

Shift of Understanding Mission from *Keummatan* and *Kemuslimatan* to Practical Politics in Muslimat Citizens Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in East Java

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Abstract. The main mission of NU's struggle in the 1926 decision was as a social-religious movement. However, in a long period of time, the dynamism of NU continues to develop along with social, cultural, and political developments to be involved in practical politics. NU has experienced in practical politics. Practical political interests (low politics) indeed almost always appear in the political history of NU time to time, although some of them are natural as a form of missionary political shift in NU's body. This was reflected in 1952 when NU became a political party. After that, NU merged into the United Development Party (PPP) since 1973. However, NU's dynamism in practical politics had obstacles and criticism. When NU plunged into the field of practical politics, there were many criticisms from the NU community itself which said that political elites were considered not to take care of the interests of the people. The culmination of this criticism led to the struggle to restore NU to its *khittah*, as a socio-religious organization, not practical politics. The purpose of this research is to understand the understanding of NU Muslimat community members regarding the Muslim mission and societies in NU Muslimat. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach. Data collection used observation, interviews, and document. The data analysis was carried out using the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, Saldana.

Keywords: *shift, NU Muslimat, community and muslim mission, politics, practical politics.*

INTRODUCTION

When Indonesia entered the reformation era, every social and Islamic group or organization carried out a political response, including the Executive Board of Nahdlatul Ulama (BPNU), facilitating the establishment of the National Awakening Party (PKB). Such actions by some NU residents were considered to have violated the 1926 *khittah*, but what was done by the PBNU was seen very strategic because the voices of the NU people, which numbered around forty millions, could be accommodated

in a single party forum. If not, then the people of NU will experience the same fate as when the New Order regime was marginalized.

The concentration of political participation in the NU Muslimat community is often driven by personal support from an Islamic boarding school. The legislatures with NU backgrounds spread in various parties, such as PKB, PPP, Golongan Karya Party (Golkar), and the Democratic Party. But when the regional leaders come from NU, the support is no longer based on party interests, but it is on the big house, Nahdlatul Ulama. The objective of this research is to understand the understanding of NU Muslimat community members regarding the *ummah* and Muslim mission in NU Muslimat.

Literature Review

The main mission of NU's struggle in the 1926 decision was as a social-religious movement. [1] However, in a long period of time, the shift in NU continues to develop along with social, cultural, and political developments that involve in practical politics. NU has experienced in practical politics. Practical political interests (low politics) indeed almost always appear in the political history of NU time to time, although some of them are natural as a form of political dynamism, especially in the body of NU. [2], [3].

This was reflected in 1952 when NU became a political party. After that, NU merged into PPP since 1973. However, NU's dynamism in practical politics had obstacles and criticism. When NU plunged into the field of practical politics, there were many criticisms from the NU community itself which said that political elites were considered not to take care of the interests of the people. The culmination of this criticism led to the struggle to restore NU to its *khittah*, as a socio-religious organization, not practical politics [4].

The formulation of the NU *Khittah* in Situbondo is very immense because it confirms the return of NU as *jam`iyah diniyah-ijtima`iyah*. This formula consists of, among other things, the understanding of the NU *Khittah*, the basics of NU's religious understanding, NU's social attitudes, behaviors formed by religious foundations and NU's social

attitudes, efforts made by NU, *ulama* functions within *jam`iyah*, and NU's relationship with the nation. In relation to creativity, NU's *khittah* states that *jam`iyah* NU must always be ready to adjust to any changes that bring benefits, uphold the leadership in an effort to encourage, spur and accelerate the development of society, uphold community togetherness, and uphold science and the experts [5], [6].

The NU *Khittah* also emphasizes important aspects of its relationship with the nation. In this context, every NU member is expected to always uphold Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. As a part of Indonesian Muslims, the NU community must strive to uphold the principle of brotherhood, *tasamuh*, togetherness and coexistence [7].

There are several studies that have relevance to this research. One of them is conducted by Miski which entitled "Political Dynamism of the NU Elite (Study of the Differences in the Political Preference of East Java *Kiai* in 2014 Presidential Elections." [8] The study focuses on the political dynamism of the NU elites with a case study of differences in the political preferences of East Java *Kiai* in the 2014 presidential election.

The results of the research above state that the form of differences in the political preferences of East Java *kiai* in the 2014 presidential election shows three cleric (*kiai*) groups: Prabowo-Hatta proponent, Jokowi-Jusuf Kalla proponent, and independent/neutral group. In the context of the 2014 presidential election, those *kiai* have three roles. First, as an actor to succeed the president candidates' campaign. Second, as a proponent only. Last, as a participant who only gives blessings to all candidates, not in mutual support. The differences in the *kiai's* political preferences are influenced by the main spectrum of the *kiai's* main force, especially in the NU's political level. It increases a number of clerics include political fundamentalists, political moderates, and productive *khittah* groups. The differences in *kiai's* political preferences are influenced by several internal and external factors.

Rizal Qasim in his a study entitled "The Existence of Nahdlatul Ulama in the Political World in the Transitional Period of Power in Indonesia (1998-2004)" [9] states that the fall of Soeharto's New Era power on May 21, 1998 has led Indonesia to the Reformation Era. The power transition has also changed Indonesia's political configuration fundamentally. The political configuration leads to the appearance of a number of political parties with various ideological bases and both religious and non-religious identity. It has been the most numerous political parties ever Indonesia.

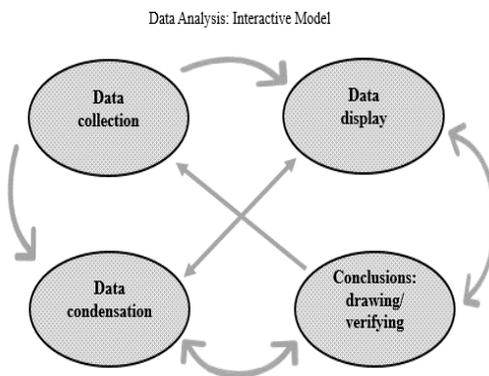
METHOD

In accordance with the objectives and unit of analysis, this study uses the social definition paradigm. [10], [11], [12] Exemplar of this paradigm is Weber's work on social

action and Talcott Parsons' regarding to social actions. Weber's work helps direct attention to social definitions in the way that social actors define their social situations and the effects of social definitions in maintaining actions and interactions.

This study used a qualitative approach. The qualitative approach prioritizes in-depth interviewing and observation techniques. Observation is a typical method of the social definition paradigm. The data obtained were primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained using interview guideline instruments prepared for informants that are relevant to data needs. [13] They are, first, Muslim community members who are active in the NU Muslimat organization as the party administrators. Second, the NU Muslimat management who becomes the legislature both at the district and provincial levels of Pasuruan regency. While secondary data are data in the form of documents or information.

Data analysis was done by applying analytical methods that are commonly used in field research. In this case, the writers agree with the steps written by Babbie. [14] The collected data were analyzed using an analysis strategy that is an interactive model by Miles, Hubenrman, and Saldana. [15] This model views the analysis as three concurrent activities: (1) summarizing data, (2) presenting data, and (3) drawing conclusion. The writers explored each of these components deeper when they read the data.



DISCUSSION

An understanding of the Islamic mission according to NU members who were the subjects of the study, out of the five interviewed respondents, are as follows:

First, the community and Muslim mission is not different in the concept of *ummah* or Muslims community, especially Muslim women, to always keep on Islamic guidance in their life. Therefore, this effort to guide the *ummah* or the Muslim community is to guide the Islamic community in general and especially women who are NU followers who are active or not active in the NU Muslimat movement. So, loyalty and Muslimism are two inseparable objects of NU Muslimat and become the mission of NU

Muslimat carried out by its members, starting from the central to the local regions.

Second, the dynamism of the post-establishment *Nahdlatul Ulama* movement in 1926 is seen as NU once joined the board of Syuro Muslimin (Masyumi). Then, NU went out to be NU Party to participate in facing national conditions and problems in Indonesia. When Suharto ruled, there were only three political parties. They were Golongan Karya Party that represented the general public and bureaucrats, the Indonesian Democratic Party that accommodated nationalist groups, and the United Development Party (PPP) that accommodated Islamic groups in general. NU joined the PPP as they involved in the establishment of the party.

Third, the problem of affliction that happens in the NU Muslimat community is also the problems that afflict the NU Muslimat community and Islamic issues. Basically, it cannot distinguish between the term *ummah* and muslimat in NU. The understanding of these two terms is similar to the term *keummatan* as the Muslimat's members. For example, all the members of NU's female boarding school are *ummah*. If they follow the NU teachings of Islam, then they are considered as Muslims. That is why NU Muslimat members are also called *ummah* who are both objects and subjects of the NU movements. Therefore, there is no difference between the *ummah* of NU followers and NU Muslimat.

Fourth, the activities carried out by the NU Muslimat community are the empowerment of the *ummah*, especially NU followers in cities, suburbs, and remote villages. The activities are recitations, skills training, and outing activities that are done selflessly, as a responsibility of Muslimat as organization members. As administrators, they constantly carry out actualization and creativity related to the interests of the *ummah* (Islamic *ummah*) in general. If the NU Muslimat continues to carry out positive activities to the community or *ummah* wherever they are, the community will be interested in NU Muslimat and will join as members or administrators. So, religious activities are actually synonymous with Muslims' activities. *Muslimat* also means the Islamic *ummah*. Doing good deeds to the *ummah* is the mission of the NU Muslimat. Indeed, there are many things that are considered quite serious when justifying rural or uneducated communities as community groups without sufficient educational background. To face it, the management must use cultural methods. This method is to manage time availability and opportunities for community groups in remote areas because they generally work in the agricultural sectors.

Fifth, religious and Muslim mission in the NU community must be understood broadly and contextually in accordance with the development of the global era today because when someone tries to good ones, especially for Muslim women, it is necessary to empower in this country. It may probably influence the politics results. If they can influence all decisions made by the legislature, then it is

considered as the success of the NU *ummah* and *Muslimat*. The understanding of NU's faithfulness and *Muslimat* is to mobilize all the powers to take part in all lines of life in order to fight for the mission of the NU Muslimat organization.

CONCLUSION

From the result above, the writers conclude that the understanding of NU Muslimat community regarding religious and religious mission is almost the same. The community and Muslim mission have the same understanding. The *ummah* mission is to teach Islam to all Muslims without discriminating any groups or ethnics. The mission invokes Islam specifically for women followers of *ahlus-sunnah wal jamaah* who join the NU Muslimat organization. So, the difference is about the goal of the preaching, but the materials are the same. The mission specifically emphasizes Islam as the basis of *ahlus Sunnah wal jamaah* in the NU Muslimat.

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