Santri Political Culture : A Case Study of Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah Medan Islamic Boarding School

Windawati Pinem [1], Prayetno [2], Taufiq Ramadhan [3], Muhammad Iqbal [4]

{windawatipinem@unimed.ac.id[1], prayetno@unimed.ac.id[2], TaufiqRamadhan@unimed.ac.id[3], iqbal81@unimed.ac.id[4]}

Pancasila and Civic Education Department of Faculty of Social Sciences ofUniversitas Negeri Medan, Indonesia 20221 [1,2,3,4]

Abstract. This study aims to see the santri political culture in Ponpes Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah Medan. Apart from being an educational and da'wah institution, islamic boarding school is also included as a political entity in which there are santri. The elements included in politics are power, state, decision making (*distribution*) and others. As it is known that in the life of the nation and state almost every citizen will come into contact with political issues. So that political culture is one of the characteristics of culture in society. Political culture includes legitimacy, policy making, power, government/society behavior and others. Political activities that contain elements of religion can also be said to be part of political culture. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach. Data collection techniques are carried out by interviewing, observing and collecting various previous studies. Analysis of the data is done through triangulation. The result of this study found that political culture of santri in Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah islamic boarding school is the political culture of kaula and participants.

Keywords: santri political culture, ar-raudlatul hasanah medan boarding school.

1 Introduction

This study aims to see the political culture of santri at Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah Islamic boarding school Medan. Since the beginning of its presence, Islamic boarding school has its own uniqueness. One of them is that Islamic boarding school are synonymous with Islamic values and also the authenticity of Indonesian culture. This is also what makes Islamic boarding school referred to as indigenous Indonesians. Islamic boarding school have become part of the culture of the Indonesian nation which is realized through educational institutions. The aim is to educate and produce moral human beings based on Islamic religious values. In addition, the presence of Islamic boarding school is considered as a response to the symptoms of socio-cultural reality that develop in society. However, the presence of Islamic

boarding school is often a political tool used to gain sympathy through the pattern of relationships established between kyai and santri. This pattern of relations is called political patronage [1]. Kyai as patron while santri as client. The problem in this study is that the political culture of santri tends to be formed through the pattern of patronage relationships between kyai and santri. So it is not uncommon for the political culture of santri to be influenced by the figure of a kyai. This happens because the kyai figure is considered a charismatic figure and has influence in Islamic boarding school. In addition, the role of kyai in building society and driving socio-political action is considered very effective. This stems from the belief that kyai is a leader in Javanese Islamic society. Respect and obedience to kyai is strengthened by the culture of Indonesian people who are accustomed to obeying their leaders. This is what makes kyai leaning closer to his people. Not only in educational and religious matters, but also in political matters. The patron is seen as a resource that can meet the material and spiritual needs of his followers. So that the relationship between kyai and santri is supported by traditional authorities.

This research is interesting to discuss because the relationship between kyai and santri forms a pattern called patronage. This patronage occurs not only in matters of religious science, but also in political matters. This research is also reinforced from several previous studies. Such as research conducted by Hendra Gunawan. In his research entitled Political Culture of Islamic boarding school Cipasung Singaparna, Tasikmalaya Regency, found that Islamic boarding school are not only educational institutions. But Islamic boarding school are also places of power struggle, influence and power retention [2]. So it is not uncommon for Islamic boarding school to become a political tool to fight for people's votes. This is reinforced by research conducted by Siti Asiyah on political da'wah in Islamic boarding school. In this study, it was found that in Islamic boarding school the santri were also given political da'wah to train leadership [3]. That is, santri have been equipped with political information that can build a sense of nationalism. However, the kyai figure is still considered as a figure who plays an important role behind the political behavior of santri. This can be seen in the research conducted by Ahmad Robi on the Political Culture of NU Society. In this study, it was found that kyai and Islamic boarding school still have a strong influence in shaping people's political behavior [4]. The political culture of Islamic boarding school is basically related to the culture that develops in islamic boarding school. But it is different with tradition according to Edward Shils is everything that is transmitted or passed down from the past to the present [5]. Traditions that exist in society have the aim that human life is rich in cultural values and also history. Based on the definition of culture, a line of thought about Islamic boarding school culture can be drawn as below.
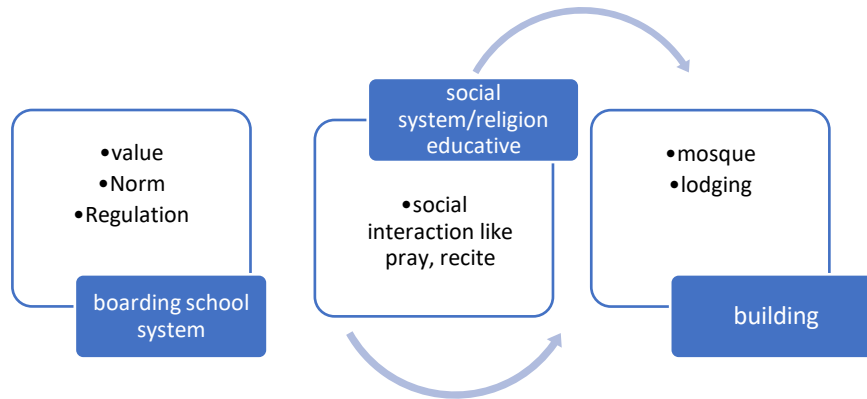
Fig 1. Islamic boarding school Culture

Based on the picture above that Islamic boarding school culture consists of three parts, namely the Islamic boarding school system consists of values, norms and regulations. A religious social/educational system consisting of social interactions such as prayer and recitation. Physical consisting of a mosque and huts. So if summarized, Islamic boarding school culture consists of beliefs, behaviors, and habits in society. In general, the customs in the Islamic boarding school will be passed on from generation to generation and considered as an absolute truth. Of course, this will be accepted by the community as something good, because Islamic boarding school is considered an institution with high moral values. So it is very easy for the community to accept the cultural pattern of the Islamic boarding school.

What distinguishes this study from previous research is that this study wants to present a democratic patronage culture in the lives of santri at Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah Islamic boarding school. If in general, kyai is still a charismatic figure who is highly respected by santri and has an influence on the political behavior of santri [6]. However, in Ar-Raudlatul Islamic boarding school, kyai is not a determinant of the behavior and political culture of santri. Research conducted by Suci Rismawati found that the proximity of the Islamic boarding school to one of Gresik's regent candidates had an influence on the political culture of the santri [7]. There is also Amanatus Zahro who found that Islamic boarding school need Aswaja culture (Sunnah Wal Jamaah) to suppress issues of radicalism, salafism and fundamentalism [8]. In addition, there is also research conducted by Riskal Fitri et al, which found that Islamic boarding school have a plural character, including in terms of culture [9]. The novelty value in this study is that santri have a mixed political culture of participants. The political culture of santri tends to remain unstable in one form of political culture. This is influenced by the low political education of santri and not because of the kyai figure.

2 Methode

This study tried to see the political culture of santri in the Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah Medan Islamic boarding school. In this study using the theory of Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba to look at the political culture of santri. As is known that research is a scientific way to be able to get data with certain purposes and uses. The scientific method is a research activity based on rational, empirical and systematic scientific characteristics. Rational means that research activities are carried out in a reasonable way so that it is affordable to the human mind [10]. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach. Qualitative research has a descriptive nature and tends to use inductive approach analysis. So that the process and meaning based on the subject's perspective are more highlighted in this qualitative research [11]. The data sources used are derived from primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews and observations. While secondary data is obtained through previous research, books and journals. The data validation method used in this study is by data triangulation.

3 Result and Discussion

Indonesia is one of the most populous Muslim countries in the world. Demographically, Indonesia's Muslim population is around 229.62 million people or about 86.7% of the total population of Indonesia [12]. Even this number is predicted to continue to increase every year. In addition, the Muslim population in Indonesia also contributes around 13.1% of the total Muslims in the world. This means that Indonesia is in a strategic position and has *soft* and *hard power*. As one of the most populous Muslim countries in the world, the history of the development of Islam in Indonesia has an interesting story. At first Islam entered Indonesia through trade routes such as the straits of Malacca, Demak, Cirebon, Gresik, Tuban, Makassar and Eastern Indonesia. The role of missionaries and traders from Arabia is considered to help the process of Islamic development in Indonesia [13]. Initially, the spread of Islam in Indonesia was carried out through educational institutions which are currently called boarding school. Boarding school is used as one of the media in accelerating the spread of Islam in Indonesia. So that the history of the growth of boarding school in Indonesia cannot be separated from the history of the entry and development of Islam in Indonesia.

At first, Islamic boarding school were defined as a place of learning for santri and were synonymous with the culture of Indonesian society. Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, especially those on the island of Java, are more similar to "*padepokan*", which is a simple tenement that is used as a dormitory for santri. Etymologically the word cottage comes from the Arabic funduq which means lodging or dormitory. Islamic boarding school was once the only educational institution that belonged to indigenous peoples that contributed to shaping a literate and culturally literate society [14]. Islamic boarding school at the beginning of its formation was an educational institution that was only used to learn about Islam. But with the times, Islamic boarding school began to undergo transformation. There are several advantages possessed by Islamic boarding school. First, in the Indonesian education system, Islamic boarding school have contributed in two ways, namely changing the aristocratic education system to democratic and continuing the people's education system. Second,

Islamic boarding school are considered as unique educational institutions because the education system is different from other schools in general. Third, Islamic boarding school have relatively independent communities. Fourth, santri and kyai who live and live in Islamic boarding school also have a strong emotional connection. This is what makes Islamic boarding school different from other schools. But now Islamic boarding school not only function as educational institutions, but also as da'wah institutions. It is this role that is often translated differently by political actors. So that Islamic boarding school are often used as a political tool to gain power through political culture in it. The political culture that characterizes Islamic boarding school is the relationship that exists between kyai and santri.

The study of political culture is always interesting to discuss. Even after the current of globalization came, the theme of political culture was increasingly in demand. This is because political culture always intersects with the problems of society as individuals and also as citizens [15]. For Muslim-majority countries such as Indonesia, the study of political culture is not only concerned with problems within individuals but also institutions. One of them is Islamic boarding school which has a different cultural pattern when compared to other institutions. Indonesia is one of the countries with the highest number of Islamic boarding schools in the world spread almost throughout its territory. Even Indonesia is dubbed as the land of santri. Therefore, the study of the political culture of santri is very important. Especially considering that Islamic boarding school in Indonesia is not only a symbol of Islamic religious education, but also a symbol of socio-political power. Apart from being an educational and da'wah institution, Islamic boarding school is also included as a political entity.

The elements included in a political entity are power, state, decision making (distribution) and others. As it is known that in the life of the nation and state almost every citizen will come into contact with political issues. It is undeniable that politics has become an important part of our lives as citizens. But often we just don't realize it. But do not imagine that the political issue only concerns elections. But also about policies made by the government. The interaction carried out by the community in a country, it will form a culture. Therefore, the study of the political culture of Islamic boarding school is very important. Especially considering that Islamic boarding school in Indonesia are not only a symbol of Islamic religious education, but also a symbol of socio-political power.

The deep-rooted Islamic boarding school culture can form a pattern of Islamic boarding school political culture as well. The difference is if the culture of Islamic boarding school is related to the lives of santri and kyai, while the political culture of Islamic boarding school is related to the political dynamics that exist in Islamic boarding school. Including political relations between kyai and santri. Political culture is a pattern of behavior and orientation of individuals or groups towards political life. Political culture is an interesting study because it reflects and reflects the pattern of people's behavior. An institution like Islamic boarding school is no exception. There are several types of political culture according to Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba, namely [16].

A. Parochial Political Culture

Parochial political culture is a political culture that has a low level of political participation. Individuals in this type of political culture have weak ties to the political system, both cognitively and affectively. Individuals do not expect any change from a political system. This is because individuals do not feel part of a whole nation. Individuals only feel bound by power close to them. For example, the political culture of the Asmat and Dayak tribes in Indonesia.

B. Kaula Political Culture

Kaula political culture is a political culture where people already have good political awareness but each is passive. In this type of political culture, the society is economically and politically advanced. But when talking about politics, there is a feeling of discomfort because they can't trust others just like that. On the other hand, when dealing with state institutions they feel weak and can't do anything about it. This kind of political culture is prevalent in strong, but authoritarian countries.

C. Participant Political Culture

The political culture of the participants has a high political awareness of the community. People have begun to be active in giving opinions and participating in political activities. In participant political culture, individuals have the awareness that they are part of the citizens who have rights and obligations.

Islamic boarding school is an *indigenous* institution that has become a symbol of Islamic civilization in Indonesia. As a well-organized institution, Islamic boarding school has an *important figure* in carrying out its policies, namely kyai. Kyai not only acts as a teacher, but also as a charismatic and highly respected leader. The advantages possessed by a kyai lie in the authority of his power which is considered legitimate. Kyai is considered a decision maker who is able to provide solutions for social changes that occur in society [17].

In this study, the Islamic boarding school to be discussed is Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah Islamic boarding school Medan. Ar- Raudlatul Hasanah Islamic Boarding School is one of the many modern Islamic boarding school in the North Sumatra region. The history of Ar- Raudlatul Hasanah boarding school starts from the study activities that are usually carried out by the surrounding community. Since the 1970s, the culture of recitation discusses Islamic issues and recites wirid yasin almost every week. With the "*waqaf*" land that had been provided, at that time a simple *musholla* was built by the surrounding community. This simple *musholla* is used for religious activities such as praying, reciting and others. Departing from this simple prayer room, then the idea of building a boarding school began.

As explained earlier, political culture is the attitudes, values and beliefs of the community that can influence its political behavior. The political culture of Islamic boarding school is the attitude, values and beliefs of Islamic boarding school. One important part of understanding the political culture of Islamic boarding school is related to the relationship between kyai and santri. Kyai is a central *figure* in a Islamic boarding school. Kyai is often regarded as a legacy from the Prophet that is obligatory to obey. However, the position of the kyai in the Islamic boarding school is not the same as the teacher in general. Santri and kyai have a stronger

emotional attachment than other educational institutions. This is influenced by many factors, one of which is the culture of *sami'na wa atho'na* which means we listen and we obey are still inherent in the life of Islamic boarding school. In QS: An-Nisa Verse 59 reads "O believers, obey Allah and his Messenger and Ulil Amri among you". Ulil Amri here can refer to teachers and scholars. In addition, kyai is also considered as a determinant of the direction of Islamic boarding school [18]. In Salafi (traditional) Islamic boarding school, santri studying the yellow book will usually record important things conveyed by their kyai without any questions. So santri must believe that what is conveyed by the kyai is something absolutely true. But this is no longer the case in modern Islamic boarding school such as Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah. This Islamic boarding school actually provides openness for santri to live democratically. Including asking questions and discussing with kyai.

But unfortunately the culture *of sami'na wa atho'na* is often derailed by certain groups for political purposes. The obedience of santri to kyai is considered a magnet for fighting for support. Especially considering that the culture of 'inviting' in Islamic boarding school is still felt. Santri will usually convey the political information received to his family. The information conveyed is usually also considered as truth. This is what can often affect the political behavior of santri and those around them. Thus making Islamic boarding school a promising political attention. The attitude of obedience possessed by santri in islamic boarding school has become a tradition that continues to grow from time to time. Then it continued in the formation of political attitudes and gave birth to patterns of patronage relations. A relationship that is considered asymmetrical and overlapping. So that political patronage relationships are often used by certain groups to fight for public support. Kyai is not only the head of the Islamic boarding school but also as a *cultural broker*. This term refers to the role of kyai as a link between Islamic boarding school and power. As Barton said, as a cultural broker Islamic boarding school has a dual role, where one side wants to maintain its traditionality but on the other hand must also be able to accept the changing times.

However, this role later underwent a shift to *political broker* become *political actor*. A considerable change in the role of Islamic boarding school and kyai. This is of course based on the start of the involvement of kyai and Islamic boarding school in political affairs. There are even those who are already sitting in legislative seats. The relationship between kyai and santri, which is based on cultural emotional strength, is now a force that is used and utilized to enter the political world. In addition, the relationship between kyai and santri has a pattern of traditional relations that are feudal in nature.

There are three pillars that make up the culture, namely first, the mass base which is the pattern of its social structure. Second, the base of scholars who present the leadership structure. Third, the basis of tradition that culturally becomes a binding cultural system [19]. The shift in relationship between kyai and santri also occurred in Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah boarding school. The democratic atmosphere feels thicker in Islamic boarding school life. Kyai is no longer a reference for santri to influence their behavior and political culture. Since the current of modernization and democracy developed in the world of Islamic boarding school, now santri are no longer obedient to kyai in political matters. Santri began to transform into rational voters and were not fixated on the role of kyai. The obedience of

santri to kyai in the patronage pattern only revolves around religious affairs. The relationship that exists between kyai and santri is like the relationship between teacher and santri, not *longlife.*

However, the relatively democratic relationship between kyai and santri does not make santri open to political issues. This then formed a mixed political culture of the participants. From the results of interviews conducted with santri, it was found that interest in political issues was relatively small. The santri focus more on studying religion, not for worldly things (politics). The involvement of santri to participate in elections, for example, is not entirely due to political awareness but because of obligations as a citizen. There are several types of political behavior of santri [20] that is:

a. Santri is Obedient and Absolute
In living the life of Islamic boarding school, santri has a strong attachment to kyai. Kyai is a teacher as well as a parent while in the Islamic boarding school. In providing knowledge, kyai is considered a one-stop source of information.

b. Pseudo-Obedient Santri
Santri who has a laughing attitude towards kyai in various moral, religious and social aspects. In this condition, students absorb information not only from kyai and Islamic boarding school. As Karl Marx said that the consciousness possessed by santri as false consciousness or false consciousness.

c. Prismatic Santri
Prismatic students are santri who have undergone a transition process from traditional to modern attitudes. Kyai is no longer the sole agent in absorbing various political information. So that the political behavior of santri is not influenced by kyai figures. However, the attachment of santri to kyai cannot be separated in religious matters. Kyai is still the main reference source for santri to learn about social religion.

Based on the form of political behavior of santri mentioned above, the Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah boarding school has a type of prismatic santri. Where the kyai is no longer the sole agent in absorbing political information. Kyai remains an important figure for santri, but no longer influences political behavior. The obedience of santri to kyai is limited to religious matters only.

4 Conclusion

Based on the results of the research conducted, it was found that the political culture of santri in the Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah Medan boarding school was in the form of participant-hall. On the one hand, santri want to be actively involved in political activities because of their obligations as citizens, but on the other hand, it is still difficult to do so because of the low political education received. In addition, a shift in the relationship between kyai and santri also occurred in the Ar-Raudlatul Hasanah boarding school has changed the political culture of santri. The democratic atmosphere feels thicker in Islamic boarding school life. Kyai is no

longer a reference for santri to influence their behavior and political culture. Since the current of modernization and democracy developed in the world of islamic boarding school, now santri are no longer obedient to kyai in political matters. The students began to transform into rational voters and were not fixated on the role of kyai. The obedience of santri to kyai in the patronage pattern only revolves around religious affairs. The relationship that exists between kyai and santri is like a teacher and santri relationship that is not in nature longlife.

Acknowledgements.

Reference

[1] W. Pinem, Prayetno, Muhammad Iqbal, and Taufiq Ramadhan, *Budaya Politik Pesantren (Dinamika Patronase Politik Kyai dan Santri)*. Medan: Deepublish, 2023.

[2] H. G. dan A. Satori, "Budaya Politik Pesantren Cipasung Singaparna Kabupaten Tasikmalaya," *Jurnal Ilmu Politik dan Pemerintahan*, vol. 1, no. 24, 2014.

[3] S. Asiyah and A. Chasanudin, "Pondok Pesantren dan Dakwah Politik: Kajian Histori Pondok Pesantren Hasyim Asy'ari Bangsri Jepara," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah*, vol. 40, no. 1, 2020, doi: 10.21580/jid.v40.1.5296.

[4] A. Robi Ulzikri, R. Cahyadi Kurniawan, and H. Indrajat, "Budaya Politik Warga Nahdlatul Ulama Kota Bandar Lampung," *Nakhoda: Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2021, doi: 10.35967/njip.v20i1.108.

[5] S. Jacobs, "Edward shils' theory of tradition," *Philos Soc Sci*, vol. 37, no. 2, 2007, doi: 10.1177/0048393107299685.

[6] W. S. Aji and M. Adnan, "Hubungan Peran Kyai, Perilaku Pemilih Dengan Pilihan Masyarakat Banjarnegara Pada Pemilu Gubernur Dan Wakil Gubernur Jawa Tengah Tahun 2018," *Journal of Politic and Government Studies*, vol. 9, no. 02, 2020.

[7] S. Rismawati, "Analisis Perilaku Politik Santri Pondok Pesantren Qomaruddin Bungah dalam Pemilihan Bupati Gresik 2020," *Kajian Moral dan Kewarganegaraan*, vol. 10, no. 3, 2021, doi: 10.26740/kmkn.v10n3.p555-569.

[8] A. Zahroh, "Transformasi Budaya Aswaja di Pesantren," *TARBIYATUNA*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2021, doi: 10.36835/tarbiyatuna.v14i1.853.

[9] R. Fitri and S. Ondeng, "Pesantren Di Indonesia Lembaga Pembentukan Karakter, Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Islam," *Al Urwatul Wutsqa: Kajian Pendidikan Islam*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2022.

[10] S. Lukman, *Problematika & Paradigma Penelitian Kualitatif*. Malang: FPPIS Malang, 1996.

[11] M. R. Fadli, "Memahami desain metode penelitian kualitatif," *HUMANIKA*, 2021, doi: 10.21831/hum.v21i1.38075.

[12] World Population Review, "Negara Dengan Jumlah Penduduk Muslim Terbanyak."

[13] M. M. Alfiani, S. Suweleh, and L. K. Janah, "Islamisasi Nusantara Dan Sejarah Sosial Pendidikan Islam," *Fikrotuna; Jurnal Pendidikan dan Manajemen Islam*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2019.

[14] A. J. W. Huisman and D. Noer, "The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 98, no. 2, 1978, doi: 10.2307/600979.

[15] Prayetno, W. Pinem, Muhammad Iqbal, and Taufiq Ramadhan, "PATRONASE POLITIK DALAM KONSEP KEWARGANEGARAAN DI PESANTREN AR-RAUDLATUL HASANAH MEDAN," *Jurnal Kewarganegaraan*, vol. 20, Sep. 2023.

[16]   Dr. T. T. Pureklolon, "EKSISTENSI BUDAYA POLITIK DI INDONESIA : SEBUAH KAJIAN," *Jurnal Communitarian*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2021, doi: 10.56985/jc.v3i1.147.

[17]   M. Noor, "Gaya Kepemimpinan Kyai," *Jurnal Kependidikan*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2019, doi: 10.24090/jk.v7i1.2958.

[18]   Z. Fanani, "Kekuasaan dan Otoritas Kepemimpinan Kyai dalam Proses Pengambilan Keputusan di Ponpes PPAI Daarussalam Wagir Malang," *Idarah (Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kependidikan)*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2022, doi: 10.47766/idarah.v5i2.72.

[19]   K. Marijan, *Quo Vadis NU*. Surabaya: Erlangga, 1992.

[20]   Z. Syarif, "Mitos Nilai-Nilai Kepatuhan Santri," *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2013.