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The Influence of the Nihongo Mantappu YouTube Channel Content on Generation Z's Career Choices

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Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis pengaruh konten YouTube Nihongo Manttapu terhadap pilihan karir Generasi Z, khususnya minat mereka terhadap bahasa Jepang. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah survei yang mengumpulkan data menggunakan kuesioner yang dibagikan kepada Gen Z yang mengikuti saluran tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa konten yang disediakan oleh Nihongo Manttapu memberikan dampak positif dalam meningkatkan minat Gen Z dalam belajar bahasa Jepang sehingga membantu untuk pemilihan karir masa depan seperti penerjemah, guru, serta meningkatkan minat untuk bekerja di Jepang. Kajian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan wawasan lebih mengenai peran media sosial dalam membentuk preferensi karir generasi.

Kata Kunci: Karir, Generasi Z, Nihongo Manttapu, YouTube

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyse the influence of Nihongo Manttapu's YouTube content on Generation Z's career choices, particularly their interest in Japanese. The method used in this study is a survey that collects data using questionnaires distributed to Gen Z who follow the channel. The results show that the content provided by Nihongo Manttapu has a positive impact on increasing Gen Z's interest in learning Japanese, thus helping them to choose future careers such as translator, teacher, and increasing their interest in working in Japan. This study is expected to provide more insight into the role of social media in shaping generational career preferences.

Keywords: Career, Generation Z, Nihongo Manttapu, YouTube

Introduction

YouTube is one of the most widely used social media platforms, with an exceptionally large base of active users, particularly among Generation Z, who integrate it into their daily lives. On YouTube, users can upload their own videos or simply watch various channels for free. The platform also provides a virtual space where individuals can connect with others who share similar interests, thereby fostering communities that encourage creativity and talent exploration.

This interactivity makes YouTube highly appealing across diverse demographics, especially to members of Generation Z.

According to a survey conducted by Google Agency in collaboration with the TNS Office, 92% of Indonesian internet users consider YouTube their primary source for information, education, and entertainment (Sinaga, 2023). Moreover, YouTube hosts a wide range of engaging content on various topics. Official statistics released by YouTube indicate that the platform has over one billion users, representing more than one-third of all internet users worldwide.

The growing popularity of YouTube is closely linked to its monetization opportunities. By creating an account or channel and gaining subscribers or views, users can earn income through advertisements. As more people create their own channels, new career opportunities have emerged. Every day, YouTube users collectively watch hundreds of millions of hours of video, generating billions of views.

A report from Beritasatu.com shows that YouTube remains the most popular social media platform in Indonesia, with 94% of users aged between 16 and 64 years actively using the platform. As a media outlet, YouTube offers a wide variety of video materials, including vlogs, music, films, news and information, sports, lifestyle, and gaming content.

Vlogs, or video blogs, have grown in popularity since YouTube was first launched in 2005. As the name implies, vlogs typically feature content about daily activities, personal opinions or reflections on particular issues, tutorials (such as cooking or creating something), educational material, and other engaging forms of entertainment.

The wide range of content uploaded to social media—particularly on YouTube—allows audiences to freely select what they wish to watch. This study focuses on the Nihongo Mantappu YouTube channel created by Jerome Polin Sijabat, a well-known YouTuber, influencer, and content creator who is particularly popular among Generation Z audiences.

Jerome Polin uses his YouTube channel, Nihongo Mantappu, as a platform for self-expression. His videos have attracted significant attention, especially from younger viewers, because they combine educational, motivational, and entertainment content. Much of his material draws from his personal experiences studying in Japan and includes topics such as Japanese language learning, university life in Japan, the country's transportation system, living costs, and other aspects of Japanese culture.

Through his distinctive style—educational yet humorous—Jerome successfully connects with his audience and demonstrates how YouTube can serve as both a medium for knowledge sharing and a source of inspiration. His content embodies the broader role of social media as a platform for digital learning, cultural exchange, and career motivation among Generation Z users.

This is what distinguishes Jerome Polin's YouTube videos from other creators' content. Beyond his educational materials, Jerome remains highly active across social media platforms, producing

quiz-based content, offering mathematical problem-solving tips, and responding to viewer questions about mathematics and learning strategies. Known for his humorous and engaging personality, Jerome consistently greets his audience with enthusiasm—an approach that has helped him quickly gain recognition, especially among Generation Z viewers.

His use of casual language, combined with humor and themes centered on Japanese culture, makes Nihongo Mantappu particularly relatable and accessible to younger audiences. Furthermore, Jerome's outstanding academic achievements in mathematics enhance his credibility as a young content creator who successfully combines education and entertainment. Jerome launched his YouTube channel on December 12, 2017, and has since uploaded over 1,400 videos, gaining more than 10 million subscribers. Through his storytelling and personal journey—particularly his perseverance in obtaining a scholarship to study in Japan—he inspires many members of Generation Z to reflect on their own ambitions, values, and future career decisions (Sijabat, 2019).

Research by Tamba (2023) on career opportunities and challenges for Generation Z in the era of the Fifth Industrial Revolution (Industry 5.0) highlights that this generation benefits from easy access to information through digital media, enabling them to make career decisions based on personal interests and skills. However, the study also points out challenges such as intense competition and the need for adaptability in a rapidly changing digital environment. In this context, YouTube content can serve as both a source of inspiration and a learning medium, helping Generation Z navigate these challenges more effectively.

YouTube is predominantly used by Generation Z, who view it as a platform to expand knowledge, perspectives, and skills not always available from formal educational sources. According to Akhmal et al. (2019), a career represents a personal role that reflects an individual's choices regarding work or profession based on interests, abilities, and values. Career decisions often depend on personal experiences and self-reflection, making the process of choosing a lifelong career path particularly complex. As Suyanto et al. (2021) observed, Generation Z's career selection has shifted from being primarily influenced by parental expectations to being shaped by self-determination and autonomy.

Overall, Generation Z's career decisions are influenced by their technological access, individual values emphasizing freedom and flexibility, and the digital content they consume. Members of this generation prioritize direct access to information through digital platforms, which enables them to explore diverse career possibilities quickly. In this sense, the content presented by Nihongo Mantappu has the potential to shape viewers' perspectives and decision-making, particularly among university students who are currently navigating their career paths.

Generation Z often seeks careers that combine creativity and digital media engagement, and Nihongo Mantappu illustrates how these interests can be aligned with emerging professional opportunities. With the rising prominence of the creative and digital industries, careers involving social media and content creation have become increasingly appealing. Many Generation Z

individuals are inspired to pursue professions as YouTubers or influencers, driven by the aspiration to merge personal expression with meaningful work.

By delivering educational yet entertaining content, Nihongo Mantappu exemplifies how platforms like YouTube can reshape students' perceptions of future careers. As a generation raised in a fully digital environment, Generation Z tends to favor flexible, creative, and technology-driven career paths. One rapidly expanding field is the creative and digital industry, which leverages social media platforms such as YouTube for career development. This includes producing daily vlogs, creating entertainment content like music and podcasts, or developing tutorial-based videos—all of which represent modern avenues for self-expression and digital entrepreneurship.

Many young people today are deeply interested in learning about foreign cultures, with Japanese language and culture emerging as particularly popular areas of study. YouTube channels such as Nihongo Mantappu have demonstrated a significant positive impact on Generation Z's career choices, with communicator competence, confidence, and personal appeal serving as key influencing factors. After watching Jerome Polin's content, viewers often report feeling motivated to explore their interests more deeply, to pursue careers aligned with their passions, and to experience greater enjoyment and inspiration in their daily lives.

A study by Nursyifa (2022) highlights the crucial role of YouTube content in shaping career aspirations among Generation Z. The research found that informative content on Nihongo Mantappu not only enhances students' interest in learning the Japanese language but also provides insight into related career opportunities. As the channel's popularity continues to grow, many young people have been inspired to pursue education and careers connected to Japan, including in the fields of education, business, and cultural exchange.

Engaging in work or building a career represents a major milestone in transitioning into adult life. According to Program et al. (2016), career choice is fundamentally a personal decision that reflects an individual's skills, interests, and understanding of career paths within society. However, many individuals still face challenges in identifying and pursuing careers that align with their long-term goals, often overlooking the idea that a career is not merely an occupation but a lifelong pathway toward personal fulfillment and stability.

In this context, YouTube provides substantial benefits, particularly in supporting users especially students and university learners in exploring potential career paths. The platform serves as a digital ecosystem for self-discovery and skill development, enabling users to identify their talents through exposure to diverse forms of media content.

A recent study by Harlisa and Abdullah (2024) discusses the emerging trend of content creation as a new and attractive profession among Generation Z. Their findings indicate that individuals born in the digital era tend to be highly creative and entrepreneurial, capable of creating new types of employment through content creation on platforms such as YouTube. The study also found that

Generation Z's interest in becoming content creators stems from the flexibility and income potential of this profession, which allows for autonomy, innovation, and digital visibility.

Consequently, content across various YouTube channels, including Nihongo Mantappu, serves a dual function—educating audiences while simultaneously inspiring them to pursue innovative and passion-driven career paths. YouTube content does not only transmit knowledge but also shapes the aspirational landscape of young people navigating the complex intersections of media, identity, and work.

Based on these phenomena, the present study aims to investigate "The Influence of YouTube Channel Nihongo Mantappu Content on Generation Z's Career Choice." This inquiry is essential for understanding how digital media engagement influences the formation of career goals among young people. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on the relationship between digital media and career development, offering insights into how platforms like YouTube can be leveraged to empower Generation Z in realizing their full potential and constructing purposeful, future-oriented careers.

Method

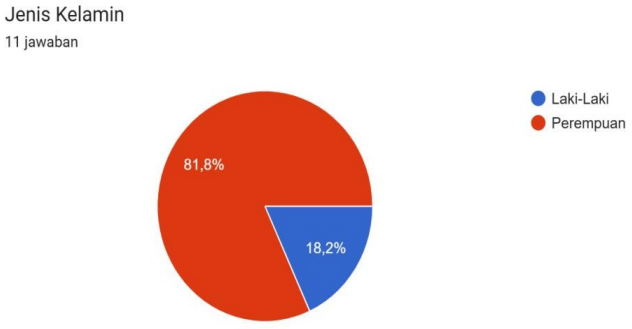
This study employs a quantitative approach using a survey method designed to explore the relationship between two main variables in the context of career choice among Generation Z. The primary focus is to examine the extent to which the content presented by the Nihongo Mantappu YouTube channel centered on topics related to Japanese language and culture—affects the career decisions made by Generation Z, a cohort recognized for its adeptness in utilizing digital technology across various aspects of life, including career selection.

Findings

Based on the data analysis derived from questionnaires distributed to 10 Generation Z respondents who actively follow the Nihongo Mantappu YouTube channel, several key findings can be summarized as follows:

Respondents

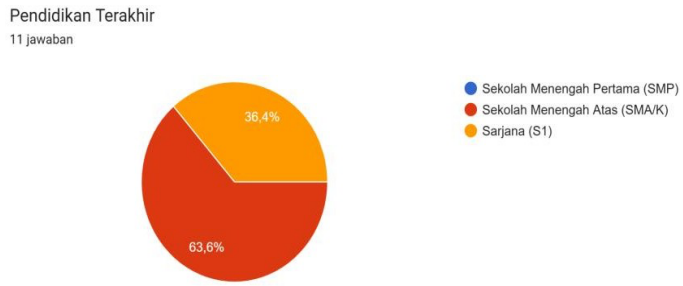
The survey involved 10 participants aged between 18 and 22 years, representing members of Generation Z. Data show that 81% of the respondents were female and 18% were male. This distribution provides an overview of gender representation in this study.



Sex: Blue =male, red =female*

Educational Background

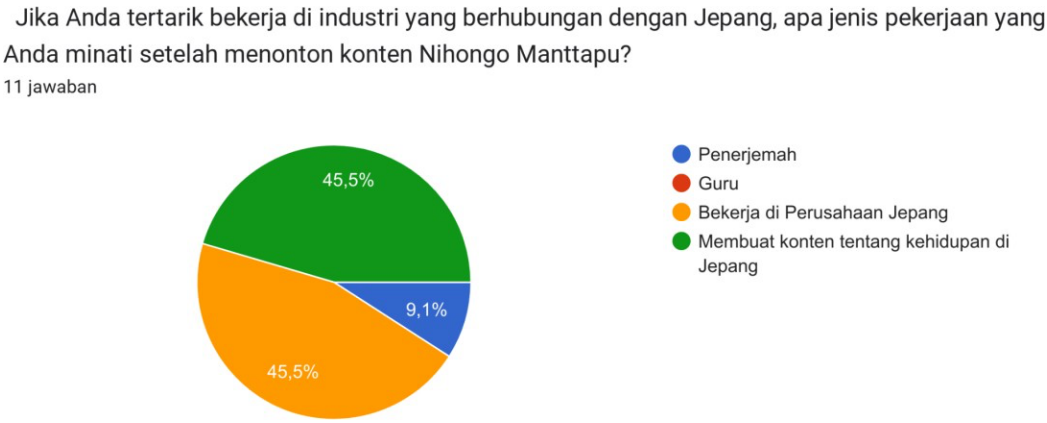
The majority of respondents, 63%, were recent high school graduates, while 30% were university students. This indicates that the content presented by the Nihongo Mantappu YouTube channel effectively reaches an audience that is highly relevant to the context of education and career development.



Educational Background: Red = Senior High School, Orange = Bachelors, Blue = Junior High School*

Influence of Content on Career Choice

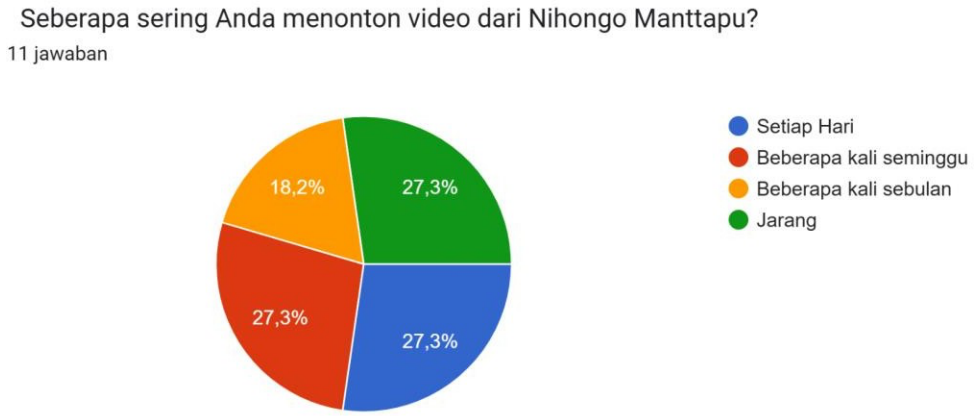
Approximately 90% of respondents stated that Nihongo Mantappu content had influenced their career perspectives, particularly in fields related to Japan. A majority of 50% expressed interest in working for Japanese companies, while 40% were more inclined to create content about life in Japan. Meanwhile, around 10% of respondents indicated an interest in pursuing a career as translators.



Type of work respondents are attracted to: Blue = Translator, Green = Content Creator, Orange = Working in Japanese companies*

Viewing Frequency

The majority of respondents (50%) reported watching content from the Nihongo Mantappu YouTube channel regularly, with a viewing frequency of several times per week or per month. Respondents who watched more than three times per week demonstrated a stronger interest in



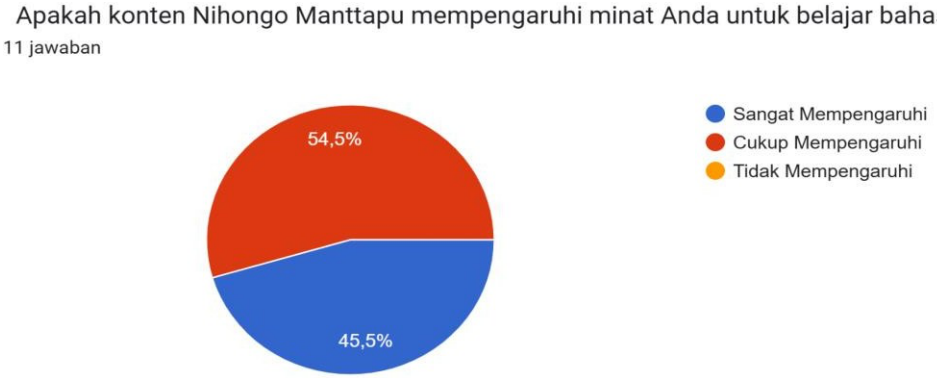
careers related to the Japanese language, such as translation, language teaching, or employment in Japanese companies.

Intensity to watch youtube on Nihongo Mantappu: Blue = Everyday, Red =More than 3 times within a week, Orange = More than 3 times within a month, Green = Seldom*

High Interest in the Japanese Language

The majority of respondents (54.5%) stated that watching Nihongo Mantappu content had increased their interest in learning the Japanese language. Around 40% of respondents felt that the

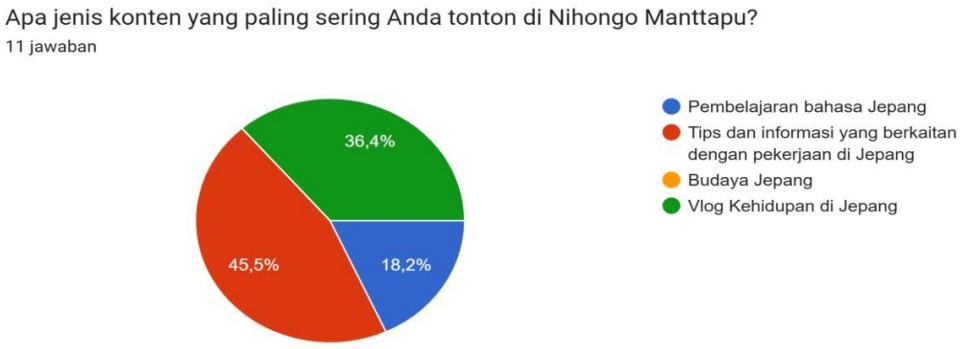
channel's content had a moderate influence on their motivation to study Japanese. These findings indicate that the content presented on Nihongo Mantappu has a significant impact on viewers' motivation and enthusiasm for learning the Japanese language.



Affect of Nihongo Mantappu Content on learning Japanese Languange: Blue = Significantly affecting, Red = Enough, Orang = Not affecting*

Most Influential Types of Content

Content focusing on tips and information related to Japan (45%) was considered the most influential in helping respondents choose careers related to the Japanese language. Additionally, motivational content and vlogs about life in Japan (36%) also made a significant contribution in shaping respondents' perceptions of potential career opportunities in their fields of interest.



Most watch content on Nihongo Mantappu: Blue = Japanese language lessons, Red = Tips and Information about Job Opportunities in Japan, Green = Vlog of Daily Life in Japan*

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that Nihongo Mantappu YouTube videos exert a considerable influence on the career decision-making processes of Generation Z, particularly in motivating cross-cultural learning and professional aspirations. The survey respondents, comprising ten

individuals aged between 18 and 22 years, represent the demographic segment that Marc Prensky (2001) identifies as digital natives—a generation characterized by their fluency in digital environments. Their familiarity with media platforms such as YouTube reflects the broader trend of digital media shaping cognitive and behavioral orientations among youth (Prensky, 2001).

Furthermore, the data reveal that 63% of participants were high school graduates and 30% were university students, highlighting that Nihongo Mantappu attracts an audience situated within educational and career development contexts. This finding aligns with Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, which posits that learning occurs through observation and imitation of role models. Exposure to educational and motivational content enables young audiences to construct their career preferences by emulating perceived successful figures, such as Jerome Polin.

Respondents also reported that Nihongo Mantappu significantly influenced their career outlook, particularly toward Japan-related professions. This observation supports Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovations Theory, which underscores the media's role in disseminating novel ideas and practices through opinion leaders. In this case, the YouTube channel functions as a digital mediator that diffuses cross-cultural and career-oriented knowledge to its viewers.

Moreover, 50% of respondents reported watching Nihongo Mantappu content regularly, with frequent viewers demonstrating higher interest in Japan-related occupations such as translation, teaching, or corporate positions. This pattern corresponds with Gerbner's (1998) Cultivation Theory, which suggests that consistent exposure to specific media content shapes audience perceptions and worldviews. Accordingly, repeated engagement with culturally themed educational content may cultivate Gen Z's perception of Japanese-related careers as aspirational and attainable.

In sum, this study reinforces prior findings that media exposure, when combined with relatable digital figures, can shape generational career perceptions (Harlisa & Abdullah, 2024; Nursyifa, 2022). It also extends the discussion by situating YouTube as an informal educational space that not only disseminates cultural knowledge but also informs career decision-making processes within digital-native audiences.

The majority of respondents indicated that watching Nihongo Mantappu content enhanced their interest in learning the Japanese language. Approximately 40% reported that the channel had a significant influence on their motivation to study Japanese. This finding underscores the strong motivational effect of Nihongo Mantappu as an educational medium that integrates cultural and linguistic exposure. This result aligns with Donald Super's Career Development Theory, which posits that career choices evolve progressively over time as individuals engage in self-exploration and skill development (Super, 1990). A high level of learning motivation can facilitate broader career exploration, enabling individuals to discover and pursue career pathways aligned with their interests and abilities.

The survey findings also reveal that the most influential content type involved career-related tips and information about working in Japan, which helped shape respondents' perceptions of potential professional trajectories. This observation is consistent with Information Processing Theory, which emphasizes how individuals internalize and interpret information obtained through media exposure (Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968). When individuals are repeatedly exposed to media content showcasing diverse professions, they cognitively process and evaluate that information, leading to more informed and deliberate career decisions.

The values embedded in Nihongo Mantappu such as perseverance, cross-cultural adaptability, and motivational guidance serve as key drivers for Generation Z to reconsider career paths that they may not have previously envisioned. This dynamic resonates with Agenda-Setting Theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), which asserts that media significantly influence how audiences prioritize and perceive social issues. For viewers, particularly those within Generation Z, Nihongo Mantappu instills a mindset that living or working abroad is not only possible but also advantageous for personal and professional growth. Prior studies have supported this perspective, suggesting that media exposure based on authentic experiences can inspire youth to pursue international education and career opportunities (Nursyifa, 2022; Harlisa & Abdullah, 2024).

This discussion also identifies distinctions between the present findings and previous digital media studies that primarily associate online content with entertainment rather than education. Unlike many social media platforms, Nihongo Mantappu is characterized by its inspirational and instructive quality, supporting the claim that Generation Z seeks digital content that contributes to meaningful life decisions rather than mere amusement. The findings suggest that Gen Z's career choices are substantially shaped by the values and narratives conveyed through Nihongo Mantappu's content. However, the influence is not uniform; while some respondents adopt the channel's messages as practical career guidance, others perceive them merely as sources of inspiration without direct behavioral impact. This divergence highlights the necessity for future research to identify additional variables mediating the transition from inspiration to real-world application.

From an analytical standpoint, the influence of Nihongo Mantappu content on Gen Z's career decision-making is contingent upon several factors, including the audience's perception of mediated reality, viewing frequency, and access to educational opportunities. The study argues that while such content plays a crucial role in broadening Gen Z's perspectives, a more critical approach toward digital media consumption and information filtering remains essential.

In conclusion, this research reaches a logically significant outcome: Nihongo Mantappu serves not only as a motivational source but also as a potential agent in shaping career aspirations among Generation Z. Nevertheless, the degree to which audiences comprehend, internalize, and integrate the content into their lived experiences ultimately determines the effectiveness of digital media in influencing actual career decisions.

Conclusion

According to the findings of this study, Nihongo Mantappu plays a substantial role in shaping the interests, talents, and career choices of Generation Z, particularly in fields related to Japan. The research revealed that exposure to the channel's content enhances learners' motivation to study the Japanese language, fosters career aspirations in teaching, translation, and creative industries related to Japan, and increases the desire to work or pursue higher education in the country. The significance of regular media exposure in shaping career perspectives and ambitions is further reinforced by the finding that interest in Japan-related professions is positively correlated with higher viewing frequency.

While many viewers find the content inspirational, certain limitations were also identified — such as the tendency to idealize opportunities and lifestyles in Japan — highlighting the need for viewers to engage with the information critically. This suggests that, when appropriately managed, digital media can serve as a catalyst for cross-cultural career development, functioning not only as an informational tool but also as a motivational medium that broadens global perspectives.

For future research, a more comprehensive investigation is recommended to examine how additional factors including educational background, socioeconomic status, and exposure to other forms of media influence the reception and career decisions of Generation Z. Further exploration could also address how more balanced storytelling within digital content might provide a realistic yet inspiring representation of life and career opportunities abroad. Moreover, content creators are encouraged to include deeper insights into the challenges of living and working in Japan to offer audiences a more holistic understanding of the realities behind their aspirations.

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