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GENERATION Z'S ETHICAL LEADERSHIP MODEL IN NATIONAL POLITICS: A STUDY OF CERINT IRALLOZA TASYA'S ROLE IN THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (DPD-RI)

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ABSTRACT

Generation Z is increasingly demonstrating a strategic role in the national political sphere, not only as voters but also as leadership actors who carry ethical values and character. This article examines the Ethical Leadership Model of Generation Z in the National Political Space through a study of Uni Cerint Iralloza Tasya, a young person from Minangkabau who is active in the Regional Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia (DPD-RI). This research focuses on how character education shapes ethical leadership practices reflected in Uni Cerint's attitudes, values, and actions in carrying out her political role. The research approach used is qualitative with a character study method, through document analysis, interviews, and tracing activities and ideas displayed in the public sphere. The results show that the ethical leadership of Generation Z represented by Uni Cerint Iralloza Tasya is characterized by integrity, siding with the interests of the community, openness, and strengthening local Minangkabau values that align with the principles of democracy and national political ethics. Character education, whether obtained through family, cultural environment, or formal education, plays a significant role in shaping moral awareness and social responsibility as a young leader. This article asserts that Generation Z's ethical leadership model has great potential to strengthen the quality of democracy and build value-oriented politics, particularly through the internalization of character education and local wisdom in national leadership practices.

Keywords: *Ethical leadership, Generation Z, character education, DPD-RI*



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Introduction

Changing times demand the emergence of leaders who are not only intellectually proficient but also firmly grounded in moral and ethical principles. In the context of Indonesian national politics, ethical leadership is a pressing need, especially in an era where the younger generation is beginning to enliven the political scene. Character education plays a crucial role in shaping leadership qualities that focus not only on achieving power but also on integrity, social responsibility, and exemplary behavior. This becomes even more relevant when considering the emergence of young figures who bring new energy to political practice, one of whom is Cerint Ilaroza Tasya.

Cerint Ilaroza Tasya, a young woman from Minangkabau, successfully entered the national political arena as a member of the Regional Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia (DPD-RI) for the 2024–2029 term, at the age of 24. Tasya's journey is an interesting phenomenon to study, as this success stems not solely from political ambition but also from a strong foundation of character education. Her educational background, family values, and socio-cultural experiences in Minangkabau have all shaped her life principles, which are oriented towards public service and political ethics. The success of a young leader like Tasya opens up space for reflection on how Generation Z can contribute to the development of clean, transparent, and ethically based politics (Rahman, A., Zaenuri, L., & Rowi, S. 2023).

Character education for the younger generation, especially those entering politics, is a non-negotiable aspect. Character education not only teaches formal norms or ethics but also fosters critical thinking skills, empathy, responsibility, and moral courage. In this context, Cerint Ilaroza Tasya is an interesting case study, demonstrating how a young leader's character can develop through formal and informal education, as well as the socio-cultural experiences that shape her identity. Values such as mutual cooperation, honesty, and concern for the community, which are strong in Minangkabau culture, appear to be the foundation of every political step she takes.

Furthermore, Tasya's role confirms that Generation Z has a new perspective on politics, one that combines youthful energy, innovation, and ethical awareness. Her presence in the Regional Representative Council (DPD-RI) not only marks a demographic shift in the legislative body but also presents a leadership model that emphasizes integrity and accountability. This is crucial, given the challenges of national politics, which are often characterized by practices that lack transparency or tend toward pragmatism. By studying Tasya's journey, researchers and the public can understand the process of internalizing character values that shape ethical leadership, while also providing inspiration for other young generations to dare to play a role in the public sphere (Setiawan, A., & Fauzi, E. A. 2019).

The study of figures like Cerint Ilaroza Tasya also serves as a bridge between the theory and practice of ethical leadership. Much of the literature on ethical leadership remains normative or theoretical, but the study of real-life figures provides a more concrete empirical perspective. By exploring their life journeys, educational backgrounds, values, and political strategies, this study is expected to enrich our understanding of how a young leader's character can become the foundation for politics with integrity.

The emphasis on character, particularly for Generation Z, emphasizes that political change requires not only regulations and institutional structures but also the moral and ethical qualities of its leaders. Therefore, this article presents an effort to explore the ethical leadership model of Generation Z in the national political sphere through the study of Cerint Ilaroza Tasya. The focus on character education and the influence of Minangkabau culture provides a unique and specific context, while also emphasizing the relevance of individual experience in shaping ethically grounded leadership. This research is expected to serve as a reference for developing young leaders who are not only professionally competent but also able to exemplify integrity, social responsibility, and dedication to the public interest. (Maramis, R. B. J., & Wicaksono, K. W. 2025).

Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with the aim of in-depth understanding of the ethical leadership model of Generation Z through the study of Cerint Ilaroza Tasya. The qualitative approach was chosen because of its flexibility and ability to explore the experiences, values, and subjective perspectives of the figure more comprehensively. Unlike quantitative approaches that emphasize measurement and generalization, qualitative research emphasizes understanding the context, processes, and meaning behind the phenomena that occur (Setiawan, A., & Fauzi, E. A. 2019).

In this case, the main focus of the study is to understand how Cerint Ilaroza Tasya's character, values, and life experiences shape her ethical leadership practices in the Regional Representative Council (DPD-RI). The primary data source for this study comes from the key informant, namely Cerint Ilaroza Tasya herself. This multi-source approach was used to gain a richer perspective and validate the data through triangulation techniques. Triangulation is important to reduce subjective bias that may arise when relying solely on a single source. (Rahman, A., Zaenuri, L., & Rowi, S. 2023).

The data collection technique used in this study was in-depth interviews. Interviews were chosen because they allowed researchers to explore the experiences, values, and perspectives of key figures in greater detail. The interviews were semi-structured, with the researcher preparing a question guide while still allowing the interviewees to develop their answers and share their experiences freely. Some of the topics focused on in the

interviews included educational background, the influence of Minangkabau culture, personal experiences in pioneering a political career, and strategies used to implement ethical values in leadership. This semi-structured technique provides a balance between research focus and exploratory flexibility.

During the interviews, the researcher also conducted light participant observation of the figures' activities in their workplace and public activities. These observations helped understand how character and ethical values are manifested in concrete actions, both in interactions with colleagues and in public service. Field notes taken during the observations provided additional data that enriched insights and supported the interpretation of the interview results. After data collection, this study employed thematic analysis to systematically interpret the data.

The analysis process began with interview transcriptions, followed by thorough reading to identify emerging patterns, themes, and categories. The themes analyzed included character education, the influence of Minangkabau culture, leadership experiences, challenges as Generation Z in national politics, and strategies for implementing ethics in political practice. Thematic analysis allowed the findings to be presented in a coherent narrative, emphasizing the meaning and relationships between themes, and highlighting the aspects of leadership character and ethics that were the focus of the study. (Maramis, R. B. J., & Wicaksono, K. W. 2025).

Furthermore, to ensure data validity, this study employed several validation techniques, including member checking and source triangulation. In member checking, researchers reconfirmed initial findings with relevant figures or informants to ensure data interpretation aligned with the informants' intentions. Triangulation was conducted by comparing interview data, observations, and supporting documents, thus enhancing the credibility and accountability of the research results. With this qualitative approach based on in-depth interviews, the research was able to comprehensively explore the ethical leadership model of Generation Z applied by Cerint Ilaroza Tasya. This method provides in-depth insights into the process of internalizing character values, the influence of cultural experiences, and strategies for ethical leadership practices, while also presenting a relevant case study for the development of youth leadership theory in Indonesia.

Results and Discussion

A. Ethical Leadership as a Moral Practice of Generation Z

In the context of modern leadership, the concept of ethical leadership often takes center stage, especially when discussing the role of the younger generation in politics. American leadership expert Peter G. Northouse, in his book, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, asserts that ethical leadership is not merely technocratic or managerial skills, but rather a moral

practice rooted in values, integrity, and public responsibility. This perspective becomes relevant when we place Generation Z—a generation born in the digital era and raised with extensive access to information—in a national political space rife with vested interests, compromises, and power dynamics. In daily practice as a member of the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI), ethical leadership for a Generation Z representative is not simply about adhering to formal rules or implementing political mechanisms.

More than that, ethical leadership is a reflection of how moral values are translated into concrete actions. This includes the ability to be transparent, maintain consistency between words and actions, and dare to make decisions that are sometimes unpopular but aligned with principles of justice and the common good. Generation Z, with their tendency to be vocal, critical, and socially impact-oriented, faces unique challenges when balancing moral idealism with the realities of a political landscape full of compromises. (Rahman, A., Zaenuri, L., & Rowi, S. 2023).

In daily practice within the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI), a member's role extends beyond policymaking and oversight of the executive branch. Ethical leadership demands sensitivity to public aspirations, the ability to listen to diverse perspectives, and the determination to prioritize the interests of the people above personal or group interests. Generation Z, with its more open-minded background toward diversity, more readily adopts the principles of inclusivity and active participation in the political process. However, the greatest challenge remains maintaining integrity in an environment that often demands negotiation and compromise.

This is where ethical values play a guiding role, ensuring that every decision remains grounded in clear moral principles, rather than merely political pragmatism. Furthermore, ethical leadership for Generation Z is demonstrated through the ability to responsibly utilize technology and social media. In the digital age, information moves rapidly, and public transparency is increasing. DPD members from this generation have a significant opportunity to build a culture of accountability by utilizing digital platforms for honest and participatory communication. Small actions such as openly submitting work reports, providing clarification on legislative decisions, or facilitating public dialogue can be tangible forms of ethical leadership that reflect the values of integrity and responsibility. (Rahman, A., Zaenuri, L., & Rowi, S. 2023).

Interestingly, Generation Z's ethical leadership isn't always synonymous with confrontation or uncompromising idealism. Instead, this generation tends to seek creative ways to align moral principles with practical political demands. For example, when facing complex policy debates, Generation Z members of the Regional Representative Council (DPD) can prioritize constructive deliberation, build evidence-based consensus, and ensure that any compromises uphold the principle of justice. With this approach, ethical

leadership becomes more than a theoretical ideal, but a concrete practice that directly impacts the quality of democracy and public welfare.

B. Values as the Foundation of Public Leadership

Within the framework of public leadership, moral values are not merely abstract guidelines, but rather the foundation that determines the direction of a leader's actions and decisions. James MacGregor Burns, a key figure in normative leadership theory, emphasized in his work *Leadership* that true leadership stems from a leader's ability to operate through moral values, not solely through power or position. This view is particularly relevant for members of the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI), where political dynamics often demand a balance between public interest and political pressure. For me, the foundation of public leadership lies in several core values that consistently guide every political step.

First, integrity—the ability to maintain consistency between words and actions, so that every decision taken can be morally and publicly accounted for. Second, justice—a commitment to ensuring that the resulting policies and regulations do not favor any particular group, but genuinely consider the interests of the public at large. Third, social responsibility, namely the awareness that every decision made has a real impact on people's lives and the environment.

These values are not merely slogans, but serve as practical guidelines in every aspect of legislative work, from internal discussions to decision-making in official forums. In daily practice at the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI), these values are concretely translated through a transparent and participatory approach. For example, when discussing a regional policy, I always ensure consultation with various stakeholders, including directly affected communities, academics, and relevant experts. This approach is not only for gathering information but also to ensure that every decision taken reflects the principles of justice and public responsibility.

Furthermore, integrity is tested when political pressure arises or offers of compromise that could harm the public interest. In such situations, moral values guide us in choosing the right course of action, even if it is not always popular or politically advantageous. Furthermore, these values also shape our daily attitudes in the political sphere. In interactions with colleagues, I emphasize the importance of honest and respectful communication, so that differences of opinion can be bridged without compromising ethical principles. Political decisions, both legislative and oversight, are always framed from a moral perspective, ensuring that every step is accountable not only to the institution but also to the wider community. Thus, these values serve as a compass that guides behavior, encouraging leadership that is not only administratively effective but also dignified and civilized.

C. Integrity Amidst the Tug-of-War of Political Interests

Moral integrity is a key foundation for ethical leadership, and in the tradition of virtue ethics, Aristotle emphasized in his *Nicomachean Ethics* that integrity does not emerge instantly but is formed through consistent ethical habits over time. In the context of national politics, this principle is particularly relevant because political dynamics are often fraught with competing interests, pressure from certain parties, and the need for complex negotiations or compromises.

For a member of the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI), maintaining integrity is not simply a matter of upholding formal rules, but about moral consistency in every action, decision, and political interaction, even though the surrounding environment may encourage pragmatic or opportunistic behavior. In daily practice, maintaining integrity means cultivating the habit of always evaluating every decision through an ethical lens.

Before making a decision, I always ask myself: is this step in line with the principles of justice, public responsibility, and the broader public interest? This question acts as a kind of internal filter that helps avoid decisions that might be politically advantageous but harm society or conflict with deeply held moral values. This habit, while seemingly simple, requires mental discipline and courage, especially when pressure from interest groups or pragmatic political demands is intense. Maintaining consistent integrity isn't always easy, but by habituating ourselves to evaluating every action through clear moral principles, the decision-making process becomes more focused and less easily derailed by momentary interests.

Furthermore, integrity is also reflected in transparency and openness. In my daily interactions at the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI), I always strive to explain the rationale for every decision to the public and colleagues. This action is not only a form of accountability but also a way to maintain moral consistency amidst political pressure.

For example, when sharp differences of opinion arise regarding a regional policy, I ensure that my position is based on objective analysis, valid data, and ethical considerations, not simply the interests of a particular group. In this way, integrity is not an empty slogan but a concrete practice that can be observed and accounted for, even in complex situations. Furthermore, integrity in politics requires the courage to reject compromises that conflict with moral principles. In the legislative realm, offers or pressures often arise that can facilitate political progress, but risk sacrificing the interests of the people or ethical values. According to Aristotle, integrity is formed from ethical habits, so the ability to say "no" in such situations is part of consistent moral practice. In my experience, rejecting costly compromises is not an impulsive act, but rather the result of deep reflection, prior experience, and an understanding of the long-term impact on society. This habit builds a reputation as a principled and trusted leader, not just one that

is effective in short-term political negotiations. (Hasanuddin, S. N., Ramadhaning Bekti, W., & Satyadharna, M. 2026).

D. Moral Dilemmas in Political Decision Making

In the realm of public leadership, moral dilemmas are an integral part of political decision-making. Rushworth Kidder, in his book *How Good People Make Tough Choices*, emphasizes that leaders are often faced with situations where they must choose between two interests that both have ethical consequences. No choice is completely right or wrong; every decision carries risks and impacts that can benefit some parties but harm others. In the context of the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI), my experience shows that such moral dilemmas arise at almost every stage of the legislative and oversight process. One of the most striking moral dilemmas occurs when discussing budget allocations for regional development projects.

On the one hand, there is the urgent need of the community for basic infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, or educational facilities, which directly affect the quality of life of citizens (Arsyad, N. A., Narimawati, U., & Aseanty, D. 2025). On the other hand, there are demands to support long-term, strategic, innovative programs, such as investments in technological research or environmental projects whose results will only be visible for several years. Both of these choices have ethical consequences: choosing urgent needs means providing immediate benefits, but risks sacrificing sustainable development; While choosing long-term projects can advance socio-economic progress, it leaves behind some communities facing real hardship today.

When faced with such dilemmas, my moral reasoning framework is based on the principles of justice, public responsibility, and sustainability. First, I always emphasize the importance of listening to all stakeholders. The public consultation process is a crucial first step, as the perspectives of the community, experts, and colleagues provide comprehensive information and mitigate personal bias. This way, each decision is not made unilaterally, but through a thorough understanding of the ethical and practical impacts for various groups.

Second, I weigh priorities based on urgency and long-term impact. Political decisions should not be purely pragmatic but must also consider their moral and social implications. This requires mature analytical skills and the courage to take steps that may be controversial but align with the principles of justice. Another dilemma that often arises relates to the conflict between national and local interests. As a member of the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI), I am responsible for representing the region, but every policy passed has national implications. Sometimes, the interests of the region I represent conflict with central government policies or the interests of other regions. In this situation, the moral framework I use is to find common ground that minimizes harm and maximizes

benefits for the wider community. This approach requires flexibility without sacrificing principles; compromises must be made within clear boundaries to maintain integrity and ensure ethically accountable decisions (Setiawan, A., & Fauzi, E. A. 2019).

Furthermore, moral dilemmas also arise in interactions with political interests and pressure from certain parties or groups. Often, a policy can strengthen a particular political position but have negative impacts on the public. In situations like this, I always remember that a public leader's responsibility lies not in momentary interests or popularity, but in the broader well-being of society. Moral considerations serve as a filter that prevents decisions that are politically advantageous but ethically detrimental. Decisions made must be explained logically and morally, so that the public can understand the reasons behind the choice.

Furthermore, I practice continuous reflection as part of my moral framework. Every dilemma, regardless of the outcome, becomes a moment of evaluation: whether the decision-making process considered all ethical values, whether the action was aligned with the principles of justice and integrity, and what impact it had on society. This reflection is crucial for honing moral intuition and building consistency in ethical leadership. Aristotle emphasized that virtue is formed through practice and habit; similarly, the ability to navigate moral dilemmas in the legislative chamber develops through repeated experience, self-evaluation, and commitment to ethical principles. (Maramis, R. B. J., & Wicaksono, K. W. 2025).

E. Role Model as an Instrument for Public Moral Education

Role modeling is one of the most effective instruments in moral education, especially in the public sphere. Albert Bandura, through Social Learning Theory, emphasized that humans learn values and behavior not only through formal rules or directives, but primarily through observing figures considered significant. These figures serve as models that influence how individuals judge what is right, what is appropriate, and how they act in social situations (Arsyad, N. A., Narimawati, U., & Aseanty, D. 2025).

In the political context, public leaders hold a unique position: their every attitude, decision, and interaction are observed, imitated, and sometimes used as a moral benchmark for the next generation. As a young senator from Generation Z, I view role modeling not merely as a personal attribute, but as a strategic instrument for building a healthier culture of political ethics in Indonesia. In practice, role modeling begins with consistency between believed values and concrete actions demonstrated in the public sphere. The younger generation tends to be more sensitive to discrepancies between words and behavior; They can quickly assess whether a leader truly practices their professed values or is merely political rhetoric. Therefore, every action of a young leader,

no matter how small, has the potential to educate the public about integrity, responsibility, and fairness.

For example, when facing complex policy debates, choosing to be transparent, honest, and open to public input serves as a concrete example that political decisions are not just about strategy or power, but about moral responsibility to the public. This kind of exemplary behavior serves as a life lesson for the younger generation, who witness how ethical principles are translated into concrete actions. (Hasanuddin, S. N., Ramadhani Bekt, W., & Satyadharma, M. 2026).

Furthermore, the exemplary behavior of Generation Z leaders has a unique dimension because this generation was raised in a digital environment full of information and openness. Social media, online platforms, and widespread access to information make every action of a young leader easily observed, analyzed, and responded to by the public, especially other young people. In this context, the ethical behavior of a young senator not only provides a direct example but also shapes the public narrative about politics with integrity.

Young people learn that politics isn't always synonymous with pragmatic practices that ignore morality. Through real-life examples, they understand that ethical leadership allows for compromise while maintaining principles, demonstrating courage in the face of pressure, and prioritizing the public interest over personal or group interests. Modeling also plays a role in fostering a collaborative and participatory culture. Young people who see a leader interacting with colleagues, the public, and stakeholders with respect, openness, and ethics will emulate the same behavior.

This impacts how they view the political process, not as an arena for power struggles, but as a space for dialogue, deliberation, and shared solutions. As a young senator, I strive to ensure that every public forum, every meeting, and every communication—both formal and informal—is an opportunity to demonstrate behavior consistent with moral values. In this way, role modeling goes beyond simply demonstrating ideal behavior to fostering a collective understanding of how politics can be conducted ethically.

Furthermore, role models include the ability to admit mistakes and take responsibility for decisions. Younger generations learn from leaders who courageously face consequences, rather than hiding mistakes or blaming others. For example, if a policy has an impact that is not as expected, demonstrating transparency in evaluation, taking corrective action, and honestly explaining the reasons behind the decision serves as a concrete model of moral responsibility in politics. Such experiences are far more educational for young people than mere normative lectures on ethics; they witness firsthand how moral principles are applied in complex, real-world contexts. Furthermore,

the exemplary behavior of Generation Z leaders can influence how young people understand priorities in politics.

By demonstrating that integrity, fairness, and a commitment to the public interest are more important than popularity or personal gain, young leaders shape a new mindset among their peers. This allows for the emergence of a more ethically conscious political generation, one that understands that the legitimacy of leadership is not merely a matter of formal position, but the ability to consistently practice moral values. This role model serves as an “informal moral education” that occurs daily, through observation, interaction, and imitation. (Oktari, Y. 2023).

F. Ethical Leadership: Innate or a Result of Education and Process?

Ethical leadership is often viewed as an exceptionally important quality for any public leader. Lawrence Kohlberg, in his *The Philosophy of Moral Development*, emphasized that moral awareness does not emerge spontaneously but develops through stages influenced by education, value formation, and social experience. This perspective provides a clear framework for understanding that ethical leadership is not simply innate or a natural talent, but rather the result of a long process of learning, experience, and ongoing reflection.

In my leadership journey as a member of the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI), I have increasingly come to realize that ethical leadership is a combination of personal character and systematic learning, with political experience playing a significant role in shaping daily moral practices. Personally, I recognize that some aspects of ethical leadership may be innate, such as empathy, sensitivity to injustice, and a drive to do the right thing. These early values, instilled from childhood through family and community education, served as the foundation that enabled me to understand the importance of honesty, integrity, and responsibility in every social interaction. However, this innate talent or character is only a starting point; without learning and experience, these values do not automatically translate into concrete actions in the public sphere. Consistent ethical leadership requires a process of self-development, practice in decision-making, and direct involvement in complex social and political environments. (Agus R, A. H. H., & Saputra, Y. I. 2025).

This learning process has been ongoing since the beginning of my involvement in community organizations and social activities. My early experiences leading small projects, interacting with the community, and dealing with differences of opinion served as an initial laboratory for understanding how moral principles are applied in real-world practice. In each situation, I learned that morally correct decisions are not always easy and often require the courage to face pressure or criticism.

This experience reinforced my awareness that ethical leadership is not merely rhetoric, but requires the courage to act on principle, even in the face of risk or unpopularity. When I entered national politics, this learning process became even more complex. In the Regional Representative Council (DPD RI), I was faced with various dynamics: regional interests that had to be accommodated, pressure from political groups, and the need to negotiate to reach consensus. These situations often tested my integrity, fairness, and commitment to the public interest. In facing these challenges, I realized that my own political experience is an invaluable teacher: every negotiation, debate, and decision-making opportunity serves as an opportunity to hone moral skills and strengthen ethical habits. This lived experience teaches me that ethical leadership is not a static entity, but rather a quality that is continually developed through practice and reflection. (Oktari, Y. 2023).

G. Political Rationality and Moral Considerations

In politics, the balance between rationality and morality often presents a complex dilemma. Political rationality demands decision-making based on strategic considerations, calculating costs and benefits, and long-term interests. Moral considerations, on the other hand, emphasize a commitment to universal ethical principles that prioritize justice, truth, and responsibility to the wider community. In this context, Immanuel Kant's thoughts on morality become relevant. Kant asserted in his "Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals" that moral actions should not be based solely on consequences or personal benefits, but rather must be subject to principles that can be considered universal law.

This concept, while philosophical, offers important guidance for members of the Regional Representative Council (DPD) in formulating political attitudes and views. When asked about how to balance political rationality and moral commitment, Ibu emphasized that politics is not merely an arena for competing interests but also a space for moral responsibility. In daily practice at the DPD, every political decision and stance must be thoroughly considered. Political rationality is necessary to ensure that policies or decisions are effective, realistic, and implementable. However, Ibu emphasized that effectiveness alone is not enough. Without a moral foundation, political decisions risk injustice, exploitation, or neglect of the broader public interest. Therefore, for me, political rationality is always framed by a clear moral compass.

One concrete example I presented is the process of drafting recommendations for regions still experiencing development inequality. On the one hand, rationally, the Regional Representative Council (DPD) must consider various technical factors, such as budget, infrastructure capacity, and national development priorities. On the other hand, morally, the DPD must ensure that these recommendations not only benefit certain groups or more vocal regions, but also provide justice for disadvantaged regions. In situations like

this, I emphasized the importance of Kant's principle of universality: decisions made must be fair standards for all regions, not just accommodate the interests of a select few.

I also highlighted that the balance between rationality and morality is not always easy to achieve. The political world is often characterized by pressures from various parties, from party interests and lobby groups to rapidly changing public opinion. In the face of these pressures, political rationality may encourage compromise or pragmatic strategies that appear practically advantageous. However, if such compromises violate moral principles, the results can be detrimental to political integrity and public trust. (Oktafien, S., Oktari, S. D., Suhardi, A. R., & Salsabil, I. 2025). Therefore, Ibu emphasized the need for reflection and in-depth consideration before taking a stance. Every proposed policy or view must be tested through a moral lens: Is this decision fair? Does it respect the rights and interests of all parties? Is this decision acceptable as a general standard of fairness?

This approach is also reflected in the way she interacts with fellow DPD members and other legislative bodies. In meetings and policy discussions, she consistently encourages open dialogue that considers multiple perspectives. Political rationality emerges in the form of data analysis, risk evaluation, and measured advocacy strategies. Morality manifests itself in the ethical awareness of not exploiting positions or information for personal or group gain. (Hasanuddin, S. N., Ramadhani Bekt, W., & Satyadharma, M. 2026).

This combination makes the decision-making process more transparent, accountable, and oriented toward the interests of the wider public. Furthermore, she emphasizes that morality in politics is not only about avoiding wrong decisions, but also about proactively shaping policies that promote the common good. In this regard, Kant's philosophy serves as an important guideline. Kant's universal moral principles encourage her to assess each policy not only by its impact on the present but also by its acceptable long-term ethical standards. For example, in environmental and sustainable development issues, rational political decisions must consider economic and technical costs, but moral decisions must also consider the rights of future generations to a healthy environment. In other words, political rationality and morality are not mutually exclusive, but rather complement each other in determining the right and just policy direction.

H. Transforming Political Culture through Ethical Leadership

Indonesia's national political culture has often been considered pragmatic, colored by considerations of short-term interests, political compromise, and strategic calculations that sometimes ignore ethical values. In this context, the theory of transformational leadership developed by Bernard M. Bass provides a relevant framework. Bass emphasizes that an effective leader not only manages an organization or policies technically but also is able to influence existing values, norms, and culture. Such leaders become agents of change

capable of transforming individual and organizational behavior, creating new, more moral and civilized standards.

In politics, this principle is crucial, as political values and culture are shaped by the behavior and attitudes of leaders and their interactions with the public. Ibu believes that the ethical leadership of Generation Z has real potential to bring about change in the national political culture. Generation Z, born and raised in the digital era, possesses unique characteristics that distinguish them from previous generations. They tend to be critical, open to new ideas, and have a high awareness of issues of social justice, the environment, and integrity. In politics, these characteristics can be important assets for encouraging more ethical, transparent, and responsible practices. Ibu emphasized that despite the great potential, the success of Generation Z's ethical leadership is not automatic. Transforming political culture requires awareness, consistency, and the courage to uphold moral principles, especially when facing pragmatic pressures or strong political interests.

According to Ibu, ethical leadership can influence political culture through several interrelated mechanisms. First, through personal example and integrity. Young leaders who uphold ethical principles can demonstrate that politics is not always synonymous with moral compromise or pragmatic interests. (Setiawan, A., & Fauzi, E. A. 2019). Consistency in upholding honesty, transparency, and justice sets a new standard for political colleagues and the public to emulate. Ibu believes that such examples are an important foundation for building a more civilized political culture, as political norms and values are often derived from the behavior of leaders at the highest levels. Second, the ethical leadership of Generation Z can transform political culture through innovations in public participation.

This generation is accustomed to utilizing technology and social media to express aspirations, advocate for policies, and build social awareness. In politics, this opens up space for more transparent and inclusive participation, while reducing long-entrenched transactional practices. By empowering citizens through digital platforms and facilitating public involvement in decision-making, young leaders can instill the values of accountability and integrity, thereby gradually shaping a political culture that values ethics and civility.

Third, ethical leadership emphasizes the integration of moral principles into policymaking. Generation Z tends to be more sensitive to the social, environmental, and human rights implications of every policy they promote. For example, in regional development issues, policies adopted not only emphasize economic growth but also pay attention to social justice, environmental sustainability, and the rights of affected communities.

This approach, according to Ibu, can gradually foster new norms in national politics, placing integrity and moral responsibility as the foundation of decision-making. Ibu also recognizes that transforming political culture is not an instant process (Hasanuddin, S. N., Ramadhani Bekt, W., & Satyadharma, M. 2026). Obstacles from long-standing pragmatic practices, pressure from established political interests, and frequently changing public expectations can slow change. However, Ibu emphasizes that ethical leadership among Generation Z has the capacity to face these challenges, especially if they are able to combine personal integrity with the ability to innovate and the courage to uphold moral values. This awareness, Ibu believes, is key to ensuring that political culture transformation is not merely rhetoric but becomes real, sustainable change.

I. Political Experience as a Process of Forming Moral Awareness

Political experience is one arena that intensely shapes a person's moral awareness, particularly in the context of carrying out public mandates. David A. Kolb, in his book *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*, emphasizes that direct experience is not only a means of learning but also a primary source of value reflection and character formation.

In practice, political experience is not merely an administrative routine or a legislative mechanism, but rather a continuous learning process regarding ethics, responsibility, and leadership. For me, my time serving in the Regional Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia (DPD RI) was a rich platform for moral experience, ultimately shaping my perspective and awareness of the meaning of leadership responsibility in the public sphere. From the beginning of my tenure in the DPD RI, I realized that this position is not simply a symbol of power or political achievement.

The mandate bestowed upon me by the public carries vast moral implications. Every decision, every policy I participate in formulating, and every interaction with the public has a real impact on the lives of many. From this experience, I began to understand that leadership is not only about the ability to organize or influence, but more importantly, about the moral awareness to prioritize the public interest over personal or group interests. There have been many moments where I have had to face the dilemma of shifting short-term political interests and the broader interests of society. In such circumstances, the reflection on the values taught by Kolb has been particularly important; I have been forced to weigh not only what is politically achievable, but also what is ethically right and just for society. (Agus R, A. H. H., & Saputra, Y. I. 2025).

J. Transmission of Values to the Next Political Generation

In the context of character education, Thomas Lickona, through his work "Educating for Character," emphasizes the importance of transmitting values from one generation to the next. Moral values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and integrity are not only

needed in personal life but are also crucial in the political realm. Lickona asserts that without consistent transmission of values, society's moral quality can decline, and political practice risks losing its ethical orientation. As a young leader with experience and insight in politics, I feel it is crucial to convey normative messages to the younger generation so that they remain steadfast in their core values when engaging in national politics. Politics is not merely an arena for competition or a struggle for power, but a means to serve the community and build the nation. Therefore, value orientation must be the primary foundation of every political step taken.

The first message I want to convey is honesty as the primary foundation of leadership. The younger generation must understand that political promises and decisions must always be based on the truth. Prioritizing honesty not only builds public trust but also protects a politician's personal integrity. In practice, honesty can be demonstrated through policy transparency, open communication with the public, and consistency between words and actions.

By practicing honesty from the outset of their political careers, young people can avoid the pitfalls of manipulative and corrupt political practices. The second message is social responsibility and political ethics. Every political decision has a broad impact on society, so young politicians must always weigh the consequences of their actions. In today's digital age, the public can quickly learn about a politician's actions, so responsibility is not only internal but also external. Young people must instill the principle that the interests of the people must always take precedence over personal or group interests. For example, when formulating public policy, moral considerations and social justice must be prioritized, not simply short-term political gain. Furthermore, concern for humanitarian values is also an important message. Healthy politics is not just about winning votes, but about fighting for the welfare and rights of all citizens, including minorities and vulnerable groups. Young people must be taught to view politics as a means to build an inclusive, just, and civilized society. Empathy and the ability to listen to the aspirations of the people are important competencies that must be developed from the outset of a political career. (Setiawan, A., & Fauzi, E. A. 2019).

The transmission of these values also needs to be carried out consistently through political education, mentoring, and practical experience. The younger generation needs concrete examples of leaders who practice moral values, not just theory. Therefore, the role of senior political leaders as role models is crucial in shaping the character of young politicians. They must be figures who demonstrate that politics with integrity and ethics is not a utopia, but something that can be achieved through commitment and consistency.

Finally, the normative message I want to convey is that dignified politics begins with individual awareness of moral values. Each generation faces its own challenges, but if

fundamental values such as honesty, responsibility, justice, and empathy are consistently instilled, the younger generation can become agents of change that strengthen the moral quality of society. With a clear value orientation, they will not be led astray by the temptations of pragmatic or opportunistic political practices. Instead, they will become leaders capable of leading the nation towards progress based on integrity and justice (Dewi, F. S. 2025).

Conclusion

Generation Z's ethical leadership in the national political sphere emphasizes moral practices based on values, integrity, and public responsibility. Young leaders view leadership not merely as technocratic skills or political strategy, but as a representation of a consistent ethical attitude in decision-making, even when faced with competing political interests. Values such as honesty, justice, and responsibility are the main foundations that are concretely translated into every political policy and action, so that ethical leadership is not only normative, but also practical and tangible for society. Moral integrity and consistency are key in addressing ethical dilemmas that frequently arise in political practice. Generation Z leaders view moral dilemmas as challenges to uphold principles, not mere compromise, with a clear and reflective framework of consideration. Role modelling is also considered an instrument for public moral education; the actions and attitudes of young leaders serve as examples for the next generation, so that ethical awareness and political responsibility can be effectively transmitted.

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