

## Islamic Political Communication In The Digital Era: A Study On The Media Social Islamic Mass Organizations of Indonesia

Sebagus Pipo Mahendra<sup>1\*</sup>, Budi Martan Saudin<sup>2</sup>, Hanzholah Loeca<sup>3</sup>, Muhammad Yazid Al Busthomi<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,3</sup>Department of Communication Science, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya 60231, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Department of Educational Policy, College of Education, King Saud University, Riyadh 11362, Saudi Arabia

<sup>4</sup>Department of History Education, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya 60231, Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author

Email address: [sebagus.23382@mhs.unesa.ac.id](mailto:sebagus.23382@mhs.unesa.ac.id)

### ABSTRACT

*This study explores how Islamic civil society organizations (CSOs) in Indonesia employ political communication strategies in the digital era. It focuses on the role of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), and the 212 Alumni Brotherhood (PA 212) in using social media to disseminate political messages, build religious identity and mobilize public support. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, digital content analysis, and in-depth interviews. The findings reveal that these organizations adopt diverse communication styles—ranging from moderate and educational to confrontational and emotionally driven. Social media is an effective platform for engaging younger audiences, such as Generation Z, who are highly active in digital spaces. The study concludes that Islamic CSOs have evolved into strategic actors capable of influencing public opinion and shaping political identity discourse in Indonesia. It also highlights the need for further research to assess the long-term implications of digital communication strategies on democracy and social cohesion.*

**Keywords:** Political Identity, Digital Media, Islamic Organizations, Public Communication, Youth, Political Strategy

### INTRODUCTION

The development of Islamic politics in Indonesia cannot be separated from the strategic role of organizations—Islamic community organizations (mass organizations). Large mass organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah and

contemporary mass organizations such as the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) and The 212 Alumni Brotherhood have shown active involvement in national and local political dynamics. Although not directly political parties, mass organizations have a significant influence in shaping the direction of mass support, the Islamic agenda in public policy, and moving public opinion through religious issues that are politically packaged.

The strategies used by Islamic mass organizations in the political arena vary greatly, depending on their ideological approach, historical background, and relationship with formal political actors. Several mass organizations prioritize cultural strategies based on education, preaching, and dialogue, while others take the symbolic route and use mass action as a tool of political pressure. For example, NU plays a strategic role through structural and institutional channels. At the same time, the FPI is known for its confrontational strategy in public spaces through demonstrations and mass pressure.

The ability of Islamic mass organizations to adapt their political strategies reflects the dynamics of relations between religion and state in Indonesia. In the context of democracy, Islamic mass organizations become civil power with a real mass base and can be mobilized quickly. Their strategies aim to win short-term interests and form a grand narrative about morality, justice, and Islamic identity in politics.

This condition shows that Islamic politics occurs through political parties based on religion and social movements carried out by mass organizations. Therefore, it is important to study the political strategies of Islamic mass organizations scientifically to understand them, how religion is practiced in the political sphere, and how it influences the democratization process, governance, and community participation.

## **CONTEXTUALIZATION OF RESEARCH**

The phenomenon of the involvement of Islamic mass organizations in Indonesian politics is no longer new. It is merely incidental but has become part of a structured socio-political dynamic. In the last two decades, especially since the reform era, the role of Islamic mass organizations has experienced a shift: from initially focusing on da'wah and socio-religious activities, it is increasingly actively taking part in the practical political arena, both directly and through communication and mass mobilization strategies. This was

reinforced by several significant events, such as the 212 action, political support ahead of the presidential and regional elections, and strategic alliances between mass organizations and certain political parties.

On the other hand, the development of technology and social media has also changed how Islamic mass organizations conduct political communication. Conventional preaching strategies are shifting to digital patterns faster, more massive, and measurable campaigns. Islamic mass organizations use platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube as a medium for conveying political narratives, forming public opinion, as well as building a religious image that overlaps with political interests. This makes the issue of Islamic politics today inseparable from the context of political communication and marketing strategies based on religious values.

This research is important because not many in-depth academic studies dissect how Islamic mass organizations' strategies and political communication are constructed, their impact on society's political awareness, and the direction of democracy in Indonesia. By examining the case or pattern of Islamic mass organization strategies, this research attempts to present a broader understanding of how socio-religious forces fill spaces political space outside formal channels.

Academically, this research is at the intersection of political communication studies, sociology, religion, and Islamic political marketing. In the Indonesian socio-political context, this study also reflects the tension between electoral democracy and religious identity. It opens up space to evaluate the extent to which religion-based politics brings positive or negative influence and causes societal polarization.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The phenomenon of Islamic politics in Indonesia cannot be separated from the existence and role of Islamic community organizations (Ormas) as socio-political actors with strong roots in society. Previous studies have shown that the space for identity-based political expression has become increasingly open since the reform era. This provides an opportunity for Islamic mass organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, and Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) to the 212 movements to play a more

active role in the political sphere, both through direct support for candidates or through the formation of public opinion at the grassroots level grass.

Alfian (1989) has written historically about how political Islam in Indonesia did not only in the form of a political party but also moved through socio-religious channels, which mass organizations organize. Anies Baswedan (2004) also observed that in the system of open democracy, Islamic-based forces are often more effective when moving through social networks such as mass organizations rather than being trapped in formal party structures politics. Islamic mass organizations have strategic flexibility and direct proximity to a mass base.

In the context of political strategy, Mujani and Liddle's research (2009) explains that political actors- Political actors who are supported by religious forces usually have an advantage in mobilization matters. Islamic mass organizations utilize networks of Islamic boarding schools, religious studies, and charismatic figures to build influence, not only in religious aspects but also in electoral aspects. Wahid (2018) added that the strategies used by mass organizations differ; NU and Muhammadiyah prefer the institutional and educational path, while other groups, such as the FPI, tend to use mass actions and religious symbols directly to influence public opinion.

Political communication is also an important instrument in the activities of Islamic mass organizations. Romli (2012) stated that preaching cannot be separated from the political communication process because the religious messages conveyed often contain either explicit or indirect political content or are implicit. In the contemporary context, this communication is increasingly widespread its reach thanks to social media. Rizal (2020), in his research, showed that Islamic mass organizations use digital platforms such as YouTube and Instagram to disseminate ideological messages and shape political discourse, even in campaigns—unofficial electoral campaigns.

Furthermore, religion-based political marketing is an increasingly prominent approach. Firdaus (2015) noted that religious imagery is very effective in political marketing, especially in attracting value-sensitive voter segments of Islam. Political figures supported or "sold" by Islamic mass organizations are usually packaged as religious figures, close to religious scholars, and fighting for Islamic values in public policy. Arifin (2017)

strengthens this view by stating that religious identity-based approaches are more easily accepted in society, especially in urban areas with strong networks of Muslim study groups and communities.

From the various literature, it can be concluded that the role of Islamic mass organizations in politics in Indonesia is no longer just a moral actor but has developed into a strategic actor influencing public opinion, shaping political images, and even determining the direction of support Mass. Study Islamic mass organization's strategy, political communication, and marketing approaches. It is important to understand the dynamics of identity politics in Indonesian democracy today.

## **RESEARCH GAPS**

Various previous studies have discussed the involvement of Islamic mass organizations in the dynamics of Indonesian politics, both from a historical and ideological perspective, as well as its influence on the political process, namely, democratization. For example, research by Mujani and Liddle (2009) has shown how Islamic forces mobilize electoral support through religious bases. Wahid (2018) has also reviewed the political strategies of large mass organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah in public spaces. Meanwhile, Rizal (2020) highlights the role of social media as a new channel for political communication among Islamic mass organizations.

However, most of these studies emphasize the aspect of political roles more. Formal or electoral support of mass organizations for specific candidates or analyzing from a political perspective of large organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah. There has not been much research that comprehensively combines three approaches at once—namely political strategy, religion-based political marketing, and digital political communication—carried out by mass organizations in Contemporary Islam, especially in the post-212 Action context and the increasing influence of social media as the primary medium for mass mobilization and opinion.

In addition, limited research still examines how political messages are constructed. Religious activities by mass organizations are understood and responded to by society, especially the younger generation. Muslims are the primary targets in their digital

communications. Previous research focused more on the practices of mass organizations, not on the dynamics of message reception and the effects of its strategy in shaping public opinion and the people's political attitudes.

Thus, this research occupies an important space in filling the gap in existing research, namely by focusing on an in-depth analysis of political strategy, digital communication, and the marketing approaches used by Islamic mass organizations and how the three interconnected in forming political power based on religious identity in the era of digital democracy.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This study aims to understand and analyze how Islamic community organizations (mass organizations) in Indonesia form and implement political strategies in the contemporary socio-political context. In particular, it examines how Islamic mass organizations use political communication and political marketing approaches based on religious values to influence public opinion, build a political image, and expand their influence in the public space, both offline and through digital media.

This study also aims to reveal the relationship between these strategies. With community response and examining the role of Islamic mass organizations in the dynamics of identity politics developing in the current Indonesian democratic system. The specific objectives of this study include:

1. Analyze how Islamic mass organizations construct political messages through social media and digital channels.
2. Examine mass organizations' religion-based political marketing strategies to build a political image and attract public sympathy.
3. Identifying patterns of political mobilization carried out by mass organizations through symbols. Islam and collective identity.
4. Exploring the perceptions and responses of the community, especially young Muslim groups, towards political communication of mass organizations spread across digital platforms.

5. Understand the role of Islamic mass organizations in shaping the dynamics of identity politics in the current Indonesian democratic system.

By achieving these objectives, this research is expected to provide a scientific contribution to understanding the shift in Islamic political practices from the conventional realm towards a structured and influential digital communication strategy in the modern democratic landscape.

## **THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

This research starts from the understanding that political activities carried out by Islamic community organizations (Ormas) are not a form of conventional political participation alone. They are a rather complex and structured social communication practice. Therefore, the theoretical framework in this study combines several approaches: relevant theories, namely political communication theory, political marketing theory, and identity-based political mobilization.

First, political communication theory is used to understand how Islamic mass organizations convey political messages through traditional and digital media. This theory explains that political communication is conveying information and persuading the public through political actors, in this case. These Islamic mass organizations convey information, shape public opinion, and build a political image. Political communication carried out by mass organizations is not limited to election issues. However, it is also related to attitudes toward state policies, political figures, and religious issues, which are packaged in a political narrative.

Second, political marketing theory is used to analyze how Islamic mass organizations position their political message as a "product" that is packaged in such a way as to be attractive and accepted by society, especially Muslims. In this context, mass organizations act as an "ideology seller" who offers Islamic values, religious leadership, and social promises through various campaign strategies, both directly (face to face) and indirectly (social media). This approach emphasizes the importance of branding, target audience segmentation, and religious symbols as a political marketing tool.

Third, to strengthen understanding of mass organizations' influence in forming public opinions, the theory of identity-based political mobilization is also used, which explains that religious identity can be an effective tool in building group solidarity and mobilizing the masses for specific political goals. In this case, Islamic mass organizations use Islamic identity as a basis for rallying support, mobilizing collective action, and directing the people's political attitudes towards national issues that they consider relevant to Islamic values.

By combining these three approaches, the theoretical framework in this study will help to systematically explain how the political strategies of Islamic mass organizations are not only based on the strength of social and religious networks but are also influenced by the way they package, deliver, and plant political messages amid society. This theoretical approach also allows researchers to analyze the extent to which Islamic mass organizations' successes or limitations in forming a political awareness community through the strategies implemented.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research is qualitative, meaning that the researcher does not use statistical data or numbers but rather deeply explores meanings, processes, and social phenomena. The type is descriptive, namely, trying to describe and explain how Islamic mass organizations develop and execute their political and digital communication strategies.

## **RESEARCH APPROACH AND TYPE**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to understand and describe how social organizations (Islamic mass organizations) carry out their political strategies, including communication and political marketing. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore Islamic mass organizations' social and political practices from the subject's perspective and capture the meaning behind the communication and mobilization actions.



## **LOCATION AND TIME OF RESEARCH**

The research was conducted in Surabaya and its surroundings, the center of activities for several mass organizations, including big Islamic organizations with national influence, such as NU and Muhammadiyah, and contemporary groups, such as the 212 Alumni Brotherhood. This location was chosen because it is a place for political activities, mass actions, and religious communication, often in the public spotlight. The research period is planned to take place from May to June 2025.

## **RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

The subjects of this research are administrators, active members, or sympathizers of Islamic mass organizations involved in communication activities and political mobilization. Subject determination is carried out using a purposive sampling technique, namely, selecting informants deliberately based on specific criteria, such as direct involvement in mass organization activities, experience in political activities or public communication, and understanding of organizational strategies. The number of informants is determined flexibly following the principle of data saturation; that is, data collection is stopped when no new information emerges.

## **DATA TYPES AND SOURCES**

This study uses two types of data: primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained by observing mass organization activities, visual documentation (photos, video), and analyzing Islamic mass organizations' official social media content. Meanwhile, secondary data is obtained from academic literature, journals, online news, analytical articles, and public documents relating to the political activities of mass organizations.

## **DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES**

Data were collected through non-participatory observation, where the researcher observed activities. Mass organizations directly without involvement and through documentation studies, such as analysis of social media uploads, action videos, campaign flyers, and digital publications created by mass organizations. Apart from that, researchers

also conduct searches of mass media news and articles containing statements or political activities of Islamic mass organizations.

### **DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES**

Data analysis was done qualitatively thematically by grouping the data based on specific themes, such as communication strategies, religious narratives, political marketing forms, and relations patterns between mass organizations and the public. The analysis process is carried out inductively, drawing conclusions based on patterns from the data field. Relevant data are recorded, coded, classified, and interpreted to understand better the phenomena being studied.

### **VALIDITY OF DATA**

To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses source triangulation techniques, namely comparing data from various sources: field observations, digital content, and documentation from mass media or other written sources. This step aims to increase credibility and reduce the potential for bias in data interpretation.

### **RESEARCH LIMITATIONS**

This study has several limitations in clarifying the study's focus and avoiding irrelevant topic broadening. First, the object of study is limited to Islamic community organizations (mass organizations) that are active in political activities and use social media as a tool for political communication. Mass organizations in the spotlight include Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, and more contemporary groups such as the Alumni Brotherhood 212. This study does not examine Islamic-based political parties directly, except in the context of the relationship related to the mass organization being studied. Second, the research's geographical scope is focused on the Surabaya area and its surroundings. This area was chosen because it has a relatively high intensity of mass organization activity and is considered representative of observing the dynamics of religious politics at the local level. However, these geographical limitations make the research findings contextual and not intended to be generalized nationally.

Third, this study analyzes political strategies, digital communication patterns, and a religion-based marketing approach. Other factors, such as internal organization structure, financial resources, or international relations of mass organizations, are not the primary focus unless they are directly related to the dimension under study.

Fourth, data collection techniques are limited to observation, digital media documentation, and interviews with informants selected purposively based on their involvement in mass organizations' communication and political activities. Because this study uses a qualitative approach, its results are interpretive and not oriented toward statistical measurements or quantitative generalization. These limitations are intended to maintain consistency of focus and depth of analysis and to become a basis for further research that can expand the scope of areas, objects, and the methodological approach used.

## **REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE METHOD**

The descriptive qualitative method was chosen in this study because it was considered the most appropriate for delving deeply into the practices of political strategy, digital communication, and political marketing run by Islamic community organizations (Ormas) in Indonesia. The characteristics of complex and meaningful phenomena require an approach capable of capturing social dynamics and the actors' perspectives

Qualitative approaches allow researchers to explore symbols, narratives, and patterns. They also help researchers understand the communication used by mass organizations to frame religious and political issues, primarily through social media. With this approach, researchers can understand the social context and subjective experiences of informants directly involved in mass organization activities.

This method was also chosen because it aligns with the research objectives, which are interpretive and explorative. The data is not in numbers but in narrative form, statements, digital visuals, and documents reflecting socio-political meaning construction. Thus, the descriptive qualitative method is considered capable of providing a complete picture and in-depth analysis of how Islamic mass organizations practice political communication in the era of digital democracy.

Qualitative methods also allow researchers to adapt their data collection and analysis processes, especially when dealing with ongoing social phenomena changes such as the involvement of Islamic mass organizations in digital political activities. By utilizing observation techniques, documentation studies, and in-depth interviews, this research obtained contextual data that cannot be represented by numbers alone.

The selection of this method was also based on the fact that there are still limited comprehensive studies connecting political strategy, digital communication, and religious and political marketing from the perspective of the actors directly in the field. Therefore, a qualitative approach can provide depth of analysis and explain the construction of meaning formed by mass organizations in their political activities, especially in the digital space, which is very strategic for spreading influence.

Overall, this method is seen as the most relevant approach to understanding the complexity of the political communication practices of Islamic mass organizations in digital democracy. This approach allows researchers to capture social dynamics holistically and in-depth to present descriptive and reflective findings of the studied phenomenon.

## **PROFILE OF ISLAMIC MASS ORGANIZATIONS STUDIED**

This study examines four Islamic community organizations that have an important role in the Indonesian political landscape: Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, the Defenders Front Islam (FPI), and the 212 Alumni Brotherhood (PA 212). These four mass organizations were chosen because they have a strong mass base, significant socio-political activities, and a strategy for diverse political communication in the digital era.

### **a) Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)**

NU is Indonesia's largest Islamic mass organization, founded in 1926. Based on Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah's understanding, NU is known as an organization that upholds the values of moderation, tolerance, and cultural approach in its preaching. In the political realm, NU is not directly involved in the party. However, its influence is huge through its cadres and spread across various state institutions and historical relations with political parties. Nationalist Islam, like PKB NU, has a strong and active network of Islamic boarding schools, religious study groups, and wing

organizations. using social media to convey religious, social, and cultural messages about nationality. NU's communication strategy tends to be gentle and educative and prioritizes dialogue.

**b) Muhammadiyah**

Founded in 1912, Muhammadiyah is a modernist organization focusing on education, health, and community empowerment. Unlike NU, which is based on Islamic boarding schools, Muhammadiyah prioritizes institutional channels through schools, universities, hospitals, and social institutions.

In the political context, Muhammadiyah tends to take a neutral position and keep its distance from political parties, but it still voices attitudes toward national issues. This organization is also active on social media, but its communication style regarding public education is more formal and user-oriented. His political approach is more institutional and intellectual compared to mass mobilization.

**c) Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) (deleted but historically relevant)**

Even though the government legally disbanded the FPI at the end of 2020, its role as an Islamic mass organization active in mass political mobilization for more than two decades remains relevant to be analyzed historically. FPI is widely known for its confrontational approach to conveying political aspirations, its agenda of enforcing Islamic law, and its often involvement in symbolic and emotional demonstrations.

FPI uses social media such as Facebook and YouTube to spread political and religious messages, using a militant and agitator communication style. Although the organizational structure has been officially disbanded, the network of former members is still active in social media and informal movements, including in the ranks of PA 212.

**d) Alumni Brotherhood 212 (PA 212)**

PA 212 was born from the momentum of the mass action 212 Islam the ic Defense Action in 2016. This organization displays a more populist approach to Islamic politics and is confrontational compared to NU and Muhammadiyah. Based

on mass movements, PA 212 actively voiced political issues through street actions, public statements, and digital campaigns.

PA 212 actively uses social media such as Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to convey Islamic messages that intersect with practical political interests, including support for specific candidates in the election. The narratives tend to be symbolic and emotional and often use the diction of people's struggle and criticism towards the government.

### **Public Perception of Political Communication of Islamic Mass Organizations.**

Society's views, especially among the younger generation of Muslims, towards communication and the politics carried out by Islamic mass organizations (Armas) are very diverse. Several factors, such as level of education, ideological background, digital literacy, and religious experiences, influence these differences. In the context of the digital era, perception. These are formed from direct interactions and exposure to digital content that mass organizations spread through social media, including symbols and identity narratives of the religion they built. Some people, especially those with an ideological or emotional closeness to specific mass organizations, consider political communication a form of moral struggle and defense of Islamic values in public life. For example, groups that support PA 212 or FPI view the narrative they bring as a representation of their voice.

Muslims who feel the state is not accommodating them. This perception is reinforced by the use of religious symbols that touch the emotional side of the people, such as the term "struggle of the people," "jihad," or "amar ma'ruf nahi munkar."

On the other hand, quite a few people also view this political communication strategy as an attempt to politicize religion that has the potential to cause social conflict. This group, generally from educated circles, students, or active social media users, is more critical of religious-based political practices. They tend to reject the approach of mass organizations that are considered exclusive and provocative and do not prioritize the principle of diversity and tolerance between religions.

Public response is also greatly influenced by the communication style of each mass organization. For example, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah received more

positive responses because they conveyed messages with a moderate, educational, and dialogical approach. They reflect national values and the ethics of preaching on social media. Peace. On the other hand, mass organizations that use harsh rhetoric prioritize mass action and tend to oppose the government, often drawing mixed reactions from the public. While some support it because they feel their aspirations are being voiced, others reject it because they think this approach could disrupt unity and social stability.

Social media algorithms also play a significant role in shaping public perception. Interest-based recommendation systems often expose audiences to only the content they are most interested in, strengthening their beliefs (echo chamber), thus deepening segregation of information and strengthening confirmation bias towards previously believed narratives. From this description, it can be concluded that public perception of political communication in Islamic mass organizations is diverse and not uniform. The assessment depends on the values adhered to, their views on religion and politics, and their involvement in socio-religious dynamics in the digital realm.

### **Effectiveness of Digital Political Communication Strategies of Islamic Mass Organizations**

The success of the digital political communication strategy implemented by Islamic mass organizations is determined by their ability to convey messages that reach a broad audience, influence perceptions, and encourage political involvement. In the digital era, which is characterized by the high speed of information and interactivity, the effectiveness of a message is not only judged by the amount of content but also by the extent to which the message is conveyed. This builds collective awareness, strengthens group identity values, and shapes public attitudes towards socio-political issues.

Mass organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah have demonstrated their effectiveness through a consistent, moderate, and education-focused communication approach. They convey religious and national messages packaged contextually and rationally through official digital channels such as websites, social media accounts, and video content.

The effectiveness of this approach is seen from the broad reach and high acceptance—of society to the inclusive and dialogical narratives they offer. Meanwhile, groups such as the 212 Alumni Brotherhood (PA 212) and networks of former FPI activists emphasize a more fast, emotional and symbolic communication style. In the short-term context, this strategy can create strong resonance, mobilize sympathizers, and encourage collective action through digital appeals. Social media such as Instagram, Telegram, and WhatsApp allow them to spread messages massively and virally. However, spontaneous and emotional effectiveness often does not last long due to the lack of narrative continuity and being vulnerable to public resistance.

Besides content, internal factors such as digital media management capacity are also key. Effectiveness. Mass organizations with a solid communications team, a clear content strategy, and digital production skills are generally more successful in conveying messages professionally and systematically. In contrast, organizations that rely on volunteers or informal network activities to carry out digital activities often face obstacles in maintaining consistency and quality of messages.

External influences also determine the effectiveness of this digital strategy. Media algorithms, social issues, national issue trends, and the role of conventional media in strengthening or weakening an organization's digital narrative all contribute to creating a desired effect. In this case, the ability to read the situation and respond to momentum becomes an important part of an effective digital communications strategy.

Overall, the effectiveness of digital political communication by Islamic mass organizations results from a combination of the right message, accurate audience segmentation, relevant media, and relevant media sensitivity to the socio-political context. Mass organizations that successfully combine Islamic values with an adaptive and professional communication approach have greater opportunities to shape public opinion and expand their political influence in digital space.



## **Relevance of the Role of Community Organizations (Ormas) in Political Communication towards Generation Z Values**

Generation Z (Gen Z) was born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s. It is known as a digitally native generation that is very familiar with technology and has distinctive values such as openness, inclusiveness, social concern, and awareness of identity. In this context, the role of mass organizations in political communication is very relevant, mainly because of their political communication strategies—as examined in the document *Islamic Political Communication In The Digital Era*—increasingly directed towards digital platforms, which is the primary social habitat of Gen Z.

First, Gen Z's values of openness and the search for personal meaning tend to interest them in political narratives that touch on idealism and moral values. Mass organizations that convey political messages through Islamic narratives full of values such as justice, honesty, and social concern can easily resonate with the Gen Z spirit.

Their approach makes mass organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah more easily accepted. Their moderate and educative approach fits Gen Z's critical and rational thinking style. Second, Gen Z's interest in real action and direct participation finds its outlet through mass organizations' digital campaigns and social media. Political communication delivered through Instagram, YouTube, or Twitter content becomes easier to access and comment on, thus creating the participatory space that Gen hopes for Z. On the other hand, confrontational and symbolic styles, such as those used by PA 212 or FPI, could appeal to the more emotional and idealistic Gen Z segment. However, the more tolerant and pluralist Gen Z segment can also consider this approach exclusive.

Third, Gen Z highly values authenticity and honesty in communication. Therefore, it is easier for mass organizations to convey political messages in a transparent, consistent, and factual manner data or social reality to gain their sympathy. In this case, the approach of Political marketing that emphasizes religious and educational images can be an effective strategy when packaged authentically and not manipulatively.

Fourth, visual, interactive, and light political communication suits Gen Z's way of life. Z consumes information. Gen Z will readily accept mass organizations that understand this dynamic—for example, through infographics, short video content, and digital

storytelling—compared to conventional communication methods or political narratives that are too heavy and rhetorical.

Thus, political communication by Islamic mass organizations has transformed into the realm of digital, which not only shows the ability to adapt to the times but opens up a broad and meaningful dialogue space with Generation Z. The success of mass organizations in shaping public opinion. Political influence depends mainly on their ability to read the values and interaction patterns typical of Gen Z.

## **THEORETICAL DISCUSSION AND COMPARISON**

In theoretical discussions, the main approaches used to analyze the role of organizations and society (mass organizations) in political communication are political communication theory, political communication theory, political marketing, and identity-based political mobilization theory. All three offer a strong conceptual framework in explaining how mass organizations construct political messages, choose the medium, and shape public perception among the younger generation, such as Gen Z.

According to political communication theory, every mass organization acts as a non-state political actor. It conveys messages related to public issues, both directly and implicitly. Mass organizations act as information providers and agents of formation—public opinion. In the context of Gen Z, which is more responsive to narratives and communication, the effectiveness of mass organization communication is very much determined by its ability to convey political messages in an adaptive and engaging digital format.

Political marketing theory sees political communication as a process of marketing ideas, images, or public figures to the public, including specific audience segments such as Gen Z. Mass organizations act like "political brands" that must build an image, audience segmentation, and social media-based campaign strategies. Gen Z is a selective consumer of information and is critical and more interested in authentic, relevant messages that reflect values. They are like social justice, honesty, and diversity.

Meanwhile, the theory of identity-based political mobilization explains how mass organizations use religious and social identity to consolidate support and mobilize the masses. Although very open to diversity, Gen Z must build a collective identity. In this

case, mass organizations that can frame their political message within an inclusive and contextual identity narrative would be more able to reach Gen Z emotionally and ideologically.

From a strategic perspective, the success of mass organizations in reaching Gen Z is primarily determined by their ability to digitalize content and use inclusive language. The creation of touching narratives of social values held by Gen Z. Political communication that is too dogmatic or provocative can backfire in a digital space dominated by Gen Z is critical and vocal.

The role of mass organizations in political communication is becoming increasingly significant in the digital era, primarily when associated with Gen Z as the leading actor in the online public space. Understanding It is essential for the character of Gen Z to ensure that the political messages conveyed by mass organizations are heard, accepted, and understood critically. With a theoretical approach and strong and adaptive communication strategies, mass organizations have great potential to positively shape Gen Z's political awareness.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study conclude that Islamic community organizations (Islamic mass organizations) in Indonesia have experienced significant development in their role in the communications sector politics, especially in the digital era. Through the use of social media, mass organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), and the 212 Alumni Brotherhood (PA 212) not only carry out religious functions but also play an active role in forming public opinion, strengthening the collective identity of the people, and influencing the direction of national politics.

Each mass organization has different communication characteristics—NU and Muhammadiyah tend to use a moderate and educational approach, while FPI and PA 212 adopt a more emotional and symbolic approach. Through social media, they convey political messages packaged in religious narratives and moral campaigns to the call to action. This strategy has proven to reach wider community groups broadly, especially Generation Z, a digital native generation with a high level of participation in online space.

Integration between political communication theory, political marketing, and identity-based mobilization. This study shows that Islamic mass organizations are now not just a moral force but strategic actors with great potential in directing political discourse and influencing people's electoral behavior. Digital transformation has become an effective means for mass organizations to expand the reach and intensity of their influence.

However, this dynamic also brings challenges, such as the potential for polarization, the spread of biased information, and a tendency toward exclusivity in framing political issues. Therefore, Islamic mass organizations must continue developing approaches to inclusive, data-based communication based on democratic values and diversity.

In conclusion, this research opens up opportunities for further studies, especially those that explore the long-term impacts of religion-based digital political communication on social cohesion, the quality of democracy, and the political literacy of the younger generation. A more interdisciplinary approach is also needed to holistically understand the relationship between religion, media, and power in Indonesia's ever-growing digital society.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alfian. (1989). *Politik dan kebudayaan*. LP3ES.
- Baswedan, A. (2004). *Potret politik Islam dalam demokrasi Indonesia*. Pustaka Pelajar.
- Firdaus, A. (2015). *Marketing politik dan citra kandidat dalam pemilu*. Prenada Media.
- Mujani, S., & Liddle, R. W. (2009). Pemilih Muslim Indonesia: Perilaku dan preferensinya. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik*, 13(1), 1–28.
- Mulyana, D. (2005). *Ilmu komunikasi: Suatu pengantar*. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Nurudin. (2007). *Komunikasi politik: Antara wacana dan realita*. Kencana.
- Putri, A. N. (2021). Partisipasi politik dan ormas: Studi tentang mobilisasi sosial. *Jurnal Politik dan Masyarakat*, 9(2), 123–137.
- Rizal, M. (2020). Strategi komunikasi politik ormas Islam di media sosial: Studi pada PA 212. *Jurnal Dakwah Digital*, 3(1), 55–70.
- Romli, A. (2012). *Komunikasi politik Islam*. Simbiosis Rekatama Media.
- Wahid, M. (2018). Ormas Islam dan politik di Indonesia: Strategi, peran, dan tantangan. *Jurnal Politik Islam*, 7(1), 21–35.