

# THE CREATIVITY OF INDONESIA'S "GENERATION Z" IN DRAWING ILLUSTRATIONS

<sup>1</sup>Pujiyanto, <sup>2</sup>Dennaya Cintya Danastri

<sup>1,2</sup>Malang State University, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup>pujiyanto.fs@um.ac.id, <sup>2</sup>naya.cintya.fv@um.ac.id

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8004-2179>

## Abstract

Illustrations created by Generation-Z students of Indonesian Junior High Schools have been a hot topic among practitioners and academics because they have a high level of creativity like experienced designers. The works of the winners of the National Student Art Competition Festival organized by the Indonesian National Achievement Center have attracted the researchers' interest in studying more deeply. The objects of research studied were the works of the top 3 winners of the National level illustration competition, including works from the East Java, West Java, and Special Region of Jakarta Provinces. Data mining in this study was carried out through observing the students' working process, observing work product; interviewing students, judges, practitioners and academics related to the works created; and document data containing Technical Instructions for the implementation of competition, illustration works, and minutes of the competition winners stored at the Indonesian Talent Development Center under Indonesian National Achievement Center's auspice. All data results were validated using triangulation process and then analyzed using *creative product analysis matrix* (CPAM) theory suggested by Bessemer and Treffinger. From the results of study, it can be concluded that the illustration works created by Generation Z, namely Junior High School students, are directed toward a cartoon illustration style with the following values: (1) novelty encompassing the themes, ideas, and creative processes carried out by students; (2) resolution including digital engineering and intended design, and (3) elaboration & synthesis including aesthetics and impact on the illustration work.

**Keywords:** creativity, generation z, champion, illustration

## INTRODUCTION

Junior High School students are Generation Z children born in the technological era, aged around 12-18 years (Thakur & D'Cunha, 2024). They create art and design, one of which is drawing illustrations, although in participating in competitions they are not only chasing prizes, but also improve their creative skills. To encourage their creativity, stimulation, challenges, ideas, and expression are needed (Bureekhampun et al., 2021). In their self-development, they need a concept of creativity combining cognitive, physical, emotional, technological, social, and cultural aspects. Creativity can also be used as a learning development tool including the evaluation of authentic data sources and the identification of creative ideas (Sirajudin et al., 2021). Learning through the National Student Art Competition Festival is carried out based on independent environmental adaptation in creative thinking to design a work (Srikongchan et al., 2021).

National competitions are more appealing to Generation Z because they challenge them to improve their emotional learning to gain high achievement (Sun & Hsieh, 2018). To improve their illustration skill, a cognitive learning process to produce the best work is required (Aldalalah, 2022). Socio-cultural environment also serves as a learning resource for the students as Generation Z in enriching their ideas visualized in their illustrations (Dewi et al., 2021). The social and cultural environment where the students learn and develop can influence the character of their illustrations (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021). The social environment, including information, social, and cultural interactions with students, according to Munandar (2002), can influence their creativity in their work.

Through creativity, they transfer ideas from their socio-cultural environment holistically into new and different works (Ryden & Sposato, 2020). The development of information and communication technology influences Generation Z's skills in activities such as drawing illustrations. This information and communication technology stimulates Generation Z's motivation to produce better and higher-quality work with added value (Pujiyanto, 2019). Handayani (2017) added that the existence of information and communication technology and socio-culture aspects can stimulate Generation Z to improve the better product of illustration work.

Illustration works designed by generation z are a media delivered to the public in the form of two-dimensional visual scribbles (Savitri & Setiawan, 2018). The scribbles in question are in the form of illustrations

as a medium for delivering messages personally or in groups to evoke the audience's responses (Lin & Wu, 2016). Illustrations made by generation z as the output of a National-level competition organized by the Indonesian Talent Development Center have added value, especially in terms of technology, communication, and aesthetics rarely done by generation z in general. It is this that makes the author interested in studying more deeply the winners' illustrations in the 2024 National Student Art Competition Festival.

## METHOD

This research on creativity in illustration works produced by generation z of Junior High School students was conducted systematically. This research is an assumption of integration between theory, practice, and work produced by students based on the context of problem (Davison et al., 2004). The object of research is illustration works by Aria Hanan Akbar Narendra (a student of SMPN 2 Tulungagung, East Java Province as the 1<sup>st</sup> winner at National level), Gwenna Irene Winata (a student of SMPN 4 Bogor, West Java Province as the 2<sup>nd</sup> winner at National level), and Kayla Aida Daniswara (a student of SMP ACS Jakarta, Special Capital Region of Jakarta Province as the 3<sup>rd</sup> winner at National level).

Observation and scrutiny were conducted in Best Western Hotel of Jakarta as a venue for the 4-day activities starting from the competition to the illustration exhibition. Observation was carried out to determine the students' design process from developing ideas to producing works, while scrutiny was a process of examining visually the works selected as the top 3 winners. Interview was conducted spontaneously by posing questions to the resource persons, including Dadang Sudrajat (56 years old) as a jury; Agung Eko Budi Waspada (62 years old) as a lecturer in the Bandung Institute of Technology; and Ardian Syah (45 years old) as a DC Comics illustrator. Document data consisted of Technical Instructions for the implementation of competition, minutes of the competition winners, illustration works, and other documents stored in the Indonesian Talent Development Center. All the data results were then validated using triangulation and then analyzed using *creative product analysis matrix* (CPAM) theory suggested Bessemer and Treffinger leading to *novelty*, *resolution*, and *elaboration & synthesis* (Callahan, 2004; Iswantara, 2017).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The illustration competition event in the National Student Art Festival and Competition for Junior High School Education level held on July 8-11, 2024 in the Best Western Hotel Jakarta produced the best illustration works. Based on the Head of Indonesian Talent Development Center's decision No. 1283 / JT.1 / PN.00 / 2024 regarding the Assessment Results and Determination of the Top 3 Winners for the illustration competition branch themed "No Day Without Achievement", the top winners are shown in the table and figure below:

Table: The Top 3 Winners of the National Illustration Competition

NO	NAMA	ORIGIN SCHOOL	TITLE OF WORK	AWARD
1	Aria Hanan A. Narendra	SMPN 2 Tulungagung of East Java Province	<i>Melesat meraih mimpi dengan prestasi seni</i> (Sprinting to make the dream come true with artistic achievement)	Gold medal
2	Gwenna Irene Winata	SMPN 4 Bogor of West Java Province	<i>Susun langkah menuju impian dengan berprestasi sejak dini</i> (Arrange the steps to make the dream come true through gaining achievement earlier)	Silver medal
3	Kayla Aida Daniswara	SMP ACS Jakarta of Special Capital Region of Jakarta Province	<i>Menuju generasi emas 2045</i> (Going to golden generation of 2045)	Bronze medal



Figure: Illustration works by the Winners

The winners' works can be described as follows: (1) Illustration work by Aria Hanan Akbar Narendra is entitled "*Melesat meraih mimpi dengan prestasi seni* (Sprinting to make the dream come true with artistic achievement)" as his dream comes true to become the 1<sup>st</sup> National Champion. Aria visualizes the students' activities in gaining achievements, especially in the field of art. Aria did not find much difficulty in creating his work because of numerous diverse art, social, cultural, and natural resources, such as dance, music, Javanese eagles to images of the Capital City of the Archipelago housing Indonesia's diverse riches. (2) Illustration work made by Gwenna Irene Winata from the West Java Province is entitled "*Susun langkah menuju impian dengan berprestasi sejak dini* (Arrange the steps to make the dream come true through gaining achievement earlier)" reminding and encouraging the students to arrange the steps to gain achievement from early age. Gwenna delivers the message visually through the main object of a shining book symbolizing the source of knowledge as a medium to make their dreams come true. It is this Gwenna's work that can lift her to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> winner at the National level. (3) The illustration work designed by Kayla Aida Daniswara from the Special Capital Region of Jakarta Province is entitled "*Menuju generasi emas 2045* (Going to golden generation of 2045)" visualizing six talented persons at the top of the Garuda Palace, *Ibukota Nusantara* (the Capital of Archipelago) combined with several stairs. This visual, according to Kayla, describes the Indonesian young generations' journey toward the Golden Generation of 2045, needing preparation physically, mentally, and emotionally, particularly among the students as the successors of nation's struggle. It is this interesting and encouraging work and description for the young generation that makes her work worthy of being the 3<sup>rd</sup> winner at the National level.

All of these works are aimed at high-achieving children as the Indonesia's future golden young generation. Generation Z is expected to maintain and develop social, cultural, and artistic endeavors integrating technology (Agung et al., 2025). The illustrations produced by Generation Z are highly creative and match the target audience. Dadang Sudrajat explained that the students' illustrations adhered to the national theme of "*Tiada Hari Tanpa Prestasi* (No Day without Achievement)," thus visually depicting the children participating in artistic and sports activities. The socio-cultural background of the area from which they come, according to Agung Eko Budi Waspada, influences the visual style displayed in the illustrations, creating a sense of local genius. Ardian Syah stated that the works produced through a creative process involving digital engineering have a positive impact and high aesthetic value.

Creativity through *novelty* is implemented by Generation Z through themes, ideas, and creative processes. The main theme provided by the Indonesian Talent Development Center, "*Tiada Hari Tanpa Prestasi* (No Day without Achievement)," can influence Generation Z in creating illustrations. Novelty is the exploration and reinforcement of topics discussed widely to produce new works useful to the public (Haqqi & Risnita, 2023). To creative children, this novelty is developed into hot issues, such as the archipelago's socio-culture, the emergence of nation's children excelling in sports and arts, and the golden generation's hopes in 2045. To visualize these objects, students as participants in the National-level competition undertake the creative process very enthusiastically. Through high motivation, they are always active so that they are technically able to avoid challenges. They understand digital engineering technology so that they can engineer images in designs giving them a new, original breath so that the images, colors, and composition match the message delivered.

Generation Z's creativity through *resolution* is achieved through a design process with digital technology help. Resolution is to construct images through information delivered through art and technology (Abdulfattah et al., 2021). It is not surprising that this generation designs information media in the form of illustrations using computer hardware and software for better and more engaging results. They design illustrations entirely using computer technology, resulting in novel visual styles and techniques. The use of visual engineering through computer technology results in illustrations leading futuristic design. Image objects are put throughout the drawing plane in a cartoon illustration style, presenting simple and cute objects as they are aimed at Junior High School students. All objects are organized in a *picture window layout* depicting crowds and happiness arranged within a single frame. This arrangement feels lively, cheerful, and soft, supported by colors leading green and light brown (cream), encouraging peers to pursue achievement in their fields.

Creativity through *Elaboration & Synthesis* can be seen on the aesthetic side and the positive impact of illustration work on the audience watching it. Based on aesthetics, the illustration media created by generation z tends to be asymmetrical composition but has the same balance and strength supporting each other in informing the message delivered. Visually, *the picture window layout style* indicates the delivery of various unified messages for Indonesian children as an intelligent generation. This nationalist message is delivered consciously by students as the fighters in the National Student Art Festival and Competition reminding their peers to prepare themselves for a golden Indonesia in 2045. Observed and examined carefully, the image objects and colors are blending in delivering the message of appeal for students to be determined to pursue achievements as suggested by the main theme "*Tiada Hari Tanpa Prestasi (No Day without Achievement)*". Illustrations by Generation Z telling the activities of students in striving for achievements have a positive impact on those viewing them, so that their work can convince, persuade, and influence the audience to follow the message delivered (Aprilistya et al., 2023).

## CONCLUSION

Generation Z, in drawing illustrations, is not only motivated by students themselves but also supported by environmental motivation. An interesting environment, such as social, cultural, and technological environment, can stimulate them in creativity manifested in illustration images. Creativity is, according to Burnette (2013), a way and strategy the Generation Z uses in learning systematically related to socio-cultural groups, and technology. Creativity can make the Junior High School students the generation Z with resilience in independence, confidence, never giving up in facing science development, technology and art, dare to try useful innovative works, and having strong sportsmanship and responsibility for the work they produce. In drawing, Junior High School students choose a cartoon illustration style needing high creativity based on the elements of *novelty*, *resolution*, and *elaboration & synthesis*. In the element of novelty creativity, students determine theme, explore ideas, and undertake creative process in working. In the element of resolution creativity, they carry out digital engineering to produce competent illustration works. In the elaboration & synthesis creativity element, they take into account the aesthetic weight of design and the positive impact of message the students deliver on the audience visually and verbally.

## REFERENCES

- Abdulfattah, M. E., Novamizanti, L., & Rizal, S. (2021). Super Resolution pada Citra Udara menggunakan Convolutional Neural Network. *ELKOMIKA: Jurnal Teknik Energi Elektrik, Teknik Telekomunikasi, & Teknik Elektronika*, 9(1), 71. <https://doi.org/10.26760/elkomika.v9i1.71>
- Agung, Y. A., Anggreni, N. K. A., Dewi, N. K. U. M., Butul, A. M., & Rianto, F. (2025). GENERASI MUDA INDONESIA EMAS 2025 SERTA PERANNYA DALAM TEKNOLOGI, PELESTARIAN SENI DAN KEHIDUPAN SOSIAL BUDAYA. *PROSIDING PEKAN ILMIAH PELAJAR*. <https://e-journal.unmas.ac.id/index.php/pilar/article/view/11280/8345>
- Aldalalah, O. M. A. A. (2022). Employment the Word Cloud in Brainstorming via the Web and Its Effectiveness in Developing the Design Thinking Skill. *International Journal of Instruction*, 15(1), 1045–1064. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2022.15159a>

- Anwar, G., & Abdullah, N. N. (2021). Inspiring future entrepreneurs: The effect of experiential learning on the entrepreneurial intention at higher education. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 6(2), 183–194. <https://doi.org/10.22161/ijels.62.26>
- Aprilistya, A., Azhari, C. V., & Pramesti, C. A. (2023). DAMPAK MEDIA SOSIAL TERHADAP PENURUNAN NILAI MORAL DAN ETIKA GENERASI MUDA. *Indigenous Knowledge*, 2(2), 150–157.
- Bureekhampun, S., Techakarnjanakij, K., & Supavarasuwat, P. (2021). Thai Seven Year Old Early Learner Creativity Design and Study Activities Promotion. *International Journal of Instruction*, 14(4), 337–356. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2021.14420a>
- Burnette, C. (2013). *Creativity in Design Thinking*.
- Callahan, C. M. (2004). *Program Evaluation in Gifted Education* (Corwin Pre).
- Davison, R., Martinsons, M. G., & Kock, N. (2004). Principles of canonical action research. *Information Systems Journal*, 14(1), 65–86. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2575.2004.00162.x>
- Handayani, R. D. (2017). ANALISIS MOTIVASI INTRINSIK DAN EKSTRINSIK MAHASISWA CALON GURU FISIKA. *Jurnal Kependidikan, Fakultas Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Jember*, 1(2), 320–333. <https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/jk/article/view/8449/pdf>
- Haqqi, A., & Risnita. (2023). Unsur Kebaruan (Novelty) dalam Penelitian: sebuah kajian literatur tentang Implementasi Kebaruan dalam sebuah penelitian. *Nazharat: Jurnal Kebudayaan*, 29(2), 221–230. <https://doi.org/10.30631/nazharat.v29i2.114>
- Iswantara, N. (2017). *Kreativitas: Sejarah, Teori & Perkembangan*. Gigih Pustaka Mandiri.
- Lin, C.-S., & Wu, R. Y.-W. (2016). Effects of Web-Based Creative Thinking Teaching On Students' Creativity and Learning Outcome. *EURASIA Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 12(6). <https://doi.org/10.12973/eurasia.2016.1558a>
- Munandar, U. (2002). *Kreativitas dan Keberbakatan*. Gramedia.
- Pujiyanto. (2019). Pemanfaatan Teknologi Informasi Komunikasi Dalam Berkarya Desain Bagi Anak Millennial "Generasi Z." *Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Seni Alternatif Di Era Millennial Berbasis Nilai-Nilai Luhur Nusantara*, 15–27.
- Ryden, W., & Sposato, D. (2020). Cultivating Convergence through Creative Nonfiction: Identity, Development, and the Metaphor of Transfer. *Journal of Creative Writing Studies*, 5(1), 20. <https://repository.rit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1127&context=jcws>
- Savitri, F. A., & Setiawan, D. (2018). Pengembangan Buku Menggambar Ilustrasi. *Jurnal Kreatif: Jurbal Pendidikan Dasar*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15294/kreatif.v9i1.16507>
- Sirajudin, N., Suratno, J., & Pamuti. (2021). Developing creativity through STEM education. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1806(1), 012211. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1806/1/012211>
- Srikongchan, W., Kaewkuekool, S., & Mejaleurn, S. (2021). Backward Instructional Design based Learning Activities to Developing Students' Creative Thinking with Lateral Thinking Technique. *International Journal of Instruction*, 14(2), 233–252. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2021.14214a>
- Sun, J. C.-Y., & Hsieh, P.-H. (2018). Application of a Gamified Interactive Response System to Enhance the Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation, Student Engagement, and Attention of English Learners. *Educational Technology & Society*, 21(3), 104–116. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26458511>
- Thakur, R., & D'Cunha, C. (2024). Understanding Generation Z as Future Workforce : Their Perspectives on Global Trends of Organisational Design. *IRJEMS International Research Journal of Economics and Management Studies*, 3(3), 190–196. <https://doi.org/10.56472/25835238/IRJEMS>