

Islam, Ideology and Political Practice: an Analysis of Nahdlatul Ulama's Involvement in Elections

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Abstract

The fact that NU's involvement in politics is practically inevitable. For example, NU's involvement in political dynamics in the Mataraman Region of East Java, especially in the momentum of the 2020 regional elections. Political parties that drag Nahdlatul Ulama into practical political practices often 'disrupt' religious social work which is NU's vision. Also, differences in political preferences of the NU organizational elite often impact fragmentation within the NU itself. The background in this research is focused on the aim of revealing more deeply the relationship between the ideological goals and political practices of NU in the Mataraman region of East Java. This research includes qualitative field research using descriptive-analytical approach methods. The findings in this study show a fact about the relationship between NU's ideological goals and political practices in NU's involvement in the 2020 elections in Blitar and Pacitan regencies while still upholding ideological values, Khittah NU 1926, and political guidelines for NU citizens, Where there is no biased practice in the practice of these values in the political dynamics of the 2020 election. In Ponorogo and Trenggalek regencies, there was a bias in the practice of the values of the 1926 NU Ideology and Khittah, where the political dynamics of the election were colored by more real practical political practices and were driven by the individual interests of the NU elite and the primordial interests of each group which had an impact on institutional fragmentation.

Keywords

Islam, Ideology, Politics, NU

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nahdlatul Ulama (ed; NU) is seen by academics as a socio-religious organization that has a central role in the history of the struggle of the Indonesian nation. (Mahatma, 2017, p. 32) After Indonesia's independence, NU's involvement in filling and guarding Indonesia's independence at that time began to look concrete. At that time, NU was not only engaged in da'wah, education, and social religion, but NU began to enter the world of politics and government. (Muhammad, 2015, p. 59)

The history of NU's involvement in politics is a form of transformation of NU's vision as a da'wah and social-religious organization. The reason and purpose of NU politics is not practical politics



related to power and pragmatism, but instead, there is an ultimate goal for the benefit of Muslims in Indonesia. So, the taking of political roles cannot be avoided indirectly by NU. At least it was this goal that inspired NU's involvement in practical politics to eventually take an entry role in political organizations. (Zainuri, 2021, p. 188)

NU's involvement in politics began with NU's entry into the Masyumi (Indonesian Muslim Syuro Council). Not long involved in the Masyumi party, in 1952 NU finally decided to leave Masyumi due to internal conflicts that needed to be in line with NU's principles and goals. (Hartati & Hambali, 2018, p. 38) After deciding to leave Masyumi, NU eventually became a political party and participated for the first time as a political party in the 1955 elections. (Haris, 2012, p. 146) At that time, NU was able to carve a monumental history by successfully gaining many votes and gaining 45 seats in parliament. This success also continued in the momentum of the next election, until in 1983 the results of the NU Munas in Situbondo, NU decided to no longer engage in practical politics and return to take part as a purely social religious organization. (Millati, n.d.)

The above facts show that apart from being a sizeable socio-religious organization, NU also has a relatively large and massive political power base, so it is not surprising that in political momentum both at the national and local levels, it often drags NU into the vortex and political dynamics. But, according to KH. Mustafa Bisri (Gus Mus), if NU is trapped in practical politics, supporting certain parties, this will only teach a bad political tradition, which is only to make NU a political vehicle to achieve and gain power only enjoyed by a few political elites. (Iqbal, 2019, p. 182)

NU's involvement in practical politics, as above, has resulted in NU often needing to pay more attention to the organization's main vision and goals. Many NU Kyai and elders have criticized NU's involvement in practical politics. This is behind the idea that NU should return to Khittah. Until 1984 through the 27th NU Congress in Situbondo, the muktamirins succeeded in formulating NU's struggle lines called "Khittah NU". One of the points formulated by Khittah NU is that NU is organizationally ¹²*independent*, not tied to any political or social organization. (Ridwan, n.d.) In this context, the author does not mean that NU's political practices are wrong. However, the author only wants to present a reflection on the history of NU's political journey in the past to become a learning reference for the role

¹ Practical politics is defined as a political practice in which there are ambitions, motives, and interests that are present simultaneously to seize power. Explicitly, the powers in question are positions, positions, and positions. Implicitly, authority and authority to make public decisions are the main contested goals. (Tampenawas, 2020, p. 117)

² Khittah NU is the guidelines, steps, and attitudes of the organization following the primary goals and ideals of the establishment of NU. Khittah NU is the basis for the attitude, thinking, and acting of NU citizens which is reflected in the behavior of individuals and organizations and every organizational decision-making process. The basic value of the NU khittah formulation comes from the teachings of Ahlusunnah wal Jamaah, adapted to the Indonesian context. (PBNU, 1985, p. 117)

of NU politics in the future.

After establishing Khittah NU at the 18th NU Congress in Yogyakarta, NU again formulated policies on political guidelines for NU citizens. The guidelines contain NU-style political principles and objectives that must be referenced for all NU citizens. The guidelines also become the 'ideology' and political paradigm of NU citizens participating in the political field either directly or indirectly.

NU's involvement in politics is practically inevitable not only in the constellation of national politics but also in the dynamics of local politics in various regions. For example, NU's involvement in political dynamics in the Mataraman Region of East Java, which is the focus of study in this study, is no less attractive to be examined.

Various studies and research have been conducted to see the political dynamics of NU from various focuses and different points of view. The author will present some previous studies on the political dynamics of NU as a reference to see the position of this research. *First*, the Thesis was written by Miski entitled "Political Dynamics of NU Elites (Study on Differences in East Java Kiai Political Preferences in the 2014 Presidential Election)". This study looks at the differences in political preferences of East Java Kiai in the 2014 presidential election. The purpose of this study is to reveal the factors of differences in political preferences and how to carry out political reconciliation due to differences in political preferences. (Miski, 2017) Although Miski's research also examines the differences in political choices of East Java Kyai in the 2014 presidential election, the author needs to examine more deeply the political fragmentation that occurs in East Java Kyai.

Second, a journal written by Firdaus Muhammad titled "Dynamics of Nahdlatul Ulama Thought and Political Movement." Firdaus analyzed NU's political dynamics from anthropological, historical, and sociological perspectives. It was found that NU's political dynamics have entered various aspects, including cultural, religious, and political aspects. Nu has been involved in practical politics and has also declared itself to stay away from practical politics. NU's ability to adapt can make NU continue to exist in ever-changing political dynamics. (Muhammad, 2015) The journal written by Firdaus examines the political dynamics of NU, whose study focus is still general, in contrast to this study, which focuses more on NU's political dynamics in the 2020 election in Matraman.

Third, the results of a study written by Makrum entitled "NU in the Power Struggle: Electoral Political Dynamics of Nahdliyin Citizens in the 2019 Presidential Election" analyzed the Attitude of Kiai NU and the Direction of Nahdliyin Preferences in the 2019 Presidential Election. The research topic is almost the same as Miski's but different from the presidential election period. For more details, the study of previous research has been described in the sub-chapter of the literature review.

Based on several previous research studies, only some studies have been found that focus on examining the relationship between ideological goals and NU's political practices in the 2020 election,

especially in the Matraman region. Therefore, researchers are interested in researching the theme's focus to reveal the relationship between ideological goals and NU's political practices in the 2020 regional elections in the mataraman region of East Java.

2. Methode

This research is a field case study that examines political dynamics and NU's role in the regional elections (pemilukada) in the Mataraman region of East Java in 2020 with a qualitative-descriptive approach. Qualitative research aims to uncover specific facts through the collection and analysis of relevant data, especially in relation to the relationship between NU's ideology and political practices and its fragmentation and impact on NU.

The research was conducted in four districts that held the 2020 elections in the Mataraman region of East Java, namely Trenggalek, Ponorogo, Pacitan, and Blitar, taking into account community characteristics, NU political participation, and engaging political dynamics. Data is obtained through interviews and documentation, and data analysis involves three stages: data reduction, data description, and conclusion drawing to answer the research problem formulation while facilitating reader understanding.

3. THEORETICAL STUDIES

Relevant theories to analyze the problem in this study are Michael Foucault's power relations theory and identity politics theory.

3.1 Michael Foucault's Power Relations Theory

Michel Foucault was a French philosopher and historian who developed theories of power relations and knowledge that had a profound impact on our understanding of the relationship between power, knowledge, and political choice. (Armita, n.d.) This theory presents a critical perspective on conventional concepts of power, claiming that power is not just linked to formal political structures but permeates every aspect of society and daily life. This understanding has significant relevance in exploring how our political choices are shaped by power and knowledge. (Schulzke, 2015)

Foucault argued that power is not only repressive, that is, coercive or controlling, but also productive. (Balan, 2010) This means that power not only prevents individuals from going through laws and social norms but also shapes their views and behaviors. In political elections, this can be interpreted as how power encourages individuals to adopt particular views, political values, and behaviors that conform to their interests. (Salsabilah & Putri, 2022)

The relevance of this theory to political choice is that Foucault pointed out that knowledge is

often used as a power tool. (Heizmann & Olsson, 2015) Knowledge does not merely reflect reality but also helps create it. Politicians, interest groups, and the media often use knowledge to influence public opinion and gain political support. (Salgado, 2018) They construct narratives, design messages, and organize information to fit their political agendas.

Power is described by Foucault not as the power to control people and dictatorship physically. Power in modern times undergoes a pattern of normalization in which power is disguised, hidden, and shrouded so that it seems invisible. Power no longer works through oppression and physical force. Power is exercised by establishing regulations carried out and obeyed voluntarily in an organization, agency, or state. (Bertens, 2006, pp. 320–321)

Through knowledge, activity, and life are governed by specific rules. In this case, knowledge serves as social control. Society can also form knowledge buildings to regulate how its citizens should act and behave or limit certain things. This knowledge can be realized with stories, concepts of belief, and others.

The practice of discipline can be done with knowledge/discourse control. Such practices in modern society do not have to be through physical means. Regulatory systems such as schedules, regulations, activity procedures, implementation, punishments, and rewards can be controlled unwittingly by individuals in the system. The more accessible the individual actually feels, the more he enters into the control of the discourse of power. (Eriyanto, 2001, p. 70)

Furthermore, Foucault emphasized that knowledge is not neutral; It always comes from a particular perspective and reflects the interests of the power that underpins it. (Susan, 2019) Regarding political choices, this can mean that the information we receive often has certain biases that reflect the views of those with power. This can affect the way we understand political issues and the way we make political choices.

Foucault also warns that power and knowledge can change over time, creating new epistemologies that shape different political realities. In politics, this can refer to changes in social norms, political values, or people's views on a particular issue. Therefore, an understanding of political choices needs to consider how changes in knowledge and power can affect our political direction and outlook.

The relevance of Foucault's theory-relations of power and knowledge to political choice is that it forces us to look beyond formal political structures and consider how power and knowledge play a role in shaping political views. (Aliano & Adon, 2023) Intelligent and critical voters must be able to assess political information by considering its source, understand potential bias, and be aware of how knowledge is used to influence public opinion. Through this understanding, the public will be able to become voters who are more aware of the influence of power and knowledge in political life

and, thus, can make more informed political choices.

3.2 Religion and Identity Politics

The notion of identity, according to Castells in his book "The Power of Identity," defines the building of identity formed from value and knowledge. The construction process is based on cultural attributes, namely prioritizing other sources of meaning. (Sjödin, 2004) Identity is a source of values, experiences, knowledge, and cultural attributes that become values for individuals or collective actors. However, this allows for a religious identity based on influences and contradictions between self-representation and social action. (Abbas, 2016, p. 26)

According to Lukmantoro, identity politics is politics that prioritizes the interests of members of a group on the basis of similar identities or characteristics, whether based on race, ethnicity, gender, or religion. Identity Politics is a political activity that seeks to channel aspirations to influence policies and hegemony of the distribution of values that are considered valuable to the most fundamental demands, namely the determination of political attitudes on the basis of primordiality. (Nasrudin, 2018, p. 36) In practical politics, identity politics is manifested in the form of conventional political participation by determining political support based on shared identity or loyalty to groups.

Identity politics is based on religious or class primordialism. In modern political dynamics, one of the media or political tools considered to have *power* in diversity and strong democratic currents of society is to put forward the paradigm of primordialism. (Supriyadi, 2015, p. 338) People's submission to the ideology of a group and high loyalty to its organization become tools for carrying out political hegemony framed in religious and group interests. Their political struggle is a concrete manifestation of the actualization of religious or group struggles.

Zakiah Darajat argues that religion is the process of man's attachment to something he believes in and that there is a higher dimension of human authority in his life. (Daradjat, 2005, p. 10) Man believes himself not to be an independent being but a dependent being. Its existence depends on the ultimate cause that causes all reality, including itself, to occur; Aristotle called this *causa prima*. According to Clifford Geertz, there are several dimensions to religion; first, Religion is a system of powerful symbols, beliefs, and motivations in human beings. Second, there is a value concept of the general order of human behavior, and third, The concept manifests itself in seemingly realistic moods and motivations. (Geertz, 1992, p. 5)

In other opinions, some explain religion as a universal identity in human social life, which means that every individual in a society has the same character of thinking and behavior patterns consisting of the same symbols, beliefs, and rituals. As a value system that is believed, religion has

an essential role in every individual human being and society. As individual human beings, religion guides humans to become human beings, while in the broader context of life, religion becomes an inspiration in all aspects of community life; religion also has a vital role in building the history of human civilization and every nation. (Ismail, 1997, p. 25)

In the context of the relationship between religion and politics, this historical fact shows evidence that the relationship between religion and politics is an inseparable entity. According to Gunter W. Remmling, although they are different entities, they both play social roles. Religion and its moral principles defend social standards, order, and values. Politics, on the other hand, is synonymous with the power and function of its government. Politics and religion both have the same role in Herbert Spencer's thesis, which is one of regulating and restraining. Regarding institutional studies, Spencer emphasized that politics and religion have a role in society as institutions that regulate and uphold the ideals of society. (Saputro, 2018, p. 115)

Smith argues that three main elements of religion psychologically shape the development of political attitudes and behavior: (1) dogmatic authority, or absolute truth; (2) directed authority, or the completeness of the regulations; and (3) institutionalized authority, or the incorporation of knowledge and the use of absolute truth in the creation of rules that strengthen religious structures. (Smith, 1985, p. 224)

Referring to other opinions, according to Sudijono Sastroatmodjo, the similarity of people's identities also affects political behavior. According to Ramlan Surbakti, primordial identity, ideology, personal figure (figure), and citizen interests combine to produce a common identity. Primordial elements include kinship, tribe, language, regionality, and custom. Thus, it is likely that a person's political behavior is influenced by kinship, ethnicity, language, region, and tradition. (Sastroatmodjo, 1995, p. 228)

According to the author, religious theory and identity politics are relevant to examining the relationship between NU's religious ideology and political practice in elections.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this analysis, we will see the relationship between NU's ideological goals and political behaviors or practices carried out by NU in the 2020 election in East Java. There are several things that will be analyzed including, what are the principles of NU-style politics based on NU ideological values? Are the political choices of NU citizens influenced by NU's ideological goals? How does NU understand and internalize ideological values in political practice? How does political practice base on NU's ideological values manifest? What is NU's political practice is analyzed based on the 1926 NU Khittah and NU's political guidelines? To analyze some of these

topics, of course, it is necessary first to present a general description of the theory used to analyze these topics.

NU is not a 'religion' but merely a religious organization. However, as a religious organization, NU has a set of values and teachings that guide its adherents in carrying out religious teachings in the context of worship and muamalah. Therefore, NU pilgrims position NU as a religion or, in other meanings, can be called a 'madzhab.' This fact has become a common truth where NU worshippers believe and practice NU values in their religious practices in their daily lives. This argument is in line with the ideas of Ahmad Baso who wrote a book entitled "NU Religion for the Republic of Indonesia". The book was written based on a reflection of the fact that many NU worshippers represent NU teachings as religious teachings. However, NU's religion is not a rival religion. NU religion only talks about how Islam as a normative teaching is practiced, practiced, and disseminated according to NU's point of view. (NU Online, n.d.) Based on these thoughts, in the context of this study, the author places the values or teachings of NU ideology as well as 'religion.'

Religion becomes an ideology; this is reinforced by the fact that in human life, religion cannot be separated from the life of every human being. As individuals, religion becomes a guideline or ideology for everyone to communicate, serve, and worship the creator. As a social being, religion becomes a guideline for every citizen in behaving and interacting with others in a community setting. There is even an expression that there is no order of society that lives without religion. Religion becomes the superstructural and spiritual basis that affects all orders of people's lives, including politics. In the history of human life, religion contributed greatly to building human civilization.

Ideological factors generally shape the same attitudes and thoughts in a religion. The same ideological identity and style of thought can shape the same political behavior in a religious organization. Especially when they believe that the political goals they are fighting for are not only for practical purposes but also part of the religious struggle. Furthermore, personal factors or a person's character also affect the preferences and political behavior of its adherents. For example, a Kiai who is highly respected by his adherents will obey every command and direction included in the political choices of his adherents. Another factor that influences a person's political behavior is the factor of mutual interest. This common interest factor is an impetus for someone in shaping their political behavior; for example is a common interest in fighting for their rights, fighting for justice in all areas of life. This reason also encourages people to support governments that fight for their interests. The political behavior of the people to support the government in this context is not

because of the similarity of religion, ethnicity, nation, and others, but because the government has succeeded in fighting for the interests of the community.

The presentation of the theory above is used to reveal and analyze data related to the relationship between goals, religious ideology, and NU's political practices in elections.

To make it easier to analyze the relationship between ideological goals and NU political practices, the author will group 2 districts of Blitar and Pacitan in one analysis because NU politics in both districts have almost the same pattern and character based on the results of interviews conducted, even though the political dynamics in the 2 districts are different.

In the 2020 election Blitar district, from several interviews with several speakers, there were several findings in research on the relationship between ideological goals and political practices of NU Blitar Regency in the 2020 election, including the first that, in general, the politics that NU Blitar Regency wants to develop is the realization of the welfare of the people, namely the increase in goodness in everything related to the community in general, both in terms of the availability of equal and quality education services, improving the community's economy, fulfilling access to public health and so on as the basic needs of the community.

With this, NU hopes that in political contestation (power struggle, ed.) can realize NU-style leadership that can be expected to bring fame as NU's political principles. This is the critical role of NU, so it must be involved and even involve itself in the political process, such as in the 2020 regent election in Blitar. Second, in NU's political practice in the Blitar Regency regional elections, NU must have an ideal conception of politics. That is; however, NU must have a fundamental role and share in every process of nation and state, including in politics, such as the election of regents, for example. In the case of Blitar, NU has long yearned for victory and has a regent from among the *nahdliyin* itself so that in addition to being able to contribute to NU, it is also able to become a model for the practice of developing NU ideology itself. Third, further related to how NU's political principles are implemented, NU Blitar district realizes the importance of establishing communication with various elements of existing forces. Because to build, build, maintain, and develop a better life according to the principles of NU's struggle cannot be done alone. NU's political goal in the recent regional elections is a united commitment, so victory is an intermediate goal because NU still understands and believes this is a momentum for unity.

Meanwhile, in the 2020 election in Pacitan district, from several interviews with several speakers, there were several findings in research on the relationship between the ideological goals and political practices of NU in Pacitan Regency in the 2020 election, including first, the political principles to be built in Pacitan are following the directions and instructions of NU elders, *kyai* and *ulama* in Pacitan in particular. The political goal is to grow and develop society towards a better

life, be it in terms of economy, education, and others. Especially Pacitan, as one of the coastal areas, we hope that NU's involvement in politics will have a tangible impact on improving the progress of the district and its citizens. Second, the momentum of the 2020 election is used to consolidate all the potential and strength of NU Pacitan, which has yet to emerge. The moment of election is a strategic and tactical means to get closer and greet pilgrims directly. So even though it seems desperate against a strong pair supported by a coalition of major parties such as Democrats, Golkar, and others, NU Pacitan remains in one line, namely in order to strengthen NU's position. Third, NU's involvement in practical politics is also a big boost from NU's elder Kyai in Pacitan.

From the data presented above, the relationship between NU's ideological goals and political practices in the elections in Blitar and Pacitan *has a reasonably strong relationship*. The political purpose of NU Blitar, which puts forward politics to benefit the people, is a manifestation of the internalization of NU ideology in political practice. In this case, NU's political principles become the superstructural and spiritual basis influencing NU's political goals. Even victory in politics aims to realize NU leadership that can be expected to bring prosperity as NU's political principles. Borrowing Greetz's theory, religion as a robust system of symbols, beliefs, and motivations (Geertz, 1992, p. 5) shapes NU's political consciousness not only for practical political victory but is an essential goal of NU's ideological beliefs. Ideological factors generally shape the same attitudes and thoughts in a religion. The same ideological identity and style of thought can usually shape the same political behavior in a religious organization. Especially when they believe that the political goals they are fighting for are not only for practical purposes but also part of the religious struggle.

Borrowing Smith's theory, the political roles and practices of NU Blitar and Pacitan based on ideological goals are a form of dogmatic authority (Smith, 1985, p. 224) or absolute truth that psychologically shapes and influences the political behavior of NU Blitar and Pacitan. NU's political goals and guidelines are not just rules but universal and directed guidelines that must be internalized in NU's political practice. In addition, the commitment to the unity of all NU institutions and the boom spearheaded by PCNU is a form of institutionalized Authority that refers to a hierarchical leadership structure within NU that will oversee the implementation of NU citizens' political goals.

In Foucault's view, the ideological goal in the political strategy of NU Blitar and Pacitan is knowledge that forms power. Foucault argues that power is not only repressive, that is, coercive or controlling, but also productive (Balan, 2010), which shapes their views and behavior. In political elections, this can be interpreted as how power encourages individuals to adopt particular views, political values, and behaviors that conform to their interests. (Salsabilah & Putri, 2022) Based on

this theory, ideological goals in politics carried out by NU, Blitar, and Pacitan are interpreted into powers that encourage their political practices to follow the views and ideological values of NU.

On the other hand, the encouragement to participate in politics from Kyai, as practiced by NU Pacitan, is a form of personal influence or figures that influence the political preferences or choices of its adherents. (Nawawi & Juandi, 2021) According to the theory presented by Sudijono Sastroatmojo, a Kiai who is highly respected by his adherents will obey every command and direction included in the political choices of his adherents. An ideological Kyai who becomes a teacher or head of an organization will be a patron and role model for his followers. Dawuh Kyai is a direction and command that students or followers must obey. (Mashuri, Lubis, & Moefad, 2023) Fighting or denying Kyai's dawuh is believed to make the knowledge taught not a blessing. The ideological factors that shape the consciousness and psychology of NU Pacitan cadres make the encouragement of involvement and enthusiasm in political practice in NU Pacitan very strong.

The above analysis is particularly relevant regarding power relations and Foucault's knowledge, especially about one's political choices. According to Foucault, power and knowledge are compelling to look beyond formal political structures and consider how power and knowledge play a role in shaping political views. (Aliano & Adon, 2023) In the above context, an ideological Kyai who becomes a teacher or leader of an organization will be a 'power' that influences his followers. Dawuh Kyai is 'knowledge' that must be obeyed by students or followers.

When related to identity politics, the political practices carried out by NU Blitar and Pacitan that are based on the same principles and ideologies manifest identity politics. In this case, the source of value of NU's identity politics is the values of ahlusunnah wal jamaah as a search for thinking and the basis of NU's religious ideology. In addition, NU also has principles and guidelines for the political affairs of NU citizens stipulated in the 1926 Khittah NU. The guidelines contain NU-style political principles and objectives that must be referenced for all NU citizens. The guidelines are prepared based on the foundation of NU's values and frame of mind, based on the principles of aqidah Ahlusunnah Wal Jama'ah. The guidelines also become the 'ideology' and political paradigm of NU citizens participating in the political field either directly or indirectly.

Looking at the data and analysis above, the relationship between the ideological goals and political practices of NU Blitar and Pacitan is powerful. However, from the data generated, this study still has weaknesses because it has yet to reveal the relationship between religious and political ideology, especially to NU citizens (NU culturally). After all, the database examined in this study is NU structural actors involved in the election process in the Blitar and Pacitan regencies.

After analyzing the relationship between the religious ideology and political practice of NU Blitar and Pacitan, the researcher will then analyze the relationship between the religious ideology

and political practice of NU Trenggalek and Ponorogo. The purpose of grouping the two districts is because NU politics in the two districts have almost the same style and character based on the interview results. However, the political dynamics in the 2 districts are different.

In the 2020 election in Trenggalek Regency, from several interviews with several speakers, there were several findings in research on the relationship between ideology and political practices of NU Trenggalek Regency in the 2020 election, including the first that ideally, the political principles of NU citizens should be following the values of NU ideology and teachings that previous NU Society has taught. However, in reality, the political practices carried out do not fully animate the values of NU's political struggle. For example, someone (NU administrator) who becomes the DPRD feels the most NU, so it considers anyone who is not a group to be an enemy 'eliminated.' Politicians who are from NU become very NU when in political momentum alone. Second, the relationship between NU ideology and political practice is biased because politics is more driven by the practical interests of office and power only. Third, the political practices of most NU administrators are efficient, even ignoring ideology in politics and, for example, supporting candidates carried from political parties that are ideologically different from NU.

Meanwhile, in the 2020 election in Ponorogo regency, from several interviews with several speakers, there were several findings in research on the relationship between ideology and political practices of NU in Ponorogo Regency in the 2020 election, including first, according to some speakers, in theory, political practices from NU must be based on ideology and political guidelines for NU citizens. Politics must maintain the spirit of NU and prioritize polite, relaxed, and national politics. NU politics is the politics of civilization, nationality, and humanity. However, this principle is contrary to the political practice that occurs. The political dynamics of NU in Ponorogo have long illustrated a bias of goals and ideology between organizations within NU itself. Second, in addition to ideological bias, the practical political practices carried out by NU to support and be directly involved in the winning team impact fragmentation in the NU organization, and the problem has become a prolonged problem that has yet to be entirely resolved.

From the data presented above, it can be analyzed that the relationship between religious ideology, in this case, NU ideology, and NU political practice in elections in Trenggalek and Ponorogo Regencies has yet to show a powerful relationship. The political goals of some NU institutions seem very biased when viewed from the perspective of NU ideology. In this case, NU's ideology and political guidelines, which should be the superstructure and spiritual basis of NU's political practice, have yet to be internalized by NU's political elites in Trenggalek and Ponorogo. The practical political interests pursued by NU's political elites ignore NU's ideological values.

From the results of research and observations made by researchers on the political dynamics of NU in Trenggalek and Ponorogo regencies, researchers consider that the political practices carried out by NU Trenggalek and Ponorogo are not in line with the 1926 Khittah NU. As has been initiated by NU scholars, Khittah NU is an effort to restore the khittah of NU's struggle and the primary purpose of establishing the NU organization. However, in the course of NU, there was a demand when NU began to play an active role in the dynamics of national politics. There is a shift in vision that occurs in NU at a time when NU is caught in practical political dynamics. Therefore, the Kyai initiated that there must be an effort to restore the vision of NU's struggle as the original purpose of establishing NU, then Khittah NU was born in 1926.

The political practices of NU Trenggalek and Ponorogo should prioritize the role of national politics, as affirmed in the Khittah NU. Although it is undeniable that every political momentum of NU elections is always involved in practical political practice, the vision of national politics must remain the main principle above all practical political interests, including office, personal interests, and groups. The impact of practical politics that prioritizes personal interests and power not only has an impact on the occurrence of fragmentation in the NU body but also has an impact on the function of the NU in carrying out its primary task as a socio-religious organization that must fight and provide benefits to the people.

As felt in Ponorogo, NU Ponorogo's involvement in practical political practices in the elections from 2005 to 2020 had a very pronounced impact, including the weakening of NU's social-religious role in society, at least it happened during the post-regional and pre-regional elections. The concentration of NU's power focused on political events dramatically reduces the social and religious activities NU carries to the community. Although there are activities based on social religion, in times of political momentum, they are often 'boarded' by practical political interests.

The political practices of NU Trenggalek and Ponorogo, if analyzed with the NU Citizen Political Guidelines agreed upon at the XVIII NU Congress in Krapyak Yogyakarta in 1989, several practices contradict these principles. First, politics for NU citizens should be carried out following Akhlaqul Karimah as the practice of Islamic teachings Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah. However, what happens in politics that prioritizes personal interests and group egos (respective institutions or organizations) and engaging in transactional politics is contrary to the values of Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah. Second, politics for NU citizens for any reason must not sacrifice common interests (NU ideology and vision) and divide unity. Meanwhile, the practice of NU's involvement in practical politics that ignores the vision and shared interests impacts fragmentation within NU itself. Of course, it is very contrary to NU's political guidelines. Third, differences in views and political aspirations of NU citizens should maintain brotherhood, *tawadlu'*, and mutual respect so that in

politics, they do not damage unity and unity within NU. However, what happened, especially in Ponorogo, was the opposite; differences in political preferences based on personal and group interests resulted in fragmentation within the NU and, even today, has the potential to weaken unity and solidity in the NU organization.

Based on the explanation above, if analyzed based on identity politics theory, the practice of identity politics carried out by NU Trenggalek, and Ponorogo is identity politics based on the primordial identity of the group. Identity building is formed from values, knowledge, and interests within a group. Identity is a source of values, experiences, knowledge, and cultural attributes that become values for individuals or collective actors. (Supriyadi, 2015, p. 338) However, this allows for a religious identity based on influences and contradictions between self-representation and social action. As illustrated in the political dynamics in NU Ponorogo and Trenggalek, the influence of individual and group interests among NU's political elite gives rise to a diversity of identities within the NU organization itself. This fact is also strengthened because Aswaja as an NU ideology has an inclusive and flexible character, thus causing an understanding of Aswaja as a religious ideology, including movements in politics, is also very varied. This is also one of the factors that causes political preferences among NU to be very open and different. Ideally, ideology should be internalized as the basis of thought (*fikroh*), worship (*amaliyah* tradition and religious practice), movement (*harokah*), and political principles (*siyasah*). So that it will form the same character and identity for all NU citizens.

Identity politics practiced by NU Trenggalek and Ponorogo is based on the primordialism of factions or groups. That is, the political interests carried out are driven by the interests of each group (PCNU, Institutions, Banom, etc.). For example, PCNU has group interests that may differ from those of Banom and its subordinate institutions (for example, Ansor and Fatayat). This phenomenon occurs in the political dynamics of NU in Ponorogo and Trenggalek.

In modern political dynamics, one of the media or political tools considered to have power in diversity and strong democratic currents of society is to put forward the paradigm of group primordialism. People's submission to ideology and group interests and high loyalty to their organizations become tools for political hegemony framed in-group interests.

5. CONCLUSION

Regarding the relationship between religious ideology and political practice in NU's involvement in the 2020 elections in Blitar and Pacitan regencies, it continues to uphold the values of ideology, *Khitthah* NU 1926, and political guidelines for NU citizens, Where there is no biased practice in the practice of these values in the political dynamics of the 2020 election. In Ponorogo and Trenggalek

regencies, there was a bias in the practice of NU 1926 Ideology and Khittah values, where more real practical political practices colored the political dynamics of elections. The political practices carried out were driven by the individual interests of NU elites and the primordial interests of each group, which impacted institutional fragmentation.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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