

Anti-Abstention Pesantren: Salafiah Pesantren Ideology and The Efforts of Muara Enim General Election Commissions to Increase Voters Participation

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to find out the reasons or ideology of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf and the people of Karang Agung village, Lubai Ulu sub-district, Muara Enim, South Sumatra who refuse to participate in the general election and what efforts have been done by the general election commission of Muara Enim and South Sumatera. To achieve these objectives, this research was conducted by using qualitative methods in the form of empirical sociological approaches. The techniques used in data collection were observation, interviews, and forum group discussions with the chairman and commissioners of the general election commission of Muara Enim and South Sumatra, voting committee, district election committee, head of Lubai Ulu sub-district, head of Karang Agung village, administrators of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf, and other involved communities. The results of this research shows that the management and the community of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf did not want to contribute their votes in the elections because of some reasons: (1) avoiding disunity, (2) there are no sanctions in both state law and religious law, (3) ideology of western election, and (4) focusing on their field of religion. On the other hand, the general election commission of Muara Enim and South Sumatra did some efforts to increase voters' participation by: (1) providing general election socialization and voters' education without focusing on Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf, (2) registering Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf residents in the permanent voter list, and (3) deviding the polling stations.

Keywords: Participation, Election, Pesantren

Introduction

General election is a sacred activity run to affect greatly the course of government and development in a country (Sucipto, 2019). states that successful election is seen from the level of participation, the higher the level of participation, the higher quantity and quality will it become (Conover M.D et al, 2011). In line with the increasing level of participation in elections, several factors affecting the participation rate must also be considered (Caprara, G. V., et al, 2006). According to (Warganegara et al, 2019), the factors in question are: 1) awareness of political rights, 2) assessment of government policies, 3) even social status can also affect the level of participation.

To anticipate these factors, socialization and education for voters play an important role as efforts to increase electoral participation (Harnom et al., 2019). Based on an article 22 E Paragraph (5) of the 1945 Constitution, it is explained that the institution that carries out socialization and education for voters belong to general election commission (Prasetyo, 2019). General election commission is tasked with implementing and evaluating previous elections so that the electoral dynamics will continue to increase. This is evident through National Medium-Term Development Plan in 2019 which set the target of achieving national voters' participation at 77%. However, based on the data released by general election commission in 2019 that the participation rate was

77.8%. The data reveal that the national voter's participation target has been successfully exceeded by the general election commission (South Sumatra KPU, 2022). When viewed from the increase in participation, it can be believed that the general election commission's task has been successfully carried out even though there are still many people out there who do not participate in elections.

This phenomenon occurred in the Karang Agung Village, Lubai Ulu Sub-district, Muara Enim, South Sumatra, Indonesia where Dhiya'us Salaf is located which claims to be Salafiah. Based on preliminary information, it is known that the teaching conveyed to students and the community is to refuse the election participation. They argue that election comes from western ideology which is heresy. Interestingly, the general election commission of Muara Enim has recorded the participation rate in the Karang Agung Village since the 2004 election to the last election in 2019 at 0% (Daulai, et al., 2020). Therefore, this research was conducted in order to explain and analyze more deeply the ideology of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf and the efforts done by the general election commission of Muara Enim against this phenomenon with the title "*Anti-Abstention Pesantren: Salafiah Pesantren Ideology And The Efforts Of Muara Enim General Election Commissions To Increase Voters Participation*".

Based on the above background, the problems formulated in this study are "How is the Ideology of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf Pesantren and what efforts are done by the general election commissions of Muara Enim in increasing voters' participation?". Consequently, the research objectives are obtained to know and describe the ideology of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf and the general election commissions of Muara Enim's efforts in increasing voters' participation. It is finally hoped that this research will generate academic, theoretical, and practical benefits. Academic theoretical benefits refer to enriching insight related to elections, including socialization and voter education, especially among potential students to be voters. Practically, it is expected to present a solution for breaking the chain of abstention that occurs in Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf and the involved communities

which can become a material reference for the general election commissions of Muara Enim to formulate the right pattern of socialization and voters' education for Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf along with its involved communities.

The phenomenon of abstention in Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf is contrary to democratic, participative, and inclusive election theories. Based on the theory of democracy popularized by JJ. Rousseau that election is an important indicator in a country for a democratic system. This is clearly not in line with the non-voting behavior carried out by Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf because the behavior of not participating in election will not be fulfilled (Djuwita, 2019). Meanwhile, when viewed from the participative theory expressed by Rousseau that the quality of democracy is largely determined by the quality of participation and democracy without participation is not democracy (Bermeo, N., 2016). It is obviously contrary to Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf which does not want to participate in the election (Thalhah, 2009). Even more emphasized through HAR. Tilaar on Inclusive Election Theory if, what is meant by inclusive election is an election that provides the widest possible participation opportunity to every citizen, while the students and administrators of the Pondok Pesantren and even the surrounding residents do not want to participate in the election on religious grounds. Therefore, election called inclusiveness will never be realized (Ferdinand, 2010).

Materials and Methods

Study area

1. Research Methods

The research method used in this research was qualitative research in the form of case study approach to explore more deeply about the case of low participation in Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf in Muara Enim, South Sumatera, Indonesia (Syarbaini, 2018). In line with this, descriptive analytical research was used to describe detailed data collected in the field (Rachman, 2018).

2. Data Source

The data sources used in this research were from Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf with six chosen informants to represent the entire population of this study. The various factors referred to include the following:

- A. The provincial commissioner of South Sumatra in the division of planning data and legal division for the organizational structure of organizing elections.
- B. The chairman and commissioners of the community participation division of Muara Enim, as the leading sector for organizing elections in Muara Enim.
- C. The public relations of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf because it has the qualifications to represent the Pesantren's academic community.
- D. The chairman of Lubai Ulu's regional general election commission, technical organization of elections at the level of sub-district
- E. The Chairman of Karang Agung's voting committee, technical organization of elections at the level of village.
- F. The village secretary of Karang Agung, the person in charge of government at the village level.

Procedures

Pre-research is an activity carried out before research is carried out in the field, such as: 1) Submitting a research permit letter to the South Sumatra Province KPU and Muara Enim Regency KPU, Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School, Lubai Ulu PPK, Karang Agung PPS and the village government Great Coral. 2) Attach consent to the willingness to conduct interviews and Focus Group Discussions with each research informant (Informed Consent). 3) Conduct observations to determine competent informants and the number of informants who can meet the data requirements in the research (Herdayati and Syahrial, 2019). 4) Prepare several main questions in the semi-structured interview and Focus Group Discussion stages which will later be developed more intensely and exploratively during the interview and Focus Group Discussion activities where you meet directly with the informant (Herdayati and

Syahrial, 2019). Pre-research activities are carried out to prepare various needs needed during direct research in the field. The next activity is the stage of data collection based on qualitative research methods with a case study approach, namely through semi-structured interviews and Group Discussion Forums with the South Sumatra Province KPU, Muara Enim Regency KPU, Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School, PPS, PPK and the Karang Village government Great. The 2 series of research activities above were carried out by receiving direct support and assistance from the KPU of South Sumatra Province through letter number: 408/HK.05 - SD/16/2023 dated 7 June 2023 with the subject: research permit.

Data analysis

The data analysis technique referred to the concept (Miles et al., 2014), through 4 stages of analysis, namely:

- A. Data Collection. Collecting as much research data as possible using data collection techniques, observation and semi-structured interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).
- B. Data Condensation. The summarized data were reviewed by looking for patterns and selecting the focus.
- C. Data Presentation. Furthermore, the data from observations, interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) reduced by being presented in the form of narrative text, and at this stage the results were interpreted to match the formulation.
- D. Conclusions. After collecting, reducing, and presenting, the conclusion was a further analysis to make conclusions according to the data and facts found.

The data obtained were then tested for validity by means of 2 types of triangulation, including the following: 1) Source of triangulation. Comparing six data sources namely interviews from the provincial general election commissions of South Sumatra, the general election commissions of Muara Enim, the voting committee, the regional election commission of sub-district, the village secretary, and the public relations of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya us'Salaf to check and saturate the data, 2) Tringulation Method. The results of

observations, interviews and FGD were seen for the correlation and relationship of each obtained data (Sugiyono, 2017).

Then the data were further strengthened by member-checking, namely going back to the informant after the data is analyzed to find out whether the resulted data were valid or not proved with the informants' signature as stated in the attachment for reliable data (Kuncoro, 2013).

Results and Discussion

Results

1. Socialization and voter education of Muara Enim's general election commissions at Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf.

The general election commissions of Muara Enim at first learned that there was a phenomenon of abstention in Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf during the election of the regent and deputy regent of Muara Enim in 2013. The interesting phenomenon began and ended with empty votes in 1 polling station where all the voters consisted of residents and students of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf. After that, the general election commissions of South Sumatra and Muara Enim immediately took swift steps by going directly to the field to verify the validity of the information and conducting direct discussions with the Government, National and Political Unity, Attorney, Dandim, Sub-District Head, and Village Head to obtain data about why all voters of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf do not use their voting rights on the grounds of belief (Chairman of general election commissions of Muara Enim: July 07, 2023).

After the accident of local leaders election in 2013 until now, the general election commissions of Muara Enim has never conducted socialization and voter education including to Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf because of the budget constraints. It happens because the absence of election participation choice of the islamic boarding school has involved beliefs so that it is not the domain of the Muara Enim's general election commissions but the government (Chairman of general election commissions of Muara Enim: 07 July 2023).

However, based on the information obtained that the government and the ranks of the regency had a direct dialogue with Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf regarding abstention, but the activity did not involve the general election commissions of Muara Enim.

To maintain the stability of elections in Muara Enim, in the 2018 and 2019 regional elections, voters from Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf were split and put into different polling stations, but still within the scope of the Karang Agung Village polling station so as to avoid polling stations with 0% participation (Coordinator of the Community Participation Division of general election commissions in Muara Enim: July 7, 2023). However, based on the mentoring of polling station officers in the field of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Slaf, until now they still do not use their voting rights (Chairman of Karang Agung's voting committee: July 10, 2023).

Although the voting committee of Lubai Ulu Subdistrict and the voting committee of Karang Agung Village have conducted socialization in several times along with the general election commissions of Muara Enim and governmental parties such as National and Political Unity, the sub-district party and the village head which have appealed to use their voting rights to the islamic boarding school as well as the Regent has also sent his team to discuss with the board of the islamic boarding school, but until now there has not been any change to Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf (Kordiv. Hukum KPU Muara Enim: July 7, 2023). As for so far, the approach taken is persuasive family because the boarding school management is quite open to the community, especially the implementation of elections, even when collecting the Permanent Voters List (DPT) and other electoral activities they actively participate, but not when faced with exercising their voting rights (Chairman of voting committee of Lubai Ulu).

The provincial general election commissions of South Sumatra as the coordinator of the Election Implementation at the provincial level of South Sumatra has also played its role. The provincial general election commissions has instructed the Muara Enim's general election commissions to be able to pay special attention to the participation in

Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf, then also appealed to be able to involve all interested parties including National and Politic Unity, MUI, and Police. The provincial general election commissions of South Sumatra has also identified the same group. The result is that until now there is no similar community found. In general, the various instruments of socialization and political education that become the program of general election commissions of South Sumatra cannot run in parallel because of the limited budget (Kordiv Planning, Data and Information KPU of South Sumatra).

2. Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'ussalaf's views on elections and democracy.

In principle, Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf loves the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia and recognizes Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution as the basis and constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. However, it is inversely proportional to the field of politics and muamalah, the Islamic Boarding School taklik with the decree of Allah in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of Rosulullah SAW with the role model for its implementation is the period of companions, tabi'tabi'in who are the best generation of salaf scholars of Islam. Regarding the use of voting rights in elections, the Islamic Boarding School admits that it has never taught or instructed or even appealed to students and residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf environment to abstain from voting. However, the ideology of not voting is born from the awareness of each individual (PR Ponpes: July 9, 2023). As for if a polling station is established, Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf welcomes it well even though they are not willing to be officers or vote (Karang Agung's voting committee: July 10, 2023).

From the results of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on July 10, 2023 with teachers and lecturers of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf, four foundations were obtained which became the basis for the consideration of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf not to use their voting rights, namely:

A. Not exercising the right to vote in elections is the free choice of every citizen because choosing not to vote is also a choice, and there are no legal or religious sanctions.

B. The election can also give birth to various negative impacts in the form of division which so far 625 heads of families in the Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf complex live in harmony, compact and peaceful. It is feared that if they actively participate in the election, the residents of the cottage will then be divided according to their respective colors and choices and will certainly result in the erosion of the integrity and sustainability of the cottage. Plus, especially if the elected leader is a leader who brings damage, then we must also take responsibility for delivering a despotic ruler to control our nation.

C. Democracy and election are not ways of appointing or choosing leaders as taught by the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and no examples were found during the time of the companions and the Tabi'in. Then, if choosing and appointing leaders are in accordance with the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah, Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf will then follow it.

D. Dhiya'us Salaf focuses more on worship and religious education as their field of expertise. While in matters of nation and state, the residents and administrators of the Islamic Boarding School are sami'na wa atho'na to the decision of the official state leader.

However, if there is a possibility that the residents, students, and administrators of the islamic boarding school run for the position of people's representatives or leaders. The answer is then unlikely to happen because: first, it is contrary to the vision of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf, second, Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf does not educate people who go into politics (Ponpes Public Relations: July 9, 2023).

Discussion

1. Efforts to increase voter participation made by the general election commission of Muara Enim towards Pondok Pesantren Salafiah Dhiya'us Salaf.

Normatively, the efforts to increase participation in general carried out by the general election commission and its staff are divided into two main models, namely in the form of socialization and voter education or what is often called political

education. There are several activities that have been carried out by the ranks of the provincial general election commission of South Sumatra, general election commission of Muara Enim, commitment-making officer of Lubai Ulu District, and voting committee of Karang Agung as well as the Government of Muara Enim, Lubai Ulu District and Karang Agung Village at Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf categorized as socialization and political education activities, among others:

- A. The provincial general election commission of South Sumatra made a visit to the Dhiya'us Salaf along with instructing the general election commission of Muara Enim and its staff to solve the election participation abstention that occurs.
- B. Discussion conducted by general election commission of Muara Enim at Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf and efforts to encourage the Lubai Ulu's commitment-maker officer and voting committee to conduct a political education at Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf.
- C. Registering the residents of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf complex in the permanent voters list.
- D. Involving the management and residents of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf in every socialization and political education activity carried out by Lubai Ulu's commitment-maker officer and Karang Agung's voting committee.
- E. The gathering and awareness carried out by the National and Political Unity and the ranks of the Muara Enim's Government to the Dhiya'us Salaf.
- F. Continuous appeals are made by the government Karang Agung Village to the santri administrators and residents of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf to exercise their voting rights in the elections.

The strategy of separating 1200 voters in Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf into 22 polling stations spread throughout the village of Karang Agung means will mingle with voters from outside their community a strategy that is quite telling, firstly, this strategy is intended so that there are no more polling stations with 0% voter participation, secondly, this strategy can also be used as a lure for

being interested in participation and using voting rights for Dhiya'us Salaf residents.

2. Factors that influence the interest of Salafiah groups at Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf to participate in elections.

Through a simple approach or logic, it can be formulated that the factors that influence interest are the antithesis of the things that underlie their reluctance to participate. It was revealed from the focus group discussions and interviews conducted with Ustadz Abu Syafiq on July 10, 2023, that the background of thought so that the Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf community did not use their voting rights in the elections were as follows:

- A. There are no sanctions either by state law or religious law for those who do not exercise their right to vote in elections. However, this idea contradicts to theory of democracy.
- B. In order to avoid divisions among fellow of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf communities due to differences in political choices in elections. Therefore, the role of political education as intended by (Dudih, 2019) is very necessary.
- C. Elections and democracy are western products and tend to deviate from the Sunnah. In fact, in the science of Fiqh Siyasah, there are various Qur'anic and hadith arguments that clarify the nature of elections and democracy from an Islamic perspective.
- D. Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf prefers to focus on worship and religious education as its expertise. As for the affairs of the nation and state, the residents and administrators of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf are sami'na wa atho'na to the decision of the official state leader. So, the question arises if the leader is a person who will bring ruin to the nation and religion whether the Dhiya'us Salaf is just silent about it.

Through the antithesis approach, we can formulate the factors that can influence the interest of the Salafiah community, especially Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf, in exercising the right to vote and participating in elections, as follows:

- a. There is a law that states explicitly for people who do not want to use their voting rights, or a

fatwa of MUI which states that abstention is a sinful act.

- b. If you can ensure that holding elections cannot only create divisions but also become a means of national integration.
- c. An in-depth study of fiqh siyassah in relation to elections and democracy is conducted.
- d. That building and improving the nation is part of worship and jihad in Islam because we are commanded to fight every form of evil, elections should be an evaluation arena for leaders.

Conclusions

1. In principle, Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf recognizes and loves the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia including Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Regarding the right to vote, Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf has never instructed or taught or even appealed not to use the right to vote. The various reasons that become the basis of their thinking not to vote, namely: (1) avoiding divisions, (2) there are no sanctions in both state law and religious law, (3) ideology of western election, and (4) focusing more on worship.
2. In particular, the general election commission have not planned and programmed activities on socialization and political education activities specifically for increasing voters' participation in the Salafiah group at Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf. Socialization carried out so far is also only partial and reactive in accordance with the stages of organizing elections or elections. The political education carried out tends to be budget-based and does not involve multi stakeholders. Concluding sentence should be given after the discussion.

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