

The Role of the Subulussalam City Community Care Movement in Instilling Islamic Educational Values among First-Time Voters

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Abstract

The increasing number of first-time voters presents both opportunities and challenges for local democracy, particularly in Muslim-majority societies. First-time voters are often vulnerable to unethical political practices due to limited experience and political literacy. This study examines the role of the Gerakan Masyarakat Peduli Kota Subulussalam (GEMAPKOS) in internalizing Islamic educational values among first-time voters in Subulussalam City, Indonesia. Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis involving community leaders, educators, youth participants, and organizational actors. The findings reveal that GEMAPKOS systematically instills core Islamic values such as aqidah, ibadah, akhlak, amanah, shidiq, fathanah, ukhuwah, and responsibility through structured mechanisms, including habituation, role modeling, dialogic learning, social engagement, and formal codification. These processes contribute to the formation of an Islamic political habitus characterized by honesty, critical awareness, discipline, and ethical responsibility in political participation. The study highlights the strategic role of local civil society organizations in bridging Islamic moral education and democratic practice, offering an empirically grounded model for strengthening ethical political participation among first-time voters.

Introduction

The increasing number of first-time voters in local and national elections has become a crucial phenomenon in contemporary democratic practices, including in Subulussalam City, Indonesia. First-time voters occupy a strategic position due to their significant demographic size and their potential influence on the direction of democratic governance (Sitanggang et al., 2024; Mulyawan et al., 2024; Greenwald et al., 2026). However, this group is also highly vulnerable to political manipulation, money politics, and negative campaigning, largely because of limited political experience and insufficient moral and ethical foundations. Previous studies emphasize that without adequate value-based education, young voters tend to exhibit political apathy or become easily influenced by pragmatic interests rather than principled considerations (Chauke, 2022; Najwa et al., 2024; Ahmad et al., 2026).

Local democratic processes such as regional head elections (*Pilkada*) in Indonesia continue to face persistent ethical and structural challenges. Empirical evidence shows that *Pilkada* in various regions is frequently characterized by unethical political practices, including vote-buying, corruption, and the manipulation of public opinion, all of which undermine democratic integrity and public trust (Taylor, 2021; Okunoye & Adeiwa, 2026; Jumardin et al., 2026). These challenges are further compounded by issues of unequal political participation, particularly gender disparities, where women often face systemic barriers to meaningful political engagement (Landemore, 2020; White, 2017; Yitbarek et al., 2026). Such conditions

demand alternative approaches to democratic consolidation that extend beyond procedural compliance toward value-based political participation (Abba & Ojiako, 2026; Rafiqi & Hastira, 2026; Wijaya et al., 2026).

In this context, education plays a decisive role in shaping ethical political behavior. Political education has been shown to significantly enhance political awareness, participation, and critical reasoning among first-time voters (Adofo, 2022; Al-Hamdi & Sofyan, 2023). Nevertheless, political education that is merely technical or procedural is often insufficient to address deeper moral and ethical challenges. Moral reasoning, ethical literacy, and value internalization are essential dimensions that influence how young voters evaluate candidates, policies, and political processes (Goyon & Legaspi, 2020; Munawarah & Kristanto, 2022). This highlights the importance of integrating moral and religious values into political education frameworks (Bunthawee, 2025; Juthi et al., 2025; Warsah & Istan, 2025).

Islamic education, in particular, offers a comprehensive moral framework grounded in values such as justice (*'adl*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), honesty (*sidq*), responsibility, deliberation (*shura*), and social solidarity (*ukhuwah*). These values are fundamentally compatible with democratic principles and can serve as ethical guidance for political participation (Suhartono et al., 2024; Sumadiyah et al., 2023). In Muslim-majority contexts such as Subulussalam City, Islamic educational values have strong sociocultural legitimacy and thus possess significant potential to shape ethical political behavior among first-time voters. Prior research confirms that religious-based moral education contributes positively to political integrity and civic responsibility (Fadillah et al., 2022; Rosyad & Ma'arif, 2020; Jakandar et al., 2025).

Beyond formal educational institutions, civil society organizations and community-based movements play a vital role in value education and political socialization (Bartlett & Yemini, 2025; Mravik, 2025; Pinandhita et al., 2025). Studies indicate that community movements function as effective agents of value internalization by bridging formal education and everyday social realities (Hendrik, 2022; Utaminingsih & Rachmawaty, 2023). Through advocacy, dialogue, role modeling, and grassroots engagement, civil society organizations can cultivate ethical awareness and participatory attitudes among young citizens. This role becomes increasingly important in addressing political disengagement and ethical erosion at the local level (Magagula, 2025; Sreirejeki & Khairurriqo, 2025).

In Subulussalam City, the Community Care Movement (*Gerakan Masyarakat Peduli Kota Subulussalam*/GEMAPKOS) has emerged as a local civil society organization actively involved in instilling Islamic educational values among youth, particularly first-time voters. Through educational campaigns, religious discussions, political literacy programs, and community-based advocacy, GEMAPKOS seeks to promote ethical political participation grounded in Islamic principles. Preliminary field findings and interviews with religious leaders, educators, and local government officials indicate that value-based political education is perceived as essential for fostering integrity, transparency, and accountability in local democratic practices (Ardiansyah et al., 2026; Suleman et al., 2025; Syafika & Marwa, 2024).

Despite the growing body of literature on Islamic education, political participation, and youth civic engagement, significant research gaps remain (Bukhari et al., 2024; Munir & Zaidi, 2023; Saud & Ashfaqm, 2025). Most existing studies focus on formal institutions such as schools, pesantren, or major religious organizations, while the role of local civil society movements in internalizing Islamic values among first-time voters remains underexplored. Moreover, prior research tends to emphasize normative or conceptual analyses rather than empirically examining practical mechanisms of value internalization in specific local contexts. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates the role of GEMAPKOS in instilling Islamic educational

values among first-time voters in Subulussalam City, aiming to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of ethical, inclusive, and value-based local democracy.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative research design with a case study approach to examine the role of the Gerakan Masyarakat Peduli Kota Subulussalam (GEMAPKOS) in instilling Islamic educational values among first-time voters in Subulussalam City, Aceh, Indonesia. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because this study sought to understand social processes, meanings, educational practices, and value internalization mechanisms within their natural sociocultural context. The case study approach enabled an in-depth exploration of GEMAPKOS as a local civil society organization that actively promotes Islamic-based political education for young voters.

The research was conducted in Subulussalam City, a region with a strong Islamic sociocultural background and active community-based religious and civic activities. The research setting was selected because GEMAPKOS has been involved in various educational, religious, and social programs aimed at strengthening ethical political awareness among first-time voters. This context allowed the researcher to examine how Islamic educational values are translated into practical guidance for democratic participation.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their relevance to the research focus. The informants consisted of GEMAPKOS administrators, facilitators, first-time voters who participated in GEMAPKOS programs, religious leaders, educators, and community figures. The inclusion criteria for first-time voters were young citizens who had voting rights for the first time or were preparing to participate in local or national elections. Supporting informants were selected because of their knowledge of GEMAPKOS activities, Islamic education, youth development, and local political participation. To maintain confidentiality, all interview data were coded using interview codes such as Wan.01, Wan.02, Wan.03, and other similar codes.

Data were collected through three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore participants' views regarding the Islamic values promoted by GEMAPKOS, the strategies used to internalize these values, and the perceived influence of the programs on first-time voters' ethical political awareness. The interviews focused on several themes, including *aqidah*, *ibadah*, *akhlak*, *amanah*, *shidiq*, *fathanah*, *ukhuwah*, responsibility, political literacy, resistance to money politics, and ethical participation in democratic processes.

Participant observation was carried out during GEMAPKOS activities, including Islamic study sessions, youth discussions, political literacy forums, election simulations, public seminars, and community-based social activities. The observation focused on how Islamic values were communicated, how facilitators interacted with participants, how young voters responded to the learning process, and how ethical messages were embedded in religious, educational, and civic activities. Observation data were used to support and verify the information obtained from interviews.

Document analysis was conducted by examining organizational documents, training materials, brochures, activity reports, program guidelines, and other written materials related to GEMAPKOS activities. These documents were analyzed to identify how Islamic educational values were formally codified and institutionalized within the organization's programs. Document analysis also helped verify whether the values described by informants were consistent with GEMAPKOS's written vision, program materials, and educational practices.

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative analysis process consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the data reduction stage, interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were reviewed, coded, and categorized according to recurring themes. The initial coding focused on Islamic educational values, forms of value transmission, internalization mechanisms, and behavioral outcomes among first-time voters. These codes were then grouped into broader categories, including core Islamic values, habituation, role modeling, dialogic learning, social engagement, formal codification, and the formation of ethical political behavior.

In the data display stage, the categorized data were organized into thematic descriptions, tables, and conceptual models. Interview excerpts, observation findings, and document evidence were compared to identify patterns and relationships among the data sources. This process enabled the researcher to construct an integrative model of Islamic value internalization through GEMAPKOS. The model was developed inductively from the empirical findings and reflects the relationship between Islamic educational values, internalization mechanisms, implementation strategies, and the formation of Islamic political habitus among first-time voters.

Results and Discussion

General Findings: Research Context and Empirical Setting

Socio-Religious and Political Context of Subulussalam City

Subulussalam City is characterized by a strong Islamic socio-cultural identity, where religious values significantly shape social norms, collective behavior, and public morality. Islamic teachings are deeply embedded in everyday life through mosques, religious study groups, and community-based religious organizations. This religious atmosphere provides a conducive environment for value-based civic education, particularly when addressing ethical issues in democratic participation. However, despite this strong religious foundation, local democratic practices especially regional head elections (*Pilkada*) continue to face challenges related to money politics, political pragmatism, and declining public trust.

Empirical observations indicate that young voters in Subulussalam often experience a gap between religious ideals and political realities. While Islamic values are widely acknowledged at the normative level, their application in political decision-making remains inconsistent. First-time voters, in particular, are frequently exposed to transactional political practices through peer networks, campaign activities, and social media. These findings suggest that religiosity alone is insufficient to ensure ethical political behavior without structured processes of value internalization.

First-Time Voters as a Vulnerable Democratic Group

The findings demonstrate that first-time voters represent a vulnerable segment within the local democratic process. Limited political experience, low political literacy, and exposure to misleading information contribute to their susceptibility to manipulation. Interviews with religious leaders, educators, and youth figures consistently reveal that many first-time voters initially perceive elections as procedural civic duties rather than moral responsibilities.

One religious leader stated,

“Many young voters believe voting is merely a constitutional obligation. They do not yet understand that choosing a leader is also a moral and religious responsibility.”
(Interview Wan.01, July 2024).

Observational data from youth discussions and community forums further indicate that political choices among first-time voters are often driven by pragmatic considerations rather than ethical reflection. This condition underscores the urgency of targeted moral and value-based political education for this demographic group.

Profile and Orientation of GEMAPKOS as a Civil Society Actor

Gerakan Masyarakat Peduli Kota Subulussalam (GEMAPKOS) operates as a local civil society organization with a strong emphasis on moral education and youth empowerment. Organizational documents, including statutes, training modules, and activity reports, reveal that GEMAPKOS positions itself not as a political actor but as a moral educator within the public sphere. Its mission explicitly emphasizes the formation of ethically responsible first-time voters grounded in Islamic values.

An organizational leader explained,

“We do not direct young people to support specific candidates. Our focus is on instilling values, so they understand that voting is an amanah.” (Interview Wan.37, August 2024).

This orientation distinguishes GEMAPKOS from conventional voter education initiatives that focus primarily on procedural or technical aspects of elections.

Forms of GEMAPKOS Engagement with First-Time Voters

GEMAPKOS engages first-time voters through a range of educational and social activities, including Islamic study sessions, public discussions on ethical politics, election simulations, youth seminars, and community outreach programs. These activities are designed to be participatory, encouraging young voters to engage actively in dialogue and reflection. Religious practices, such as collective prayers and moral reminders, are consistently integrated into political education activities, reinforcing the inseparability of faith and civic responsibility.

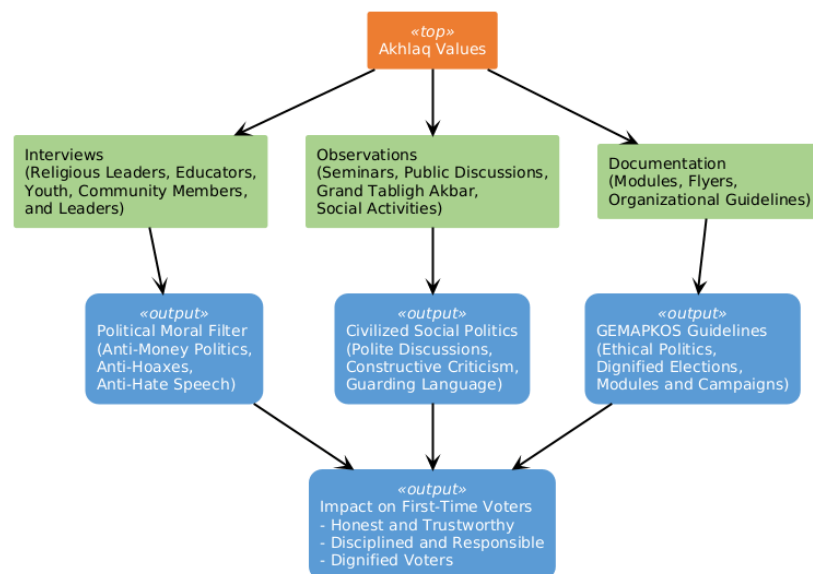


Figure 1. Patterns of GEMAPKOS Engagement in Islamic-Based Political Education

The figure illustrates the interconnected patterns of GEMAPKOS activities that combine religious instruction, civic education, and community participation. It conceptually represents how religious rituals, educational forums, and social engagement operate simultaneously to

internalize Islamic values among first-time voters, rather than functioning as separate or isolated interventions.

Empirical Patterns from Interviews, Observation, and Documentation

Triangulation across interviews, observations, and documentation reveals a high level of consistency between GEMAPKOS's stated objectives and its practical implementation. Interviews indicate a shared understanding among organizational leaders, religious figures, and participants regarding the importance of ethical political participation. Observational data confirm that activities consistently emphasize moral reflection, while documentation demonstrates that these values are formally codified in training modules, brochures, and organizational guidelines.

Table 1. Data Sources and Key General Findings

Data Source	Key Findings
Interviews	First-time voters initially show limited ethical awareness; GEMAPKOS reframes voting as moral responsibility
Observation	Religious rituals integrated with political education; participatory learning emphasized
Documentation	Islamic values codified in modules, brochures, and official programs
Triangulation	Strong alignment between discourse, practice, and organizational vision

The table summarizes how different data sources converge to demonstrate GEMAPKOS's role as a structured moral learning environment. The consistency across data sources strengthens the credibility of the findings and confirms that GEMAPKOS's approach is systematic rather than incidental.

Implications of the General Findings

Overall, the general findings indicate that the primary challenges faced by first-time voters in Subulussalam are moral and ethical rather than merely procedural or informational. GEMAPKOS effectively fills a gap left by formal institutions by translating Islamic values into practical guidance for democratic participation. These findings provide a contextual foundation for analyzing the specific Islamic educational values instilled by GEMAPKOS, the mechanisms of value internalization, and the resulting model of Islamic-based political education.

Islamic Educational Values Instilled by GEMAPKOS among First-Time Voters

Aqidah (Faith) as the Moral Foundation of Political Responsibility

The findings indicate that *aqidah* constitutes the primary foundation of Islamic educational values instilled by GEMAPKOS among first-time voters. *Aqidah* is framed not merely as a theological belief but as a moral compass that guides political decision-making. Through religious study sessions and youth discussions, GEMAPKOS emphasizes that political participation is inseparable from accountability before God. This approach encourages first-time voters to perceive voting as a moral obligation rather than a transactional act.

A religious leader explained this perspective clearly during the interview,

"We always remind young people that choosing a leader is not only a worldly matter. It is part of faith and accountability before Allah. A strong aqidah prevents them from selling their votes." (Interview Wan.01, July 2024).

Observational data confirm that discussions on *aqidah* are consistently integrated into political education activities, particularly before election simulations. Documentation such as training modules places *aqidah* as the opening theme, signaling its role as the ethical entry point for political education.

Ibadah (Religious Practice) as Moral Discipline in Political Life

Ibadah is internalized by GEMAPKOS as a form of moral discipline that shapes daily behavior and political attitudes. The findings show that religious practices such as collective prayers, recitation, and supplication are systematically embedded in all educational and civic activities. These practices are not treated as ritual formalities but as tools for cultivating self-control, sincerity, and consistency in behavior.

One GEMAPKOS facilitator stated,

“We begin every political discussion with prayer so that young voters remember that politics must be guided by worship, not by personal interests.” (Interview Wan.21, August 2024).

Observations reveal that habituation of worship strengthens moral resilience among participants, particularly in resisting money politics. Documentation further supports this finding, as activity reports consistently record *ibadah* as a compulsory component of programs. This demonstrates that *ibadah* functions as a preventive moral mechanism within GEMAPKOS’s political education framework.

Akhlak (Moral Conduct) as an Ethical Guide for Democratic Behavior

Akhlak is presented as the ethical expression of *aqidah* and *ibadah* in social and political interactions. GEMAPKOS instills values such as politeness, respect for differing opinions, and rejection of hate speech during political contests. Findings indicate that young voters are trained to engage in political discussions without hostility or sectarian bias.

A youth participant noted,

“We are taught that political differences should not destroy brotherhood. Ethics and manners must come first, even when opinions differ.” (Interview Wan.02, July 2024).

Observational data from public discussions and election simulations show that participants demonstrate controlled language and respectful debate. Organizational guidelines explicitly prohibit verbal aggression and political provocation. These findings suggest that *akhlak* is operationalized as a practical ethical code within GEMAPKOS activities.

Amanah (Trustworthiness) as the Core Value of Ethical Voting

Amanah emerges as one of the most emphasized values in GEMAPKOS’s political education. The organization consistently frames voting rights as a trust that must not be abused for personal or financial gain. This framing is reinforced through slogans, brochures, and repeated moral messaging.

A community leader explained,

“Young people involved in GEMAPKOS are more trustworthy. When they are given responsibility, they fulfill it. This shows that amanah is truly internalized.” (Interview Wan.19, July 2024).

Documentation analysis reveals consistent messaging such as *“Your vote is a trust, not a commodity.”* Observations further indicate that participants explicitly reject money politics

during election simulations. These findings confirm that amanah functions as the ethical backbone of GEMAPKOS's approach to first-time voter education.

Shidiq (Honesty) and Fathanah (Critical Intelligence) in Political Literacy

The findings demonstrate that GEMAPKOS integrates *shidiq* and *fathanah* to address challenges of misinformation and political manipulation. *Shidiq* is emphasized as honesty in intention, speech, and action, while *fathanah* is framed as critical and rational thinking. Together, these values equip first-time voters to evaluate political information responsibly.

One organizational leader stated,

"Without intelligence and honesty, democracy becomes a game of elites. Fathanah helps youth think critically, and shidiq keeps them morally grounded." (Interview Wan.27, August 2024).

Observational data show that GEMAPKOS conducts discussions on identifying hoaxes and verifying political information. Documentation such as brochures with slogans like "Smart Youth, Quality Democracy" reinforces this emphasis. These findings indicate that GEMAPKOS successfully links Islamic values with political literacy.

Ukhuwah (Brotherhood) and Social Responsibility in Political Participation

Ukhuwah is internalized as a value that preserves social cohesion amid political competition. GEMAPKOS emphasizes that political differences should not disrupt communal harmony. This value is particularly relevant in local contexts where political rivalry often leads to social fragmentation.

A community figure stated,

"Even when political choices differ, brotherhood must remain intact. GEMAPKOS teaches youth to prioritize unity over political rivalry." (Interview Wan.03, August 2024).

Observations from public events and simulations confirm that participants maintain cooperative behavior despite differing preferences. Documentation shows that *ukhuwah* is codified as an organizational principle. This indicates that *ukhuwah* functions as a social stabilizer in GEMAPKOS's political education model.

Summary of Islamic Educational Values Instilled by GEMAPKOS

The findings demonstrate that the Islamic educational values instilled by GEMAPKOS are not transmitted as isolated moral concepts, but rather as an integrated framework that shapes political awareness, ethical reasoning, and democratic responsibility among first-time voters. These values are systematically introduced through educational activities, religious discussions, and community engagement, enabling young voters to internalize moral principles that guide their political behavior. The internalization process emphasizes the alignment between personal faith, social ethics, and civic responsibility, reinforcing the notion that political participation is both a civic and moral obligation.

Furthermore, the empirical data reveal that each Islamic value serves a distinct yet interconnected function within the political education process. Some values operate as foundational principles that shape moral consciousness, while others function as practical guides for ethical decision-making and social interaction during electoral processes. Together, these values form a comprehensive moral framework that equips first-time voters with the capacity to resist unethical political practices, engage respectfully in political discourse, and

participate responsibly in democratic life. Table X presents a summary of the Islamic educational values identified in this study and their primary functions in political education.

Table 2. Islamic Educational Values Instilled by GEMAPKOS

Islamic Value	Main Function in Political Education
<i>Aqidah</i>	Moral foundation and spiritual accountability
<i>Ibadah</i>	Discipline and moral resilience
<i>Akhlak</i>	Ethical behavior and respectful participation
<i>Amanah</i>	Trustworthiness and rejection of money politics
<i>Shidiq</i>	Honesty in political judgment
<i>Fathanah</i>	Critical thinking and political literacy
<i>Ukhuwah</i>	Social cohesion amid political differences
Responsibility	Accountability in democratic participation

The table summarizes how each Islamic educational value contributes to shaping ethical first-time voters. Together, these values form an integrated moral framework that guides political participation. The consistency between interviews, observations, and documentation strengthens the credibility of these findings.

Mechanisms and Strategies of Islamic Value Internalization by GEMAPKOS

Habituation through Structured Religious and Civic Activities

The findings indicate that habituation is a primary mechanism through which GEMAPKOS internalizes Islamic educational values among first-time voters. Values are not delivered as one-time messages but are reinforced through repeated exposure in structured activities such as seminars, youth discussions, and community service programs. This repetitive engagement allows values such as honesty, responsibility, and trustworthiness to gradually become part of participants' everyday political attitudes. Habituation strengthens moral consistency, particularly in resisting unethical political practices.

An organizer explained the importance of repetition,

“Values cannot be taught only once. We repeat them in every activity so they become habits, not just knowledge.” (Interview Wan.21, August 2024).

Observational data confirm that similar moral messages recur across different programs, indicating intentional design rather than incidental emphasis. Documentation, including activity schedules and modules, further shows that habituation is embedded in program planning.

Role Modeling (Uswah) by Community and Organizational Leaders

Role modeling (*uswah*) emerges as a crucial strategy for translating abstract Islamic values into observable behavior. GEMAPKOS leaders, facilitators, and invited religious figures consciously demonstrate ethical conduct during public interactions and political discussions. First-time voters observe how leaders communicate respectfully, reject money politics, and engage constructively with differing opinions. This lived example enhances credibility and accelerates value internalization.

One youth participant note,

“What convinced us was not only the advice, but seeing the leaders practice what they taught.” (Interview Wan.02, July 2024).

Observations reveal consistent alignment between verbal messages and behavioral practices of facilitators. Documentation such as organizational guidelines explicitly emphasizes leadership ethics, indicating institutional support for the uswah approach.

Dialogic and Participatory Learning as a Strategy for Critical Awareness

Dialogic learning is identified as a key strategy in fostering critical political awareness grounded in Islamic values. Rather than using one-way lectures, GEMAPKOS prioritizes open discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and reflective dialogues. These forums allow first-time voters to express doubts, challenge narratives, and collectively evaluate political issues within an ethical framework. Dialogic engagement strengthens the values of *shidiq* and *fathanah* by encouraging honesty and critical reasoning.

A facilitator explained,

“We invite youth to ask difficult questions. Dialogue helps them think critically without losing moral direction.” (Interview Wan.27, August 2024).

Observational evidence from public discussions shows active participation and respectful debate. Documentation from program reports highlights dialogue as a core pedagogical approach, reinforcing its centrality in the internalization process.

Integration of Social Activities and Community Engagement

Social activities function as a practical arena for applying Islamic values in real-life contexts. GEMAPKOS integrates community service, social charity, and collective action into its political education framework. These activities foster *ukhuwah*, empathy, and social responsibility, reinforcing the idea that political participation should serve the common good. Through shared social experiences, first-time voters internalize values not only cognitively but also emotionally.

A community leader stated

“When young people serve the community together, they learn responsibility and brotherhood naturally.” (Interview Wan.03, August 2024).

Observations during social activities show cooperation across diverse backgrounds, while documentation confirms the institutionalization of social engagement within GEMAPKOS programs. This strategy bridges moral education and social practice.

Formal Codification through Modules and Organizational Guidelines

Formal codification represents a structural mechanism that ensures sustainability of value internalization. GEMAPKOS documents Islamic values in training modules, brochures, and organizational guidelines to maintain consistency across programs. Codification transforms values from informal norms into formal references that guide facilitators and participants alike. This mechanism reduces ambiguity and reinforces shared moral standards.

An organizational leader emphasized,

“Written guidelines help us maintain consistency so values do not depend on individual facilitators.” (Interview Wan.37, August 2024).

Documentation analysis reveals explicit references to ethical politics, dignified elections, and responsible participation. This formalization strengthens institutional accountability and continuity.

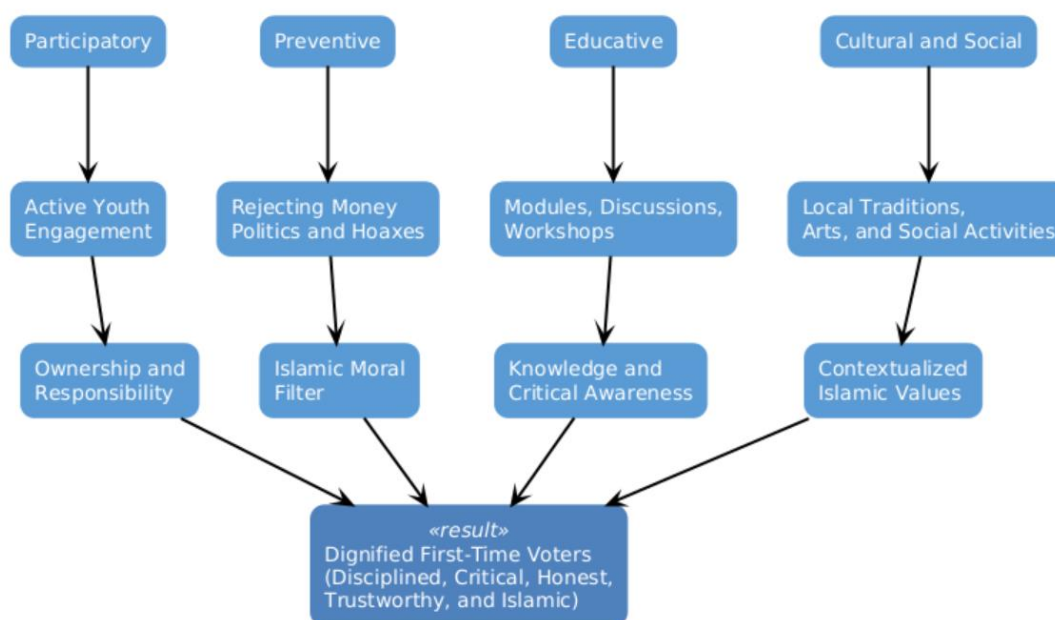


Figure 2. Mechanisms of Islamic Value Internalization Implemented by GEMAPKOS

The figure illustrates the interrelated mechanisms habituation, role modeling, dialogic learning, social engagement, and formal codification that collectively facilitate the internalization of Islamic educational values among first-time voters.

Summary of Internalization Mechanisms

Table 3. Mechanisms and Strategies of Islamic Value Internalization by GEMAPKOS

Mechanism	Main Function
Habituation	Reinforces values through repetition and consistency
Role Modeling (<i>Uswah</i>)	Translates values into observable ethical behavior
Dialogic Learning	Enhances critical awareness and moral reasoning
Social Activities	Applies values in real social contexts
Formal Codification	Ensures sustainability and institutional consistency

The table summarizes how each mechanism contributes to the overall internalization process. Together, these strategies form an integrated model that connects moral education with democratic practice. The convergence of interview data, observations, and documentation strengthens the validity of these findings.

Model of Islamic Value Internalization for First-Time Voters through GEMAPKOS

Overview of the Integrative Model

The findings culminate in an integrative model that explains how Islamic educational values are internalized among first-time voters through the structured interventions of GEMAPKOS. The model conceptualizes internalization as a progressive process that begins with core Islamic values, proceeds through specific mechanisms of transmission, and is operationalized via concrete implementation strategies. Rather than functioning linearly, the model reflects a dynamic and reinforcing system in which values, mechanisms, and strategies continuously interact. This interaction enables values to move from abstract norms to embodied political dispositions among young voters.

The model emphasizes that value internalization is not an automatic outcome of religiosity, but the result of deliberate educational design and sustained engagement. GEMAPKOS functions as a mediating institution that translates Islamic moral principles into practical democratic behavior. By integrating religious, educational, and social dimensions, the model demonstrates how civil society organizations can shape ethical political participation at the local level. This framework provides a coherent explanation of how moral education operates within real political contexts.

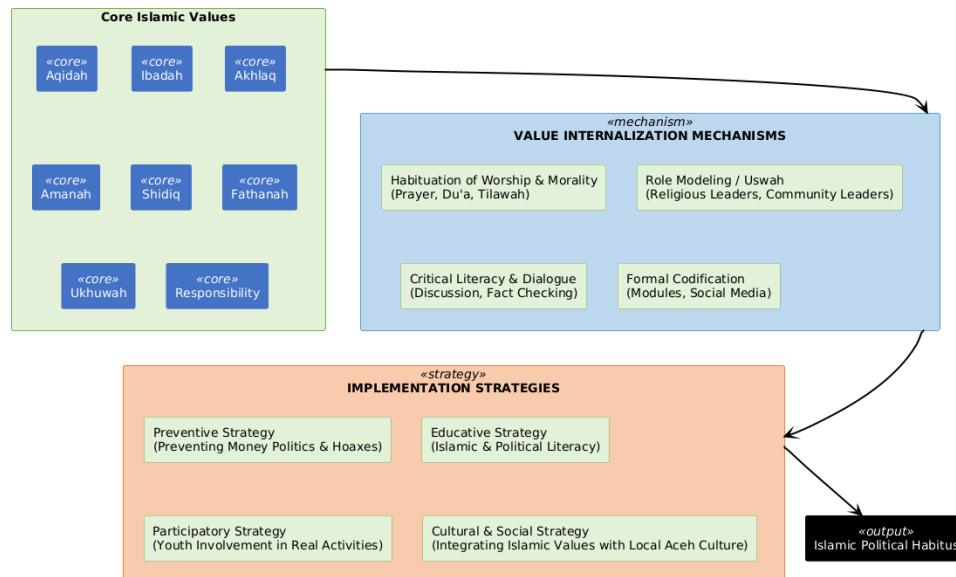


Figure 3. Model of Islamic Value Internalization through GEMAPKOS among First-Time Voters

The figure presents an integrative model illustrating the progression from core Islamic values to internalization mechanisms, implementation strategies, and the formation of Islamic political habitus.

Core Islamic Values as the Moral Foundation

At the foundational level, the model identifies core Islamic values *aqidah*, *ibadah*, *akhlaq*, *amanah*, *shidiq*, *fathanah*, *ukhuwah*, and responsibility as the moral basis of political education. These values serve as ethical reference points that frame political participation as a form of moral accountability. *Aqidah* establishes spiritual responsibility, while *ibadah* reinforces discipline and sincerity. *Akhlaq* and *amanah* guide ethical conduct and trustworthiness, particularly in resisting money politics.

The findings indicate that these values are introduced as an integrated set rather than as isolated teachings. GEMAPKOS emphasizes the interdependence of belief, practice, and social ethics to ensure coherence in moral reasoning. This approach strengthens value internalization by preventing moral fragmentation in political decision-making. As a result, first-time voters develop a holistic moral perspective on democratic participation.

Mechanisms of Value Internalization

The second level of the model consists of internalization mechanisms that mediate between values and practice. Habituation functions to reinforce values through repetition and consistency across activities. Role modeling (*uswah*) translates abstract values into observable ethical behavior demonstrated by leaders and facilitators. Dialogic learning fosters critical

awareness and reflective reasoning, enabling first-time voters to engage politically without losing moral orientation.

Formal codification through modules, guidelines, and media content ensures continuity and institutional consistency. These mechanisms operate simultaneously, creating a reinforcing environment for moral learning. The findings show that the effectiveness of internalization depends on the synergy among these mechanisms rather than on any single approach. This layered mechanism explains how values become embedded in attitudes and behavior over time.

Implementation Strategies and Practical Application

The third level of the model highlights implementation strategies that operationalize internalized values in real political contexts. Preventive strategies aim to shield first-time voters from unethical practices such as money politics, hoaxes, and hate speech. Educative strategies enhance Islamic and political literacy, equipping youth with knowledge and critical skills. Participatory strategies actively involve young voters in social and civic activities, allowing values to be practiced rather than merely discussed.

Cultural and social strategies integrate Islamic values with local Acehnese traditions, increasing relevance and acceptance. The findings indicate that contextualization strengthens value resonance and reduces resistance among participants. Together, these strategies transform moral understanding into sustained democratic engagement. This level demonstrates how values are enacted within everyday political life.

Formation of Islamic Political Habitus

The final outcome of the model is the formation of what this study terms an “Islamic political habitus” among first-time voters. This habitus is characterized by honesty, trustworthiness, discipline, responsibility, and ethical sensitivity in political participation. Rather than prescribing specific political choices, GEMAPKOS cultivates dispositions that guide how choices are made. The habitus manifests in critical voting behavior, rejection of transactional politics, and respectful political discourse.

The findings suggest that this habitus is durable because it is rooted in internalized values rather than external control. First-time voters demonstrate increased confidence in navigating political complexity while maintaining moral integrity. This outcome underscores the transformative potential of civil society–based Islamic education in strengthening ethical local democracy.

Empirical Significance and Analytical Contribution

Empirically, the model synthesizes interview data, observations, and documentation into a coherent explanatory framework. It demonstrates that GEMAPKOS effectively bridges the gap between normative Islamic teachings and practical democratic behavior. Analytically, the model contributes to the literature by highlighting the strategic role of local civil society organizations in political value education. It moves beyond formal institutional perspectives by emphasizing grassroots moral learning processes.

The model also offers a transferable framework for similar socio-religious contexts, particularly in Muslim-majority regions facing ethical challenges in democratic practice. By articulating clear components and processes, this study provides a grounded model that can inform both future research and policy-oriented interventions.

The findings of this study align with a substantial body of prior research emphasizing the central role of Islamic education in shaping ethical political behavior among young voters.

Previous studies have consistently shown that Islamic educational values such as honesty, trustworthiness, responsibility, and justice contribute significantly to the formation of moral political attitudes (Fadillah et al., 2022; Suhartono et al., 2024). Similar to these studies, the present research demonstrates that values like *aqidah*, *amanah*, and *akhlak* function as moral foundations that guide first-time voters in making ethical political decisions. However, this study extends earlier findings by empirically illustrating how these values are internalized through structured community-based interventions rather than remaining at a purely normative or conceptual level.

In relation to political participation and moral literacy among first-time voters, the results corroborate prior research highlighting the vulnerability of young voters to political manipulation, money politics, and misinformation due to limited political experience (Chauke, 2022; Najwa et al., 2024). Studies focusing on political education in formal settings often emphasize curriculum-based approaches to enhancing civic knowledge and participation. While these approaches have proven effective in increasing political awareness, they tend to overlook the moral and religious dimensions of political behavior. In contrast, the present study demonstrates that political literacy becomes more robust when combined with Islamic moral values, suggesting that ethical reasoning and critical thinking are mutually reinforcing rather than separate domains.

The role of civil society organizations identified in this study is consistent with research that underscores the importance of community movements in value education and civic engagement (Hendrik, 2022). Previous studies have shown that civil society organizations serve as mediators between formal education and lived social realities, particularly in plural and religious societies. However, most existing research concentrates on large national organizations or institutionalized religious bodies. This study diverges from that trend by focusing on a local civil society movement, GEMAPKOS, and demonstrates that localized organizations can be equally if not more effective in facilitating value internalization due to their cultural proximity and contextual sensitivity.

Despite these points of convergence, the findings of this study also challenge several assumptions in previous literature. Normative and philosophical studies on Islamic political ethics often presume that strong religiosity naturally leads to ethical political behavior (Rosyad & Ma'arif, 2020). The present research contradicts this assumption by showing that religiosity alone is insufficient without deliberate mechanisms of habituation, role modeling, dialogue, and institutional support. This finding supports sociological perspectives on value internalization, which argue that moral values must be continuously reinforced through social practice and organizational structures to influence behavior meaningfully.

Finally, this study contributes to the broader discourse on democratic education by offering an integrative model that bridges Islamic educational values, civil society engagement, and political participation. While earlier research has tended to examine these elements in isolation focusing either on religious education, youth political participation, or civil society activism this study demonstrates their interdependence within a single analytical framework. By situating Islamic value internalization within the practical context of local democracy, the findings provide empirical support for the argument that ethical and value-based education is essential for strengthening democratic integrity, particularly among first-time voters in Muslim-majority societies.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the *Gerakan Masyarakat Peduli Kota Subulussalam* (GEMAPKOS) plays a significant role in internalizing Islamic educational values among first-time voters through a structured and integrated approach. The findings demonstrate that core Islamic values such as *aqidah*, *ibadah*, *akhlak*, *amanah*, *shidiq*, *fathanah*, *ukhuwah*, and responsibility are effectively translated into ethical political attitudes when supported by deliberate mechanisms, including habituation, role modeling, dialogic learning, social engagement, and formal codification. Rather than merely increasing political awareness, GEMAPKOS contributes to the formation of an Islamic political habitus characterized by honesty, critical awareness, discipline, and moral accountability. This study affirms that civil society organizations at the local level can function as strategic agents in strengthening ethical democratic participation, particularly in Muslim-majority contexts.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that local governments, educational institutions, and civil society organizations strengthen collaboration in developing value-based political education programs for young voters. Future initiatives should integrate Islamic educational values with participatory and culturally contextualized strategies to enhance sustainability and public acceptance. Further research is suggested to examine the long-term impact of Islamic value internalization on voting behavior across different regions and electoral cycles, as well as to explore comparative models involving other community-based organizations. Expanding quantitative or mixed-method approaches could also provide deeper insights into the measurable effects of value-based political education on democratic quality.

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