

# Salafiah pesantren ideology and KPU Muara Enim's efforts to increase voter participation

Ahmad Naufal Fachriyadi<sup>1</sup>, Afryansyah Afryansyah<sup>2</sup>

MAN Insan Cendikia Ogan Komering Ilir, Indonesia<sup>1&2</sup>

[an7663013@gmail.com](mailto:an7663013@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [afrysyach2@gmail.com](mailto:afrysyach2@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>



## Article History

Received on 20 January 2024

1<sup>st</sup> Revision on 26 January 2024

2<sup>nd</sup> Revision on 1 February 2024

3<sup>rd</sup> Revision on 9 February 2024

4<sup>th</sup> Revision on 13 February 2024

5<sup>th</sup> Revision on 13 March 2024

Accepted on 18 March 2024

## Abstract

**Purpose:** This research aimed at finding out the ideology of Pondok Pesantren (Ponpes) Dhiya'us Salaf and the people of Karang Agung Village, Lubai Ulu Sub-district, Muara Enim Regency, South Sumatra Province which refused to participate in the General Election (Pemilu) and describe the efforts made by the General Electoral Commission (KPU) of Muara Enim Regency in overcoming this phenomenon.

**Research methodology:** This research was conducted using a qualitative method in the form of a case study approach. Data collection techniques included observations, interviews, and Forum Group Discussion techniques.

**Results:** The results showed that the administrators and the community around Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf did not participate in the election for the following reasons: (1) avoiding division, (2) the absence of sanctions, (3) election of Western ideology, and (4) to focus more on their fields. On the other hand, the general electoral commission (KPU) of Muara Enim and South Sumatra made efforts to increase voter participation by (1) providing election socialization and voice education, (2) registering them into the Permanent Voter List (DPT), and (3) breaking up polling stations (TPS).

**Limitations:** Researchers limited aspects of the problem only focused on the efforts of Muara Enim's KPU and the ideology of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf to create efficient and detailed research.

**Contribution:** In addition to being a solution for breaking the abstainers (Golput) chain, the benefits of this research for the General Electoral Commission (KPU) of Muara Enim and the ranks of the Election Supervisor are a reference material for formulating the right pattern of socialization and political education.

**Keywords:** Elections, Participation, Islamic Boarding Schools

**How to Cite:** Fachriyadi, A. N., & Afryansyah, A. (2023). Salafiah pesantren ideology and KPU Muara Enim's efforts to increase voter participation. *Journal of Governance and Accountability Studies*, 3(2), 121-135.

## 1. Introduction

This research was motivated by the existence of information and data on the low level of participation in the General Election (Pemilu) in Lubai Ulu District, Muara Enim Regency, South Sumatra Province, especially at Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School. In fact, elections are a momentum for evaluating the course of government and development in a country over a certain period. The benchmark for election success can be seen in the level of voter participation. The higher the level of voter participation, the better the quality of the election in terms of quantity and quality (Sucipto 2019). There are many factors that can influence the level of participation, not just the political system in a country, but there are other factors such as: 1) Awareness of political rights, 2) Assessment of government policies, 3) along with social status can also influence the level of participation (Olajubu, 2022).

One of the efforts to increase election participation is through voter outreach and education. Socialization can touch all levels of society regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, education, culture and customs (Harnom, Syahrizal, & Valentina, 2019). The implementation of political socialization and education activities is the Election Organizing Institution. In Indonesia, the existence of the Election Organizing Institution is regulated by Article 22 E Paragraph (5) of the 1945 Constitution, which states that General Elections are held by the General Election Commission (KPU), which is National, Permanent and Independent (Prasetyo, 2019). KPU Regulation Number: 9 of 2022 concerning Community Participation in General Elections and the Election of Governors and Deputy Governors, Regent and Deputy Regent and/or Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Article 3 reads: "Voter socialization and education is carried out with the aim of (a) disseminating election information, (b) increasing public knowledge, understanding and awareness of election rights and obligations." In the 2019 National Medium-Term Development Plan, the national voter participation target was set at 77%. In 2019, the national voter participation rate was 77.8%, meaning that the national voter participation target was successfully exceeded by the KPU. Meanwhile, the voter participation rate in South Sumatra Province in the 2019 elections reached 78%, which is above the national participation rate (Admin KPU Provinsi Sumatera Selatan, 2024). However, this figure still needs to be evaluated because there are many phenomena that could damage the legitimacy of democracy in Indonesia, such as the community at the Dhiyaa'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School complex, whose participation was recorded at 0% in the elections (Syarifah, 2020) or the White Group (Golput).

This abstention phenomenon occurred in Karang Agung Village, Lubai Ulu District, Muara Enim Regency, South Sumatra Province, where there is a Salafi Islamic boarding school called the Dhiyaa'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School. The initial information obtained was that one of the teachings conveyed in the Islamic boarding school to students and the surrounding community was refusing to participate in elections (golput) because it was a product of Western thought (Western ideology), which was heretical and heretical. Based on data submitted by the Muara Enim KPU, the participation rate in Karang Agung Village from the 2004 election to the last election in 2019 was 0% (Syarifah, 2020).

The abstention phenomenon can be identified and classified based on this problem. Isnaini classifies abstentions into four groups, namely Technical Abstentions, namely those who, due to technical electoral reasons, are unable to attend the polling place or those who make a mistake in voting so that their ballot is declared invalid. Second are political technical entities, namely those who are not registered as voters either because of their own fault or because of the fault of another party. Third, political entities, namely, those who have no choice from the available candidates or do not believe that the available candidates can bring change for the better. Fourth, Ideological Abstentions, namely, those who do not believe in liberal democracy and do not want to be involved in it either for religious fundamentalist reasons or for other political ideological reasons (Badriyah, 2017). Including group abstention, which is a phenomenon at the Dhiyaa'ussalaf Islamic Boarding School, as well as the efforts made by the Muara Enim Regency KPU in the form of socialization, voter education, and other activities that correlate with the increasing participation of Dhiyaa'ussalaf Islamic Boarding School students and the surrounding community, is research entitled Salafiah Pesantren Ideology and KPU Muara Enim's Efforts to Increase Voter Participation.

Based on the above background, the problem formulation that is the focus of this research is "What is the Ideology of Islamic Boarding Schools? Dhiya'us Salaf and Muara Enim KPU's efforts to increase voter participation?". Thus, from the focus of the research, the aim of this research is to understand and describe Islamic boarding school ideology Dhiya' us Salaf and Muara Enim KPU's efforts to increase voter participation. Finally, it is hoped that this research will provide theoretical and practical benefits. Academically and theoretically, this means adding insight into elections, including outreach and voter education, especially among students who are potential voters. Practically, it is hoped that we will present a solution that can break the chain of abstentions that occur at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic boarding school and the surrounding community and become a reference material for the Muara Enim KPU to formulate an appropriate pattern of socialization and voter education for students at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School and the surrounding community.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Theory Review

#### 2.2.1 Theory of Democracy

J.J. Rousseau defined democracy as a process through which a country must go through to realize a government order that is in accordance with the wishes of the people and common ideals. This thought is in line with Aris Toteles' classical theory of democracy, which states that democracy comes from the words *demos* and *kratos*, meaning government from the people. Democracy should not be understood and implemented rigidly because social and technological developments require democracy to develop accordingly but not deviate from its essence. There is no model of democracy as an ideal benchmark for a country, Rousseau said that there will be no truly democratic country and vice versa there is also no truly undemocratic country (Thalhah, 2009).

In its development, thoughts on democracy have succeeded in formulating indicators of a democratic state, namely sovereignty is fully in the hands of the people, in line with the constitution in force in the country, there are periodic elections that are carried out freely, openly, fairly, and honestly, deliberation of consensus becomes the way of every decision making, there is a guarantee of protection and promotion of human rights (HAM) and tolerance, the interests of the people are above all interests, not adhering to a single party or multiparty system (Asy'ari, 2019), like a hypothesis these indicators will continue to develop in accordance with the development of civilization. This theory of democracy is the basis of the importance of this research as an evaluation of democracy in Indonesia.

#### 2.2.2 Theory of Participation

Participation and democracy are inseparable: the quality of democracy is determined by the quality of participation, and democracy without participation is not a democracy. As the initial meaning of democracy is government from the people by the people and for the people, it is also clear that people's participation is the essence of true democracy. According to Tilaar (Ferdinand, 2012), participation is a manifestation of the desire to develop democracy through a decentralized process from below (bottom-up). The involvement of community participation at the grassroots level in the development planning process becomes "one breath" with the development of democracy itself.

Meanwhile, according to Hutington and Damsar, political participation is the action of citizens both as individuals and in certain communities, which is intended to influence actions and decision-making related to a policy that will be carried out by the government. The same is expressed by Rush and Philip Althoff, who explain that political participation includes the involvement of every citizen in a political system and process (Rasul et al., 2015).

Sundariningrum and Sugiyah (Suryana, Mumuh, & Hilman, 2022) classified participation into two groups, namely Direct Participation, which occurs when individuals perform certain activities as an expression of the manifestation of the participation process. This participation can only occur if everyone is given the freedom to express their views, discuss the subject matter, object to the wishes of others, or express their words and actions. Indirect participation occurs when individuals delegate their rights to other parties.

The forms of participation according to Effendi, as cited by Dwiningrum (2011), are divided into: First, Vertical Participation is participation that occurs in the form of certain conditions when the community is involved or takes part in a government activity and development planning, in a community relationship as a subordinate, follower, or client status; second, Horizontal Participation is a form of community participation that begins with equality of position and authority to have an initiative where every member or group of the community participates horizontally and equally with one another (Uceng, 2019). The importance of community participation in elections will have a strong correlation with the nature of democracy and state development as well as the importance of community participation in Lubai Ulu District, Muara Enim Regency, South Sumatra Province, especially at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School.

### 2.2.3 Theory of Inclusive Election

In article 1 CHAPTER I of Law number 7 of 2017 regarding General Elections, juridically, elections are defined as a means of people's sovereignty in order to elect members of the people's representative council, the president and vice president's region and to elect members of the regional people's representative council which in its implementation, is carried out in a direct, free, secret, honest and fair manner based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution.

Inclusive elections provide the widest possible participation opportunities for every citizen, regardless of ethnicity, race, religion, gender, social status, economy, and people with disabilities. Various efforts have been made to affirm the rights of vulnerable groups in elections, including the disability group (Syarifah, 2020). Inclusive elections are those that are friendly to all groups of society, without exception. Adopting Hildegun Olsen's thoughts on inclusive education, Inclusive Elections can also be interpreted,

*Inclusive election means that elections should accommodate all people regardless of physical, intellectual, social-emotional, linguistic, or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted vote, street and working people, people from remote or nomadic population, people from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and people from other disadvantage or marginalised areas or group”*

Inclusive elections are elections in which every process and stage is open, and embraces all parties using an empathic approach. All human identities and conditions in the world are accepted and treated equally in accordance with the objectives and roles to be chosen in the holding of general elections, whether as voters, election participants, organizers, or election leaders. The state is responsible for organizing inclusive elections not only limited to providing facilities and ease of accessibility, but also has a role in determining the thinking community with an open and empathetic perspective towards all the various identities and human conditions that exist (Faradila, 2020).

The three theories described above were used as the basis for the theory studied in this research. In addition to the three theories, a literature review of relevant literature and previous research was also conducted as a reference and research reference, in accordance with the objectives of this study.

### 2.2.4 Fiqh Siyasah, Democracy and Elections

From the perspective of Islam, politics is better known as the Assiyasah. In fiqh science, assiyasah is taught how to appoint, drop, and choose leaders justified in Islam. The choice of leader is also regulated by the demands of the sharia. Although not stated in detail, in general, Islam also teaches us to obey the leader and to the obligation to constitutionally carry out political choices. The obligation of the people to obey their leaders is stated in the Qur'an, in Surah An-Nisa Verse 59:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا □

Meaning: "You who believe, obey Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad), and the authority among you. Then, if you differ in opinion about anything, refer it back to Allah (the Qur'an) and the Messenger (his Sunnah), if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is better for you, and better for the result."

The choice of the Democracy model is a national agreement even since this nation was founded by our "Founding Fathers" since the Proclamation of Independence, democracy for the Indonesian nation is not just a constitutional mandate but is a joint choice of a nation, after going through a study of various aspects including aspects of Islamic beliefs and sharia. From the quotation from the Quranic verse, it is understood that every believer is obliged to carry out Allah's commands, the Prophet's sunnahs, and the decisions of the leaders among them, so participating in elections is one of obedience to leaders by channeling their voting rights (Sofyana, 2020).

Democracy for Indonesia was born with the Proclamation of Independence on 17 August 1945, There are many challenges that must be overcome to achieve a democratic system that is in line with the wishes of the people with the wishes of the people. Various democratic systems have been implemented, starting with liberal and guided democracies (Sofyana 2020). Finally, Pancasila Democracy, based on deliberation to reach consensus, is considered more suitable for the noble values of the Indonesian

nation. Meanwhile, an election is a democratic instrument in the sense that there is no democracy without elections; even Manuel Kaseipo revealed that elections are a sacred ritual of all countries with democracy as a sacred ritual of all democratic countries (Mwesigwa, 2021).

#### *2.2.5 Socialisation and Political Education*

Political education or political forming is important for improving the quality and quantity of community participation and improving the quality and quantity of public participation. The biggest obstacle and challenge to participation in elections is limited knowledge, especially regarding politics in the community (Waisnawa & Dewi, 2019). Political education not only provides education to voters related to elections and democracy, but can also deconstruct fiction about democracy. Furthermore, political education can also deconstruct ideas and thoughts that undermine the noble values of democracy and democracy, which can undermine the noble values of democracy and deviate from the goals of democracy in the community, leading to an increase in the quality of voters in Indonesia. Political education is the womb of democracy that gives birth to voters who have high intellectuality, rationality, and integrity. At various national and international studies on the importance of political education are commonplace political education, is commonplace as in the book *Perceptions of Leadership, Political Education of Students*, it is stated that political education has a major role in the formation of in the formation of people who understand politics in their status and position in society (Sutrisman, 2019).

#### *2.2.6 Relevant Research*

Research exploring the ideology of salafiyah Islamic boarding schools was conducted by Arifin (2015), UIN Sunan Kalijaga, with the title *Kiai Leadership in Ideologizing Santri Thought in Salafiyah Islamic Boarding Schools in Mlangi Yogyakarta*. This suggests that the ideology of this pesantren is based on the dominant leadership of Kiai and the fanatical attitude of santri towards Kiai. However, Salafiah boarding schools are traditional boarding schools that still preserve the tradition of studying classical books, have moderate religious thoughts, and respect the traditions of the surrounding community. A study that refers directly to Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'ussalaf was once conducted by Amrah Muslimin (now the Chairperson of the South Sumatra KPU) with the title of the book *Mendaulatkan Suara Pemilih: Strategic Socialization in the Salafiah group at Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'ussalaf Muara Enim, South Sumatra* (Syarifah, 2020) but only as reporting. Therefore, research on Salafiah Pesantren Ideology and KPU Muara Enim's Efforts to Increase Voter Participation is important.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Methods**

The research method used in this study was qualitative research in the form of a case study approach to explore the case of low participation in Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf in Muara Enim, South Sumatera, Indonesia. In line with this, descriptive analytical research was used to describe detailed data collected in the field (Sugiyono, 2017).

#### **3.2 Place and time of research**

This study was conducted from May to August 2023. The sites chosen in this research were the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School, the provincial general electoral commission (KPU) office of South Sumatera, the general electoral commission (KPU) office of Muara Enim, and Karang Agung Village, including the voting committee of district (PPK), voting committee (PPS), and Village Secretary offices. Meanwhile, data processing and analysis was carried out at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri Insan Scholar Ogan Komering Ilir, South Sumatra.

#### **3.3 Data Source**

The data used in the research came from the results of observations, semi-structured interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with nine informants as the subject of this research, among others:

1. Two of the informants were commissioners of the provincial general electoral commission (KPU) of South Sumatra. The Data and Information Planning Division and the Legal Division, in the organizational structure of the implementation of the provincial general electoral commission (KPU), was the Coordinator of Election Organizers of all districts and cities in the province, whose

- competence to talk about socialization and political education for voters throughout Sumatra Selatan was no exception in Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf.
2. Three of the informants were the Chairperson, Commissioner of the Community Participation Division, and the Legal Division of Muara Enim's provincial general electoral commission (KPU) as the leading sector of organizing elections in Muara Enim, who were competent to speak on behalf of the state's interests in organizing elections in Muara Enim and the most appropriate to be held accountable for socialization and political education for the community in Muara Enim.
  3. One informant was from the Public Relations of Dhiya'usalaf Islamic Boarding School because he had qualifications to represent the academic community of the pesantren. Representing pesantrens and the community scientifically related to the factors behind the attitude of not using voting rights in elections carried out by santri (Islamic students) and pesantren administrators.
  4. One informant was the head of the voting committee (PPK) of Lubai Ulu, the technical organizer of the election at the sub-district level, who was responsible for socialization and voter education activities in the Lubai Ulu sub-district area, including Karang Agung Village and Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf.
  5. One informant was the Head of Karang Agung voting committee (PPS), the technical organizer of the election at the village and/or Kelurahan level, whose direct connection to Pondok Pesantren Dhiya'us Salaf at every stage of the election.
  6. One informant was the Village Secretary of Karang Agung, the person in charge of the village government who interacted and was in direct connection to the Dhiya'us Salaf pesantren at all times, and determined development policies at the village level.

The selection of informants was carried out by purposive sampling (Sugiyono, 2017) with certain considerations so that informants who were competent enough could provide sufficient data for this study.

### ***3.4 Data Collection Techniques and Tools***

Pre-research was an activity carried out before research was carried out in the field, such as: 1) Submitting research permission letter to the provincial general electoral commission (KPU) of South Sumatra and regency general electoral commission (KPU) of Muara Enim, Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School, sub-district voting committee (PPK) of Lubai Ulu, voting committee (PPS) of Karang Agung and the village government of Great Coral. 2) Attach consent to the willingness to conduct interviews and focus Group Discussions with each research informant (Informed Consent). 3) Observations were conducted to determine competent informants and the number of informants who could meet the data requirements of the research. 4) Preparing several main questions in the semi-structured interview and Focus Group Discussion stages to develop more intensely and exploratively during the interview and Focus Group Discussion activities to meet directly with the informant (Sugiyono, 2017). Pre-research activities were carried out to prepare for various needs during direct research in the field. The next activity was data collection based on qualitative research methods using a case study approach, namely, through semi-structured interviews and Group Discussion Forums with the provincial general electoral commission (KPU) of South Sumatra, general electoral commission (KPU) of Muara Enim Regency, Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School, voting committee (PPS), sub-district voting committee (PPK), and the Karang Village government. The second series of research activities above was to receive direct support and assistance from the provincial general electoral commission (KPU) of South Sumatra through letter number: 408/HK.05 - SD/16/2023 dated June 7, 2023, with the subject: research permitted.

### ***3.5 Data Analysis Technique***

The data analysis technique referred to the concept (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014) through four stages of analysis:

1. Data Collection. Collecting as much research data as possible using data collection techniques, observation, semi-structured interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).
2. Data Condensation. The summarized data were reviewed by identifying patterns and selecting the focus.

3. Data Presentation. Furthermore, the data from observations, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGD) were reduced by being presented in the form of narrative text, and at this stage, the results were interpreted to match the formulation.
4. Conclusions. After collecting, reducing, and presenting the data, the conclusions were further analyzed to draw conclusions based on the data and facts found.

The data obtained were then tested for validity using two types of triangulation: 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 the sub-district, the village secretary, and the public relations of Pondok Pesantren Dhiya us'Salaf to check and saturate the data; and 2) the Tringulation Method. The results of observations, interviews, and FGD were observed 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 were analyzed to determine whether the resulting data were valid or not proved with the informants' signature, as stated in the attachment for reliable data (Kuncoro, 2013).

## 4. Results and Discussions

### 4.1 Result

#### 4.1.1 *Profil of Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School*

The Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School was founded by Ustadz Imam Bukhori in 2005. Located in Dusun 1 Karang Makmur, Karang Agung Village, Lubai Ulu District, Muara Enim Regency, South Sumatra Province which has been registered with the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia with the Pondok Statistics Number Islamic Boarding School (NNSP): 512160307016, Operational License Number: Kw.06.502/16/2005 dated 30 April 2005. The history of the establishment of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School began in 2004, Mr. Akhsani Taqwim, who was the older brother of Ustadz Imam Bukhori, donated his plantation land in the area of 1.5 hectares to build an Islamic boarding school. Starting from a small community of seven heads of family, all of whom were friends of Ustadz Imam Bukhori, when he was still living in Java. In its development, the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School has become increasingly known to the public. The students came from various regions, both in the provinces of South Sumatra and across Indonesia. Fronted by Ustadz Imam Bukhori, an alumnus of the Salafiyah Islamic Boarding School in Damaj, Yemen in 2000, the Dhiya'us Salah Islamic Boarding School with the Salafiyah named Alhusunah Wal Jamaah (aswaja) was founded with the vision of "making the institution a medium of education and da'wah to society for all ages by education in accordance with the understanding of Salafush sholih, in order to become a righteous generation for the goodness and safety of himself, his family, his community and his country." (Profile of Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School: 1-3).

Currently, the Dhiya'us Salaf residential complex has been inhabited by 625 heads of families, with a population of 2,993 people, of whom 1,500 are boarding school students, 135 are teaching staff of the Islamic boarding school, and the rest are members of other students' families. The levels of education available at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School include the following: First, Marhalah Tarbiyatul Athwal (MTAth) is equivalent to pre-kindergarten. Second, MTA (Marhalah Tarbiyatul Aulad) equivalent to kindergarten, Third, MTB (Marhalah Tarbiyatul Banat) equivalent to elementary school, Fourth MTQS (Marhalah Tahfidzul Qur'an Syabab), Fifth, MTD (Marhalah Tadribud Du'at) equivalent to high school, and Sixth, Takhosus equivalent to Diploma III (D3). In addition to formal education, the Pondok Pesanten Dhiya'us Salaf Mosque, with an area of 42 M × 22 M and two floors, can accommodate more than 1,700 worshipers. There have been scheduled studies and science assemblies held regularly open to the local community to increase their knowledge of the Islamic religion based on the Koran and the Sunnah of Rosulullah SAW (Ponpes Public Relations: July 9, 2023).

#### 4.1.2 *The Views of the Dhiya'us Salaf Boarding School toward elections and democracy*

In principle, the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School recognized and loved the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia and Pancasila as the basis of the state and the 1945 Constitution as the

constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. However, in the field of Politics and Muamalah, the Islamic Boarding School agreed with Allah's provisions in the Al-Quran and Sunnah. Rasulullah SAW as a role model for his implementation was the best generation of Islamic Salaf scholars, namely during the time of the companions, tabi'in and tabi'tabi'in. Regarding the use of voting rights in elections, the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School was never instructed or taught or appealed to students and residents of the Islamic boarding school environment to abstain from voting, but the attitude of not using the voting right was born from the awareness of each individual in accordance with the understanding of Syar'iyah owned by each of them and the leaders of Islamic boarding schools did not exercise their vote right in the elections (Ponpes Public Relations: July 9, 2023).

On the other hand, the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School welcomed the establishment of a TPS, even though community members were enthusiastic about helping, starting from preparing food and working together to build and decorate the polling station (TPS), but they were not willing to become polling station (TPS) officers and would not vote, so there was no problem with establishing a polling station (TPS). However, if the voters were only residents of the cottage, then it was almost certain that the polling station (TPS) participation would be the same as in the 2013 regional elections, namely 0%. Therefore, it would become a national spotlight and problem, and the most realistic option was to divide them into other polling stations to mix with other residents. Meanwhile, the obligation to register them in the additional voters list (DPT) was the KPU's responsibility, because they were members of the public who met the requirements as voters. If not, election organizers would be subject to criminal sanctions in accordance with the provisions of the law (Chairman of PPS Karang Agung: July 10, 2023).

From the results of the focused discussion (FGD) on July 10, 2023, with administrators and teaching staff at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School, there were at least four basic considerations behind the choice not to exercise the voting rights that occurred at the Dhiya'us Islamic Boarding School Salaf and people who lived in Islamic boarding school complexes:

1. Not exercising voting rights in elections was the free choice of every citizen, because choosing not to vote was also a choice, and there were no legal sanctions or religious sanctions. Legally, what could be subject to criminal sanctions was first, if we invited other people to abstain; second, if we prohibited or intimidated people who wanted to exercise their voting rights; and third, forced and ordered people not to use their voting rights. Meanwhile, from a religious perspective, there were no fatwa from competent institutions such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), which stated that the law of abstention or not voting was forbidden. Although there was a fatwa, the Islamic Boarding School examined the validity of the arguments used in the fatwa before following it.
2. The election also had a negative impact in the form of a division. The 625 heads of family in the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School complex had so far lived in harmony, unity, and peace. There was a concern that if they actively participated in the election, the boarding school residents would be divided according to their colors and preferences. Each of these would certainly threaten the integrity and sustainability of the lodge. In addition, there were various other negative impacts that contained the potential to arise, such as choosing the wrong leader and causing damage, so we were also responsible for bringing unjust rulers into control of our nation. To avoid these negative impacts, the choice not to be actively involved in the world of politics was a wise step chosen by Islamic Boarding Schools.
3. Elections and/or democracy were not options for appointing and electing leaders as taught by the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet and there were no examples found in the times of the Companions, Tabi'in, Tabi'tabi'n and there was no guidance from Salaf scholars that allowed or recommended it. If the method for appointing and selecting leaders and the criteria for leaders selected were in accordance with the provisions of the Koran and Sunnah, it was very likely that the large family of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School would follow suit.
4. There were already those with competence in science and knowledge to handle political and state affairs and preferred to focus on worship and religious education, which was their expertise. Meanwhile, for national and state affairs, residents and administrators of the Sami'na wa Atho'na Islamic Boarding School were subject to the decisions of the official state leader.



Regarding the possibility in the future whether there would be a change in the attitude of residents and the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School towards elections and democracy, the answer was that we left it to Allah, but there was a possibility that residents, students, or even board members would nominate themselves as representatives of the people or the leader emphasized that this was unlikely to happen because, first, contrary to the vision of the establishment of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School, the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School did not educate people to enter the world of politics and there was no special education regarding government and how to run it. It is believed that there are still many appropriate and competent people in this field (Ponpes Public Relations: July 9, 2023).

#### *4.1.3 Sosialization and Education for Muara Enim Regency KPU Voter at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School*

The first time the General Election Commission of Muara Enim Regency became aware that the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School Community did not exercise their right to vote in the election was during the Election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Sumatra which was held simultaneously with the Election of the Regent and Deputy Regent of Muara Enim in 2013, at that time the first polling station (TPS) was established around the Islamic boarding school, the voters of which were all residents and students of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School. Until the end of voting at the TPS, there were no voters who exercised their voting rights; in other words, the participation rate was 0%. The general electoral commission (KPU) of the Republic of Indonesia focused on these findings and ordered the general electoral commission of South Sumatra Province and the general electoral commission of Muara Enim to confirm this incident in the field. A discussion was held and attended by elements of the government, the national political unit (Kesbangpol), the Prosecutor's Office, Dandim, the sub-district head, and the local village head. It was discovered that not all voters at the Islamic boarding school exercised their voting rights for faithful reasons (General electoral commission Chairman of Muara Enim: July 07, 2023).

After the incident of the Regional Head Election (Pilkada) in 2013, until now, the general electoral commission (KPU) of Muara Enim has never carried out political education or socialization specifically at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School, but based on information, the district government and its staff have held dialogue regarding abstention at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic boarding school. Salaf; however, this activity did not involve the general electoral commission (KPU) of Muara Enim. So far, there has been no special socialization or political education program to increase voters' participation at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School because of being apart from budget limitations. It was also felt that this would be in vain, because the choice to abstain from voting at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School was a matter of belief, so that was its domain. The government was not in the domain of the general electoral commission of the Muara Enim Regency (Chairman of the Muara Enim KPU: July 07, 2023).

To avoid the national spotlight and maintain the stability of holding elections in Muara Enim, in the 2018 Regional Head Election and 2019 Elections, voters from the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School were separated and put into different polling stations (TPS) around Karang Agung Village to avoid having a different TPS. Participation was 0%, but based on monitoring results and reports from polling station (TPS) officers in the field, voters from the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School still did not exercise their voting rights (the general electoral commission of Muara Enim Community Participation Division Coordinator: July 7, 2023).

So far, the number of times we had carried out socialization in Karang Agung Village, through the Lubai Ulu District PPK and voting committee (PPS) of Karang Agung Village, who continued to carry out socialization and awareness efforts so that Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School residents wanted to exercise their voting rights even though so far there has been no socialization or education, especially for the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School. The general electoral commission (KPU) of Muara Enim conveyed the issue of abstention at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School and the Muara Enim Regent sent a team to discuss with the boarding school administrators, but so far, there has been no change at the Muara Enim Islamic Boarding School (Kordiv. Law of the general electoral commission of Muara Enim: July 7, 2023).

For the upcoming 2024 elections, Karang Agung Village and Lubai Ulu District have established a Permanent Voter List, for Karang Agung Village there were 22 polling stations (TPS) and the total number of voters at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School were 1,202 people registered separately spread across the 22 existing polling stations (TPS) available in Karang Agung Village (Chairman of PPS Karang Agung: 10 July 2023).

So far, the approach taken was a family of persuasive approaches to students and boarding school administrators because, in general, boarding school administrators were quite open to the community, especially election organizers. Even when collecting voter data and other electoral activities, they were quite open, but this was not the case when it came to exercising the right to vote, which was also true when carrying out socialization in the sub-district or at the PPK office. If invited or notified, representatives of the Islamic Boarding School usually attend (PPK Chair Lubai Ulu).

The existing government, starting with the Muara Enim Regency Kesbangpol, Subdistrict Authorities, and Village Heads, has issued appeals to the residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School to exercise their right to vote at every opportunity, but has still not been able to change the stance and beliefs of the residents and leaders of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School. Although for other village activities, the residents of the Islamic Boarding School are actively involved, for example, during mutual cooperation, celebrations, and commemoration of Independence Day, they are also involved in the census and accept other government programs such as BPJS, PKH, and other government programs apart from voting and/or matters. Election (Karang Agung Village Secretary, July 10, 2023).

The provincial general electoral commission (KPU) of South Sumatra instructed the general electoral commission of Muara Enim to pay special attention to the issue of participation at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School, calling for the involvement of all interested parties, including the national political unit (Kesbangpol), MUI, and the Police. However, the activities carried out did not immediately change the attitudes and stance of the residents and students of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School. The Provincial General Electoral Commission (KPU) of South Sumatera visited the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School without meeting the Board of Directors directly. In accordance with the duties and functions as coordinators of Election Management at the South Sumatra Province level, the same group was identified; thus far, no similar communities have been found. In general, various Political Socialization and Education instruments were part of the provincial general electoral commission (KPU) of the South Sumatra program, including the Sriwijaya Election Smart House, Democracy School, Democracy Volunteers, community-based socialization, disabled people, women, first-time voters, women's groups, and religious communities. However, these activities could not be run in parallel due to budget limitations (Kordiv for Planning, Data, and Information of the South Sumatra Province KPU).

#### **4.2 Discussion**

Based on the research results above and linked to the theory, previous research has shown that there is a gap between theory and reality in the field. The choice of not voting in the elections carried out by the residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School was based on the ideology embedded within them, and formulated 17 factors influencing the interests that were the antithesis of the things that lie behind their reluctance to participate. It was revealed from the FGD and interviews conducted with Ustadz Abu Syafiq on July 10, 2023, that the background to the thinking, the residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School, were caused by several reasons: (1) the absence of sanctions either under state law or religious law for those who did not exercise their right to vote in elections, (2) avoiding division, (3) disrupting worship so they prefer to focus on worship; and (4) elections and democracy were Western products that tended to conflict with the Sunnah regarding procedures for appointing and electing leaders according to the Islamic religion. In fact, in the science of Siyasa Fiqh, various propositions from the Qur'an and Hadeeth clarified the nature of elections and democracy from an Islamic perspective.

This reason was indeed grounded, for example in the realm of worship and elections, Islamic boarding school administrators used a hadeeth about the friend Abu Said Al Khudri narrated by Imam Muslim, the Messenger of Allah, who said, "Whoever of you sees evil, change it with his hand, if he is not able to do it, change it with his words, if you cannot, deny it with your heart and that is the weakest faith." This understanding was a benchmark for Islamic boarding school residents because they were worried about division and not focusing on worship just because of the election, especially because they did not want to be part of the "wrong choice of leaders" who were unsuccessful in managing the nation and state. This understanding and ideology have become more visible because of the role of the Islamic boarding school leader. Leaders of Islamic boarding schools or kiai were usually the people they most closely followed for their characteristics, attitudes, and actions, both in world matters and in their worship (Arifin, 2015). In this context, the administrator of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School stated that the school did not prohibit its citizens from participating in the elections at all, but the abstention attitude, which was also exemplified by the kiai in the Islamic Boarding School environment, certainly influenced citizens' political and democratic attitudes. In terms of Islamic law, the MUI issued a fatwa in 2019 stating that choosing a leader was a right, which became obligatory if you chose a leader deemed to meet the criteria of faith, piety, sidiq, trustworthiness, tabligh, and fathonah.

Participation in elections is a form of obedience to the leader (Sofyana, 2020) and contributes to the development of the nation and state by channeling voting rights. The decision to abstain does not contribute to the development of the nation and state. Because this issue concerns ideology, the best thing is to provide an understanding to make the ideology more frequent in exercising voting rights. Therefore, it is important that there are concrete efforts from the government to overcome this ideological problem. Ideology is the basis for a person or a group of people to think and act. Therefore, political education is currently playing an important role (Sutrisman, 2019). It was necessary to produce voters with high intellectuality, rationality, and integrity so that divisions due to political differences would be avoided. Even more than that, democracy was based on deliberation to reach consensus, so democracy would certainly not give rise to disputes but would give birth to unity.

Based on the Regulation of the general electoral commission (KPU) Number: 9 of 2022 concerning Community Participation in General Elections, Election of Governor and Deputy Governor, Regent and Deputy Regent and/or Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Article 2 paragraph (1) states that "the community has the right to participate in Elections and Elections," while paragraph (2) emphasizes that "the general electoral commission (KPU), Provincial the general electoral commission (KPU), and the general electoral commission of Regency/City KPU can facilitate the public to participate in Elections and Elections as referred to in paragraph (1)". From these provisions, it can be concluded that the role of the general electoral commission (KPU) organizationally in relation to efforts to increase community participation is that of the facilitator, while community participation in elections is the right of every member of the community independently. Normatively, the efforts to increase participation in general carried out by the KPU 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. In Article 1 number 15 and 16 of the KPU Regulation Number: 9 of 2022, socialization is the process of conveying election and election information, while political education is the process of conveying election and election information to voters with the aim of increasing voters' knowledge, understanding, and awareness of elections on an ongoing and continuous basis.

Based on the terminology referred to in the regulations of the general electoral commission KPU, several activities have been carried out by the Provincial general electoral commission of South Sumatera, the general electoral commission of Muara Enim Regency, Lubai Ulu District PPK and the polling station of Karang Agung as well as the Government of Muara Enim Regency, Lubai Ulu District and Karang Agung Village at the Dhiya' Islamic Boarding School. us Salaf are categorized into political socialization and educational activities, including:

1. The provincial general electoral commission (KPU) of South Sumatera visited the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School and provided instructions to the general electoral commission (KPU) of Muara Enim and its staff to resolve the abstention problem at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School. So that the visitation efforts carried out by the provincial general electoral commission

- (KPU) have been carried out in accordance with the study of political education put forward by Dudih who said that "political education can also deconstruct ideas and thoughts that can damage the noble values of democracy and deviations from democracy in society", then This visit will anticipate the emergence of thoughts that will damage democratization itself (Sutrisman, 2019).
2. The gathering and discussions held by the general electoral commission (KPU) of Muara Enim in Karang Agung Village and efforts to encourage PPK Lubai Ulu and polling stations (PPS) to conduct political education at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School were in line with the concept of political education in question (Sutrisman, 2019). However, this did not have an effect on the participation of the residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School complex.
  3. Registering the Residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School Complex on the Permanent Voter List. This was in line with the theory of inclusive elections to achieve good democracy, which was necessary to organize good elections. Good elections were inclusive elections that embraced all forms of community participation, without exception. Registering residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School complex on the additional voter list (DPT) was also a way to achieve inclusive elections.
  4. Involving the Management and Residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School in every socialization and political education activity carried out by the Lubai Ulu District PPK and the polling station of Karang Agung Village was in line with the theory of participation, namely, involving all levels of society/stakeholders in every government activity, including the depth of socialization and education on election politics.
  5. The gathering and awareness raising carried out by Kesbangpol and Muara Enim District Government officials at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School after information went viral in that there was 0% TPS participation in the Muara Enim Regent and Deputy Regent Election in 2013. The gathering and awareness activities that have been conducted reflect socialization and political education (Waisnawa & Dewi, 2019).
  6. The government of Karang Agung Village continued to appeal to the boarding students and residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School to exercise their right to vote in the elections. According to Manuel Kaseipo, elections are a sacred matter for all democratic countries, so residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School can exercise their right to vote.

Apart from these activities, the strategy carried out by the Lubai Ulu District Election Committee (PPK) and the Karang Agung Voting Committee (PPS), which continued to register Dhiya'us Salaf residents on the Permanent Voter List, was a tireless effort to increase voter participation in Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School. The strategy was to separate 1,200 voters at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School into 22 polling stations spread throughout Karang Agung Village, which means that Dhiya'us Salaf residents will mix with voters from outside the community. First, this strategy is intended such that there will no longer be a polling station TPS with a voter participation rate of 0%. Second, this strategy is also used as a stimulus for interest in participation and exercising the right to vote for Dhiya'us Salaf residents because all residents come to the polling stations and vote. It is hoped that Dhiya'us Salaf residents will be motivated because they are curious, so they will participate in using their voting rights.

Based on the research conducted, the factors behind the reluctance of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School group to participate in the election were as follows:

1. There were no sanctions under either state or religious law for those who did not exercise their right to vote in the elections.
2. There were no divisions between fellow Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School communities because of differences in political choices in the elections.
3. Elections and Democracy were Western products and tended to conflict with the Sunnah regarding procedures for appointing and selecting leaders according to the Islamic religion.
4. Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School preferred to focus on worship and religious education, which was its expertise. Meanwhile, regarding matters of the nation and state, the residents and administrators of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic boarding school were sami'na wa atho'na regarding the decisions of the official state leader.

Furthermore, by using an antithesis approach, we can formulate the circumstances/factors that can make the Salafi community, especially at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School, participate in the election as follows:

1. There is a law that regulates strict sanctions for people who deliberately did not want to exercise their right to vote in elections or a type of fatwa from a competent institution, in this case the MUI, which states that abstention is a disgraceful act and sin.
2. There are serious efforts to ensure that holding elections not only gives rise to divisions in society but can also be a means of national integration.
3. An in-depth study was carried out regarding *siyassah fiqh* in relation to elections and democracy, to determine whether because elections and democracy are products from outside Islam, they themselves conflict with religion and are haram. While in Islam there are no recommendations or prohibitions against certain political systems, it was well known in the study of Shia Islamic jurisprudence that they only talked about the criteria for leaders and did not specify a model for appointing these leaders.
4. That building and improving the nation and state was part of worship and jihad in Islam because we were commanded to fight every form of evil; elections should be an evaluation arena for leaders.

The government's efforts have not yet resolved the abstention of Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School residents. The main problem lies in the ideology of citizens; therefore, the solution can be cooperation between parties to provide an understanding of the importance of participating in elections. Participating in elections can be an indicator that a person or school loves the country and is said to be implementing the concept of religious moderation (Habibie, Al Kautsar, Wachidah, & Sugeng, 2021).

## **5. Conclusion**

### **5.1. Conclusion**

Based on the results and discussion in the previous section, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Ideology of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School The leadership and residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School had an ideology that recognizes and loves the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia and Pancasila as the basis of the State and the 1945 Constitution as the constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, however, in the field of Politics and Muamalah, the Islamic boarding school adhered to Allah's provisions in the Al-Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH with as the role model for its implementation for being the best generation of Islamic Salaf scholars, namely during the time of the Companions, Tabi'in and Tabi'tabi'in. Regarding the use of the right to vote in elections, the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School never instructed, taught, or appealed to students and residents of the Islamic boarding school to abstain from voting, but the attitude of not using the right to vote was born from each individual's awareness, including the kiai. There were various reasons why the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School does not exercise its right to vote in the elections, namely, (1) avoiding divisions due to differences in the color of choice, (2) the absence of sanctions in either state law or religious law, (3) elections being a Western ideology, and (4) being more focused on worship.
2. The general electoral commission (KPU) of Muara Enim increased voter participation. In general, the general electoral commission has carried out political outreach and education for voters, plus a strategy for dividing the polling station (TPS) for Islamic boarding school residents to increase voter participation rates. However, efforts have not been made to increase voter participation among Salafi residents at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School. The socialization carried out so far has only been partial and reactive, and not specifically aimed at increasing voter participation in the Salafiah group at the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School. At the same time, the socialization carried out was solely in accordance with the stages of holding the elections, not based on the needs regarding ideological issues of the residents of the Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School. The political education carried out tended to be budget-based and did not involve multiple stakeholders, so it gave the impression that each is running independently and not strengthening each other.

### **5.2. Limitation**

1. The researcher limits the aspects of the problem studied, namely the efforts of the general electoral commission (KPU) of Muara Enim in increasing voters to create efficient and detailed research.

2. In the aspect of the general electoral commission of Muara Enim's efforts to focus more on the socialization and political education efforts carried out.
3. Using three qualitative research techniques—observation, interviews, and forum group discussions—the data obtained can be classified properly.

### 5.3. Suggestion

1. The general electoral commission (KPU) and the government must formulate a special program to increase voter participation based on pesantren with a multi-stakeholder approach.
2. Develop a planned and sustainable socialisation programme with the formulation of success indicators for each stage of the activity so that progress can be seen formulation of success indicators at each stage of the activity so that progress can be seen its impact on increasing the participation of the Salafiah community in Dhiya'us Salaf Islamic Boarding School Salaf.
3. Preparing a Political Education Curriculum based on religion and pesantren, to counteract the possibility of similar thoughts that are increasingly spreading to counteract the possibility of similar thoughts that are increasingly spreading in the midst of society society. As an effort to prevent or prevent early

### Acknowledgment

Alhamdulillah wasyukrulillah, the author is so grateful to Allah SWT for all the favours and gifts the to complete the research entitled "*Salafiah Pesantren Ideology and KPU Muara Enim's Efforts to Increase Voter Participation*". This research was included at the International Conference on Interdisciplinary Studies (ICONIS).

During the process of researching and writing the results of this research, the author has received considerable guidance, advice, and input from various parties. Therefore, on this occasion, the author would like to express his sincere gratitude to all those involved in the completion of this study. Especially to Mr. Afriansyah M.Pd as the main supervisor in this research, the ICONIS committee and to the staff of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) Insan Cendekia Ogan Komering Ilir.

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