

The Role of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Organizations in West Java in Overcoming the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract—Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) is the largest socio-religious organization in Indonesia that struggles in its path with its unique techniques and approaches. In the era of the covid-19 pandemic, people now see that there are many victims floating, but at the same time they are treated to information, some of which is true, but some of it is not (hoax). So that people seem to be divided: they believe in the existence of Covid-19 and some do not believe it, and view it more as a global elite conspiracy with business motives, and people obeyed to be vaccinated. The purpose of this study was to obtain data on the role of NU in tackling COVID-19 in West Java. The role of the organization includes policies, agendas, and evaluation of them. This research method is qualitative. Research findings: NU policies in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic put more emphasis on *maqashid al-syari'ah* to save mankind, especially Muslims and their congregations; NU's steps in tackling COVID-19 are fostering *jam'iyah* and congregations to get health and keep disaster away. By conveying messages of da'wah nuances that motivate people to face Covid-19. Integrating health to achieve physical and spiritual health, mind and body, worship and charity, and reading the Koran. The communication media used are mass media and social media.

Keywords—the role of NU, NU's da'wah in the covid-19 era

I. INTRODUCTION

Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) is a historical socio-religious organization in Indonesia. He is present in every march of the nation and state in an effort to fill its independence. NU's role is so strategic that the government always considers its thoughts to be listened to when making policies. The Indonesian President when opening the MUI National Conference stated that NU (and Muhammadiyah) should participate in socializing the COVID-19 vaccine.

In Indonesia, in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic, mass movement is restricted and isolated. But here we hear a lot of news about crowd omission and mass mobilization, thus influencing public perception. When it hit a small community, the crowd was dealt with. This perception is reflected in the almost undisciplined activities of the community, which are sarcastically ejected as 'the country is up to you'. In such conditions, it is necessary to look at NU's work for the

community. NU has acted swiftly through the policies, measures and agenda it has implemented.

Since the implementation of "Macro-Scale Social Restrictions" (PSBM), the positive number of COVID-19 has continued to increase. When it was announced on March 2, 2020 that 2 people were infected, now more than 700 thousand people have been infected after 16 months (July 17, 2021). The spread of the positive number of COVID-19 in December 2020 of more than 5,000 people/day is now around 50,000 people/day. The Covid-19 pandemic has become a frightening event both because of mass media broadcasts and social media. Residents often see parties obstructing the burial of their family's bodies with the Covid-19 protocol, excavating the graves of family members who had previously been buried by the pandemic task force team. This news and media information is counter-productive and gives the impression that people are resistant to the COVID-19 stigma on their families. Entering 2021, the condition has begun to subside, until May. But at the end of June 2021 there was a second wave with the death toll above 1,000/day.

This condition shows that the pandemic is very tense. So we need to know the role of NU in dealing with the spread of this pandemic. On that basis, the researchers conducted research on "ROLE OF WEST JAVA NAHDLATUL ULAMA (NU) ORGANIZATIONS IN OVERCOMING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC".

Research Urgency. This study aims to obtain data on the role of the West Java NU organization in dealing with COVID-19. Includes: policy, agenda and evaluation thereof.

II. METHODS

This research method is qualitative with in-depth interviews and observations to the West Java PWNU website. With informants from PWNU administrators, which will be held between February-July 2021 in Bandung.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Many researchers examine the major religious organizations in Indonesia, namely: First: Faisal Ismail in his

writings states that Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was born in a pesantren culture where "traditional Islam" has taken root and is preserved. In this context, Nahdlatul Ulama declares its religious ideology as 'ahl al-sunnah wa al-jama'ah.' This religious ideology is an important feature of Nahdlatul Ulama that distinguishes itself from Muslim "modernist" organizations. Early in its movement, Nahdlatul Ulama played an important role by, for example, banning Muslim youth from entering the Dutch military service, forbidding Muslims from supporting the Dutch army, and refusing Dutch assistance offered to Nahdlatul Ulama. madrasa.

Firdaus Wajdi stated, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah are the two largest Muslim organizations in Indonesia. He describes the differences between the two organizations from the perspective of Clifford Geertz in his main work, the Religion of Java, in which Geertz covers several followers of Nahdlatul Ulama. This study concludes that NU contributes more to the development of Islam in Indonesia. Then it is hoped that his followers will be able to work together to build a peaceful Indonesia through a better understanding of Islamic religious institutions such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama.

The two writers saw the great role of NU and Muhammadiyah in advancing the Indonesian nation. However, there has been no specific discussion about how NU and Muhammadiyah will take steps during the current COVID-19 pandemic. This is where the peculiarity of this article is because the pandemic will continue to mutate itself from alpha, delta, sigma and others. By looking at the work of these two organizations, it will be able to bring the main good.

The author uses Organizational Culture Theory starting from the view that culture is a system or shared values. Culture is a set of rules, values, ideology and customs that surround, and therefore, dictate a complex group [1]. Geertz views that culture is not single but has multiple faces in different social groups. He claimed that cultures are ways of life that sustained through stories, rituals, and other symbolic activities that continuously vitalize and uphold shared meaning among members. Scholars who pay attention to this are Anderson in Wood [2]. Organizational culture can be seen from its communication [3], verbal and non-verbal. The state is very closely related to culture. adherents of religion who inhabit the area [4]. Religion becomes the most powerful emotional stimulus [5] in society.

Communication messages are the delivery of messages by an organization, both internally and externally [6]. Depth in communicating with staff and members [7] related to their duties. While outward serving the public or the parties associated with it. Also the superior-subordinate relationship (The superior-subordinate relationship). Organizational communication plays a role in moving the wheels of the organization through its policies and agendas or work programs. Managers communicate with subordinates, known as their communication and leadership style [8].

In the organization there is verbal and non-verbal communication [8]. In organizations there is also interpersonal communication from its members, because people in the organization also communicate among themselves [9]. Public Relations or Public Relations (PR) is not the chairman of the organization, but he becomes part of the leadership of the organization. Public relations has used the media to communicate with its stakeholders [10]. Appearance is the most important thing, while content is secondary [1], and organization is no exception. Organizational communication media are mass media and social media (online media). Ilham Prisgunanto [11] hints at the challenges of the television world in facing a new information order.

Communication is conveying the right information (to tell the truth) [12]. Mainstream media such as mass media have strict information selection, online media (social media) are very loose. A lot of untrue information went viral, such as hoaxes and disinformation [13]. Communication is the central task of management [14]. The 21st century is a digital era that is able to change communication patterns. From mass media to "non-mass media" [18]. The terms appear: non-governmental organization, social work [15], philanthropy [16] and charity organization [17]. Lussier stated, in contemporary times organizations are experiencing reengineering, downsizing and high-involvement organizations [18].

A. NU's Policy to Deal with the Covid-19 Pandemic

NU is a type of Jamaah-based social religious organization (non-profit). He serves the community based on religious values that are practiced in the social sphere through his organization. Religion teaches maintaining the soul, religion, property, mind, and offspring in accordance with (maqashid al-shari'ah). The rules of fiqh become the main consideration for the fatwa that in an emergency situation, things that are sunnat muakkad, even fardlu, change.

The NU organization emphasized that the COVID-19 pandemic was a disaster that befell mankind. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out policies and steps to strengthen the organization to nourish the community. Consolidated organizations and constructive messages, Jemaah NU follows the policies outlined by the government regarding health protocols for previous congenital diseases (comorbidities). May not pray in congregation at the mosque, the abolition of Friday is replaced with dhuhur prayer (in congregation) at home. And also Tarawih prayers, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are also carried out at home.

B. NU Agenda

PWNU outlines the agenda for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic organizationally, at various levels. PWNU activates autonomous bodies to its institutions. NU activates Islamic boarding schools and institutions in its jam'iyyah, including the al-Ma'arif institution, which so far has felt less resonant. It's as if NU's education is only a pesantren, even though there are many madrasas starting from the elementary level,

Tsanawiyah and Aliyah. Education in the NU environment is led by NU clerics in various regions.

NU's closeness to political parties since the first general election in 1955 has left education in NU a bit neglected, not managed properly because of the busyness of NU activists in politics. Now the political aspirations of the congregation are channeled to the National Awakening Party (PKB), and other parties. Good relations with these political parties are maintained in order to achieve harmony with their various structures. National, ummah and state issues have never been separated from the NU area.

Covid-19 is serious enough to deal with it by means of science and prayer; faith and immunity. Scientifically, by strengthening immunity with protein and quality food, rest, exercise, be happy and not stressed by the news of covid-19. Strengthening faith by praying a lot leads to worship sincerely. The distribution permit for vaccines is important from BPOM, but not absolute. So Astrazenica - even though according to viral information it contains pork - is considered permissible to use. It is seen as a safe vaccine with 72% efficiency so that people achieve herd immunity. Vaccinations have only reached 25 million from the target of 180 million. Now 50 million have been vaccinated (President of the Republic of Indonesia, TVone, 19/7/2021).

The West Java PWNU agenda guides the community to work well, and has shown results, namely awards, which resulted in the One Pesantren One Product (OPOP) prize from the Governor of West Java, Ridwan Kamil. OPOP is an award from the Governor of West Java for citizens who work best, where 6 out of 10 winners of OPOP in 2019/2020 are companies owned by activists from NU. The requirement to enter OPOP is that the business is already running and formal. There are many NU members who have performed brilliantly here. The West Java Governor's OPOP receiving areas are Purwakarta (printing), Sukabumi (calligraphy), Garut (sheep/goats), Pangandaran (agriculture) and Bandung (food/culinary).

Covid-19 has pushed NU to concentrate on the "Digital Da'wah" (DD) agenda because of its great potential. DD cannot be individually or groups but must synergize, where PWNU's online digital media, handled by the Media Center, is the largest Islamic website in Indonesia with 12 million visitors/month. Meanwhile, NU.online.jabar (owned by PWNU) part of PBNU.online (the center, which has existed since 2016) has only been reorganized since August 2020 with 200 thousand visitors/month.

IV. DISCUSSION

Cultural theory is used to analyze NU, because this organization has a very strong social group style. The culture is strong following the culture of the congregation. Socio-religious organizations initiate the application of Islamic teachings both in the textual and contextual realms. NU is more cultural and softer in implementing sharia (in the sense of Islamic jurisprudence). NU as a non-profit organization seeks

to guide the community. Now fostering Indonesia to cross the Indonesian nation in the midst of the covid-19 pandemic.

West Java, especially in Greater Bandung, is a Priangan cultural area with characteristics: very dominant family ties, smooth language, and a gentle attitude (not being direct) but quite firm. What appears on the surface is sometimes different from what is really in the heart or mind. This is to avoid open conflict.

Most of the NU congregations live in rural areas, with low and medium education, farmers and fishermen, laborers and do whatever jobs they can. Their social status is very closely related to the pesantren of their kyai who live in pesantren in rural areas. NU is more of a congregation-based organization (jam'iyah). Therefore his approach to the congregation needs to be unique by considering culturally.

West Java PWNU is now struggling in the midst of the covid-19 pandemic, with their partners being various institutions (institutions) outside of them. They need to establish communication with various parties in West Java, both with government institutions and non-government institutions. Government institutions are institutions that represent the legislature, executive and judiciary. Meanwhile, non-government includes functional institutions, both official and unofficial.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit Indonesia, these two organizations tried to answer health problems through their various organizational potentials. Organizations communicate internally and externally, vertically, horizontally. Messages are carefully designed, disseminated and received from outside.

In West Java, there are very many NU members who try to follow the NU tradition by being loose and not rigid. For them, until May 2020 (when the COVID-19 slowed down) the rural areas were not much felt, so it seemed that NU residents thought it was possible.

As part of modern society, NU uses communication media and information technology intensely. Organizations communicate directly between humans and humans (human communication), but also communicate using media (mediated communication) both print, electronic, and digital. Online communication is a good necessity.

West Java regional administrators, through their Media Center, are trying to neutralize various hoaxes and disinformation. Messages are appreciated and then reviewed internally, and if there are problems, they will be disseminated to the public. Profile the congregation according to age classification. Adults with facebook and youtube, youth via Instagram and children sent messages via Tiktok and Helo, to be able to greet their congregation well during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

V. CONCLUSION

From the explanation above, the writer concludes the following things:

- NU's policy outlines that the COVID-19 is real, which must be addressed organizationally. The number of victims who died must get attention to re-examine religion, and make it a reference for the norms of Muslim life. The understanding of Ahlussunnah wal-jamaah al-nahdliyyah makes it synergistic and supports the government in tackling Covid-19. NU conducts various religious studies based on the Koran, al-Sunnah and heritage books (al-Kutub al-Turats) of scholars.
- PWNU prioritizes its congregations, in the form of majlis taklim, majlis of dhikr/wirid and worship, creative institutions that support the wider community at the grassroots level. Many NU Islamic boarding schools, both salaf and classical, are the main concern. This organization meets in the spirit of amar ma'ruf and nahyi munkar; Da'wah bil-lisan and da'wah bi-lisan al-Hal (da'wah bil-hal). Communication media is used optimally without being provoked by haters and hoaxes.

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