Meanwhile, political knowledge did not determine voting behavior in phases 1 (before the education program) and 3 (after the Pilkada). In phase 1 (before the education program), political knowledge was not related to voting behavior. These results were considered a result of low political knowledge and the absence of educational programs. In phase 3, political knowledge was also not related to voting behavior. The

political knowledge provided through the education program persisted in phase 2 to phase 3. It is confirmed from the tests, which showed the similarity of political knowledge in phases 2 and 3, where there was only a slight decrease but not significant. Van der Meer, Walter, and Aelst (2015) state that the effect of political knowledge will decrease after an election is carried out as time passes, and voters become less involved in knowledge or political issues as election day passes.

This study has a weakness in internal validity, primarily the reduction in the number of experimental participants. This reduction in the number of participants is a mortality effect that arises due to changes in the composition of the number of subjects during the research process. In other words, the subject does not participate in the complete series of research stages (Cozby and Bates, 2018). This situation is given that participants fill out voluntarily and have the right to leave or stop the research process at any time, and the research time is quite long. However, based on the G^* power calculation, our sample size still meets the minimum number. Another drawback is that during the time lag between phases 2 and 3, our study may have other uncontrolled factors. We believe this study is helpful as a reference for increasing political participation by the General Election Commission (KPU) and the general government. The findings can also be an example of the effectiveness of online political education programs in increasing political participation, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, which requires careful consideration when conducting offline extension programs. Future researchers should involve more extensive and more varied sample sizes to obtain generally applicable findings or to meet the study's external validity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of our research, it can be concluded that the intervention program in the form of online education affected political knowledge and voting behavior among young voters in the 2020 Simultaneous Pilkada in South Kalimantan. Our educational program was online political education with materials about detailed information

on the implementation of the Pilkada that participants would face. The results showed increased participants' political knowledge after the education program but slightly decreased after the Pilkada. Participants' voting behavior also increased after participating in the education program by 24.4% compared to before the education program. Political knowledge gained during online education programs has increased participants' willingness to vote. The education program was given about one month before the Pilkada was held so that participants had the ideal time (not too long or too soon) to reconsider using their right to vote during the election. Our educational program also had the key to matching the information needs of potential voters with the material provided so that the topics presented were quickly accepted and positively impacted participants. This research proves the effectiveness of online education intervention programs based on causal relationships. It can provide strong empirical evidence to form alternative educational programs other than existing ones, such as KPU Goes to Campus, *Rumah Pintar Pemilu*, and exhibitions and festivals. During the pandemic, the opportunity to use virtual education programs can be a real solution to maintain the dynamics of a healthy political democracy.

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