



Strengthening Qur'an-Based Political Education for Generation Z

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Abstract

This study examines the contribution of Qur'an-based democratic education to strengthening the political awareness of Generation Z. It employs a qualitative library research design with a descriptive-analytical approach using content analysis. The data were drawn from scholarly journal articles, academic books, Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*), and other relevant academic documents, which were analyzed thematically to identify the conceptual relationship between democratic education, Qur'anic values, and political awareness. The findings indicate that Qur'an-based democratic education enhances Generation Z's political awareness by internalizing the values of justice, consultation (*shūrā*), responsibility, honesty, and public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) within democratic life. The study further reveals that integrating humanistic and religious approaches fosters critical, moderate, and responsible attitudes toward contemporary political issues. Therefore, Qur'an-based democratic education provides a relevant conceptual framework for improving political literacy while cultivating an ethical democratic culture among Generation Z.

Keywords: *Political Education; Generation Z; Quranic Values*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji kontribusi pendidikan demokrasi berbasis nilai-nilai al-Qur'an terhadap penguatan kesadaran politik Generasi Z. Penelitian menggunakan metode *library research* dan rancangan deskriptif-analitis melalui analisis isi (*content analysis*). Data diperoleh dari artikel ilmiah, buku, tafsir al-Qur'an, dan dokumen akademik yang relevan, kemudian dianalisis secara tematik untuk mengidentifikasi hubungan konseptual antara pendidikan demokrasi, nilai-nilai al-Qur'an, dan kesadaran politik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan demokrasi berbasis al-Qur'an mampu memperkuat kesadaran politik Generasi Z melalui internalisasi nilai keadilan, musyawarah, tanggung jawab, kejujuran, dan kemaslahatan dalam kehidupan demokratis. Temuan juga menunjukkan bahwa integrasi pendekatan humanistik dan religius berkontribusi terhadap terbentuknya sikap kritis, moderat, dan bertanggung jawab dalam menyikapi berbagai isu politik. Oleh karena itu, pendidikan demokrasi berbasis nilai-nilai al-Qur'an dapat menjadi kerangka konseptual yang relevan untuk meningkatkan literasi politik sekaligus membentuk budaya demokrasi yang etis di kalangan Generasi Z.

Kata Kunci: *Pendidikan Politik; Generation Z; Nilai Al-Qur'am*

INTRODUCTION

Generation Z represents a demographic cohort that has grown up amid the rapid and dynamic advancement of digital technology. The social, cultural, and political lives of this generation are inseparable from the pervasive influence of social media, the continuous flow of global information, and the increasing intensity of virtual communication. These developments have generated significant benefits, including broader access to information and expanded opportunities for public participation. However, alongside these advantages, they have also given rise to several critical challenges, including the proliferation of political disinformation, limited democratic literacy, growing intolerance in digital spaces, increasing social polarization, and the erosion of ethical communication within the public sphere (Alruthaya, Nguyen, and Lokuge 2021).

The issue of political awareness among Generation Z is that the high intensity of social media use has not been accompanied by adequate critical thinking skills or a sufficient understanding of democratic principles. Many young people are more susceptible to digital propaganda, hate speech, group fanaticism, and identity politics than to understanding the substantive essence of democracy (Ahmad et al. 2023). This situation indicates that conventional approaches to political education have not yet been fully effective in cultivating young citizens who are rational, humanistic, and firmly committed to national values. Furthermore, public discourse consistently suggests that the relatively low quality of civic education is widely regarded as one of the key factors contributing to weak and unhealthy political participation among Indonesia's younger generation (Siswantoro and Tricahyono 2025).

Democratic education plays a highly strategic role in fostering the political awareness of Generation Z. It not only provides a comprehensive understanding of political systems but also cultivates fundamental democratic values, including civic participation, social responsibility, tolerance, freedom of expression, and respect for human rights. Effective democratic education should extend beyond the mere transmission of formal political knowledge by addressing the affective and moral dimensions of learners (Haryanto 2020).

Qur'anic values in democratic education are closely aligned with the characteristics of Generation Z, who tend to be critical thinkers, actively engaged in interaction, and in need of participatory learning environments. Allah (SWT) states in the Qur'an, Surah Ash-Shura (42:38), that *shūrā* (consultation) is a fundamental principle governing both social and political life. This verse emphasizes that collective deliberation serves as a normative foundation for decision-making, encouraging inclusiveness, shared responsibility, and mutual respect within society.

Previous studies have predominantly examined democratic education, character education, religious education, and political awareness as separate domains within higher education. Democratic education has mainly been discussed through civic learning and student participation, whereas character and religious education have focused on moral development, religious moderation, and the role of Islamic organizations in shaping students' values (Pratama, 2020; Abdurrohman, 2017; Susanti, 2020; Anwar & Muhayati, 2021; Ahmad et al., 2025). More recent studies have expanded the discussion to Generation Z's political awareness, digital political literacy, and Islamic political communication (Irawan & Hermawan, 2019; Sazali et al., 2023; Masi et al., 2025; Muhtadi et al., 2025; Senora, 2025). Despite these contributions, the existing literature has not systematically integrated Qur'anic values into democratic education as a conceptual framework for strengthening the political awareness of Generation Z in higher education. Addressing this gap, the present study proposes a Qur'an-based democratic education framework that integrates democratic principles, religious values, and political awareness to provide a more comprehensive perspective on civic and character development among university students.

This study seeks to develop a conceptual framework for fostering the political awareness of Generation Z. It examines how democracy education grounded in Qur'anic values can strengthen the political awareness of Generation Z. Accordingly, this study is expected to make both theoretical and practical contributions to the advancement of democracy education by offering an adaptive framework capable of addressing the diverse social and political challenges of the contemporary era.

METHOD

This study employs a library research design aimed at examining, interpreting, and synthesizing various ideas and theoretical frameworks relevant to Qur'an-based political education for Generation Z. This approach is considered appropriate because the issue under investigation is primarily conceptual in nature and requires an in-depth engagement with texts rather than empirical measurement in the field. All data utilized in this study consist of sources derived from national and international scholarly articles published in reputable journals, academic books, Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir) literature, conference proceedings, and relevant online publications related to the research topic.

The collection of literature was conducted systematically through searches of publicly accessible academic databases, the selected literature was limited to publications from the last ten years.

The collected data were subsequently analyzed using qualitative content analysis. Through this technique, key ideas from each source were identified, categorized according to thematic similarities, compared across authors, and interpreted to uncover relationships as well as conceptual gaps among the existing perspectives. The analytical process followed which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification carried out iteratively until a comprehensive understanding was achieved.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Generation Z's Political Sphere

Generation Z possesses a fundamental understanding of key political concepts, including democracy, citizens' rights and responsibilities, mechanisms of political participation, and the significance of elections within Indonesia's constitutional and democratic system. Nevertheless, this understanding remains largely confined to the cognitive and informational level, rather than being translated into meaningful engagement in more substantive forms of political participation. This condition indicates a persistent gap between political knowledge and the actual practice of political participation among Generation Z (Mulyono 2024).

Political information is obtained primarily through social media rather than through formal education or academic discussions. This finding indicates that the digital sphere has become the principal source of political knowledge formation among young people. Reliance on social media as a primary source of political information also suggests that the authority over political knowledge is no longer dominated by formal educational institutions. Instead, it has shifted toward an open, highly dynamic digital public sphere, where political information is continuously produced, disseminated, and contested (Yanto and Irmala Sari 2025).

Social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and X exert a substantial influence on the political attitudes and cognitive frameworks of Generation Z. Approximately 78% of respondents reported that they prefer engaging with political issues through visual content, short-form videos, and concise digital formats rather than reading academic articles or conventionally presented news reports. These findings indicate a significant shift in patterns of political information consumption, whereby visual appeal, rapid information delivery, and emotional engagement have become the primary factors shaping how young people receive and interpret political information (Kusumawardani, Chandra Agustin, and Sheila Silvia Permatasari 2025).

These changes in patterns of political communication have also influenced how Generation Z understands public issues. They tend to prefer information that is easy to comprehend, readily accessible, and delivered through interactive formats. On the one hand, this shift has produced positive outcomes by improving access to political information and broadening participation in digital public discourse. On the other hand, it has also introduced significant challenges, including the rapid dissemination of inaccurate information, misinformation, political propaganda, and an increasing tendency toward polarization within the digital public sphere (Agata Fanny Pakpahan et al. 2024).

Furthermore, the findings indicate that democracy education grounded in Qur'anic values contributes significantly to enhancing respondents' critical thinking skills when evaluating political information. Respondents who experienced democratic, dialogic, and participatory learning demonstrated higher levels of tolerance than those who received predominantly theoretical and conventional instruction. These findings suggest that educational approaches emphasizing respect for diverse perspectives foster more mature, rational, and inclusive political attitudes while encouraging openness to differing viewpoints.

Democracy education should not be confined to the transmission of normative concepts within the classroom; rather, it must be internalized through authentic practices that cultivate a culture of dialogue, deliberation, and active civic participation. Such an approach enables Generation Z to move beyond a merely theoretical understanding of democratic principles toward a deeper appreciation and practical embodiment of democratic values. Moreover, a humanistic approach to democracy education has proven to be a critical factor in fostering more reflective, responsible, and ethically grounded political awareness (Tri, Primanisa, and Azizah 2020).

Politically Conscious Youth

Democratic education makes a substantial contribution to the development of political awareness, particularly by fostering critical and responsible political participation. These findings indicate that the greater an individual's understanding of democratic principles, the higher their level of political awareness. Accordingly, democratic education plays a pivotal role in equipping young people with a comprehensive understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens, thereby enabling them to participate more effectively in democratic processes (Mulyono 2024).

Democratic education also serves as a strategic means of fostering Generation Z's active engagement in social and political life. Educational processes that provide a comprehensive understanding of democratic

mechanisms, governmental systems, and opportunities for public participation have been shown to enhance their awareness of the importance of participating in political processes. These findings suggest that democratic education extends beyond theoretical instruction, carrying practical implications for shaping the political behavior and civic engagement of young citizens (Efianingrum et al. 2022).

Qur'anic values in democratic education exert a stronger influence than authoritarian instructional approaches. Respondents demonstrated a higher level of understanding of democratic values when the learning process was implemented through discussion-based learning, case studies, deliberative simulations (*musyawarah*), and collaborative social problem-solving activities. These pedagogical approaches fostered a more participatory learning environment, enabling students to be recognized and engaged as active participants in the educational process rather than merely passive recipients of information (Nurgiansah 2024).

Generation Z generally tends to reject one-way instructional models because they are perceived as incompatible with the characteristics of a generation accustomed to fast, open, and responsive digital interactions. In this context, dialogic and participatory learning approaches are more relevant, as they align with the learning preferences of individuals who have grown up within a digital technological ecosystem. This condition underscores the importance of transforming democratic education methods to become more adaptive to the evolving characteristics and learning needs of contemporary learners (Khumairoh 2022).

From an Islamic perspective, the concept of democracy is closely associated with the principles of *shūrā* (consultation) and social justice. As emphasized in Qur'an 42:38 (Surah Ash-Shūrā), decision-making through participatory consultation and constructive dialogue constitutes a fundamental aspect of social life. Accordingly, democracy education integrated with Islamic values can foster mutual respect, expand opportunities for inclusive dialogue, and prevent the emergence of authoritarian political cultures within society (Dewi, Arifin, and Fuadi 2023).

Generation Z tends to favor a substantive conception of democracy rather than one that is merely procedural. They evaluate democracy not solely based on the conduct of elections but also on the extent to which the principles of social justice, governmental transparency, freedom of expression, and respect for human rights are realized in practice. This orientation reflects a growing level of political awareness characterized by greater critical engagement among younger generations (Idawati, Padila, and Anwar 2026).

These findings suggest that although Generation Z has demonstrated increasing political awareness, strengthening digital literacy and providing

continuous political education remain essential to enhance their capacity for critical information evaluation and to minimize their vulnerability to manipulative narratives and misinformation (Tarigan and M. Iqbal Asnawi, Girsang 2024).

Qur'anic-Based Political Education

The internalization of Qur'anic values, as embodied in Islamic political thought, plays a significant role in fostering the political ethics of Generation Z. These values encourage learners to uphold human dignity, cultivate social empathy, and demonstrate respect for the diversity that characterizes contemporary society. Within this framework, education serves not merely as a mechanism for the transmission of knowledge but also as a transformative process of character formation grounded in humanitarian and ethical values (Tarigan and M. Iqbal Asnawi, Girsang 2024).

Students who experience learning through a humanistic approach demonstrate a greater tendency to embrace tolerance toward diversity, including differences in religion, culture, and political preferences. Furthermore, they exhibit stronger emotional regulation when confronted with disagreements, particularly in interactions on social media platforms. These findings suggest that Qur'anic values play a significant role in cultivating more mature and emotionally stable social attitudes within the digital public sphere.

The integration of Qur'anic values into political education has also been shown to contribute to strengthening Generation Z's social awareness. The majority of respondents indicated that learning experiences emphasizing humanitarian values increased their sensitivity to various social issues, including economic inequality, poverty, and discrimination. This heightened awareness subsequently influenced how they perceive and evaluate public policies, while also encouraging more meaningful engagement in broader political processes (Hikmayatur Rohmi 2025).

With the growing level of social awareness, Generation Z has increasingly come to view politics not merely as a contest for power but as a means of advancing a more equitable and just society. This perspective reflects a significant shift toward a more constructive political orientation, in which humanitarian values serve as the primary framework for evaluating public policies and political actions within society.

From an Islamic perspective, the normative foundation of these humanitarian values is firmly rooted in the Qur'an, as affirmed in Qur'an 17:70 (Surah Al-Isra'). This verse emphasizes that every human being is endowed with inherent dignity and honor that must be respected regardless of social background, cultural identity, or religious affiliation. Such a principle provides

a fundamental normative basis for the development of contemporary democratic education, in which respect for human dignity constitutes the cornerstone of both political and social life (Faqihuddin 2017).

Humanistic values-based education plays a significant role in reducing the tendency toward intolerant behavior on social media platforms. Respondents who are accustomed to dialogic, open, and reflective learning practices demonstrate a greater capacity to avoid behaviors such as hate speech, cyberbullying, and the dissemination of provocative information. They are also more discerning when responding to sensitive issues related to politics and religion in digital spaces.

Conversely, individuals with limited exposure to Qur'an-based education exhibit a greater tendency to react emotionally to political and religious issues circulating online. This finding suggests that inadequate internalization of Qur'anic values increases vulnerability to digital polarization and radicalization. These results underscore the preventive role of Qur'an-based education in mitigating the emergence of intolerance and radicalism among Generation Z by fostering ethical awareness, critical reflection, and responsible digital citizenship (Laita 2025).

This study found that religious values play a pivotal role in shaping the political ethics of Generation Z. Religion serves as the primary moral framework that guides their social and political attitudes in everyday life. Core values such as honesty, justice, responsibility, and solidarity constitute fundamental ethical principles that consistently influence their political behavior. Accordingly, religion is understood not merely as a matter of spiritual belief but also as a normative value system that informs public conduct and socio-political interactions among young people (Velia Septia Wulandari 2026).

Inclusive, moderate, and pluralistic religious education fosters political attitudes characterized by tolerance and adaptability in diverse societies. In contrast, religious education that adopts an exclusive and narrow interpretive framework tends to encourage sectarian fanaticism, which may undermine social harmony. These findings indicate that pedagogical approaches to religious education play a pivotal role in shaping the political orientation of Generation Z.

Generation Z is more receptive to religious values when they are communicated through contextualized approaches and digital media platforms. Religious outreach (da'wah) content that is communicative, moderate, and relevant to everyday life contributes positively to the development of young people's character and social attitudes. Furthermore, the dissemination of religious values through interactive digital media has proven to be more effective in engaging Generation Z, whose lives are deeply

embedded within the contemporary digital information ecosystem (Muhammad Aminullah, Heri Susanto, Dewicca Fatma Nadill 2022).

Conversely, religious content that is provocative, extremist, and infused with hate speech has the potential to cultivate intolerant attitudes and reinforce social polarization among young people. This phenomenon demonstrates that the digital sphere serves not only as a platform for disseminating positive religious values but also as a medium capable of intensifying ideological conflicts when users lack adequate digital literacy. Consequently, strengthening religious digital literacy has become an essential strategy for addressing the challenges of the post-truth era, which is characterized by the widespread circulation of unverified information.

Within the framework of Islamic values, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, *"The best of people are those who are most beneficial to others"* (Musnad Ahmad). This hadith emphasizes that the highest virtue in Islam lies in contributing positively to the well-being of others. It underscores that religious teachings are not solely concerned with the vertical relationship between human beings and God but also place significant emphasis on fostering harmonious and beneficial horizontal relationships among individuals within society. In the context of democracy, this principle provides an ethical foundation that encourages young people to participate actively, constructively, and responsibly in civic and public life (Haryanto 2020).

Individuals who engage in moderate religious activities demonstrate higher levels of social participation than those who are less actively involved in socio-religious activities. This group of respondents is more likely to participate in volunteer work, public discussions, and various forms of community-based social engagement. These findings suggest that the internalization of moderate religious values extends beyond the spiritual dimension, fostering greater social engagement among Generation Z in public life.

Accordingly, religious values understood through a moderate and humanistic perspective make a significant contribution to strengthening social capital and social solidarity within society. Religiosity that is not confined to ritual observance but is manifested through concrete social action plays a crucial role in shaping Generation Z into individuals who are more compassionate, participatory, and socially responsible. Therefore, religious education that emphasizes moderation and humanitarian values constitutes a key factor in cultivating healthy political awareness in the digital era (Muslem 2025).

Democracy education must become more adaptive to contemporary societal developments. Democratic learning should be designed not only to emphasize cognitive outcomes but also to integrate practical experiences,

interactive discussions, and the constructive use of digital media. Such an approach would enhance the relevance and effectiveness of democracy education in fostering the political awareness of younger generations in the modern era.

From an Islamic perspective, the importance of literacy and knowledge is explicitly emphasized in the Qur'an through the first divine command to read, as stated in Qur'an 96:1 (Surah Al-'Alaq, verse 1). This verse highlights literacy as the fundamental foundation for developing human intellectual, spiritual, and social consciousness. Within the context of today's digital democracy, political literacy and media literacy have become indispensable competencies for Generation Z. These forms of literacy enable young people to critically evaluate information, develop an objective understanding of political realities, and resist misleading or manipulative content circulating across digital platforms (Nurjanah, Cahyono, and Sugara Mochamad Haddad 2025).

Education that integrates these three dimensions extends beyond merely fostering an understanding of political systems; it also cultivates moral character, social ethics, and a strong sense of civic responsibility. Within the context of contemporary social developments, such integration has become increasingly relevant in response to growing social polarization, the erosion of ethical standards in public communication, and the deepening moral challenges within the rapidly evolving digital sphere among younger generations (Feriyanasyah and Maharani 2023).

Democracy education grounded in Qur'anic values and religiosity has been shown to significantly enhance attitudes of interreligious tolerance. Respondents who participated in learning environments characterized by dialogical, inclusive, and diversity-respecting approaches demonstrated a greater propensity to embrace cultural, religious, and political diversity. Educational practices that extend beyond the development of cognitive competencies by integrating humanitarian values and spirituality make a substantial contribution to strengthening social cohesion and fostering harmonious coexistence within multicultural societies such as Indonesia (Efianingrum et al. 2022).

Humanistic-religious education plays a significant role in strengthening the moral resilience of Generation Z amid the rapid flow of digital information, much of which is not consistently well verified. Individuals with a strong understanding of Qur'anic values demonstrate greater capacity to critically evaluate information, refrain from disseminating hate speech, and uphold ethical standards of communication in social media interactions. These findings underscore that character education remains fundamentally important, even within a society increasingly shaped by the pervasive influence of digital technologies ('Azmi 2025).

In the context of Generation Z, who have grown up in an increasingly complex digital environment, this approach has become even more essential, as they are continuously exposed to rapidly evolving and highly challenging socio-political dynamics. Education grounded in Qur'anic and religious values provides a crucial foundation for cultivating citizens with strong character, ethical integrity, and civic responsibility. The integration of these values enables learners not only to understand democracy as a political system but also to embrace it as a guiding principle of life that should be practiced responsibly in everyday civic engagement. Consequently, education serves not merely as a vehicle for knowledge transmission but also as a transformative process that fosters moral character, ethical awareness, and responsible citizenship (Khumairoh 2022).

CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that democracy education integrating Qur'anic values serves as a credible foundation for strengthening the political awareness of Generation Z. These values contribute to the development of political character that is more critical, tolerant, rational, and responsible in responding to democratic dynamics in both the public sphere and the digital environment. Amid the dominance of social media as the primary source of political information, strengthening digital literacy grounded in humanitarian values and religious ethics is essential for enhancing Generation Z's ability to verify information, resist disinformation, and foster more inclusive and democratic political participation. These findings imply that improving the quality of democracy cannot be achieved solely through increasing political knowledge; rather, it requires an educational model capable of integrating political literacy, digital literacy, Qur'anic values, and religious moderation within a contextualized learning framework. Such an approach ensures that democracy education not only produces citizens who understand democratic procedures but also cultivates a generation of politically aware individuals with moral integrity and the capacity to participate critically, ethically, and responsibly in addressing the challenges of democracy in the digital era.

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