



JSP: Jurnal Studi Pesantren

diterbitkan oleh Prodi Magister Pendidikan Agama Islam
Pascasarjana Institut Ilmu Keislaman Annuqayah, Sumenep, Indonesia

Vol. 3, No. 1, Maret 2024. Hal. 92 – 108

E-ISSN: 3062 – 6552

DOI: <https://10.59005/jsp.v3i1.525>

Political Diversity Culture of Kiai at Annuqayah Pesantren, Guluk-Guluk, Sumenep

Robith Mahsun*¹, Abdul Asiz²

¹Institut Ilmu Keislaman Annuqayah, Sumenep, Indonesia

²Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam (STAI) Nurud Dhalam Ganding, Sumenep, Indonesia

*e-mail corresponding: jhendrallenteng97@gmail.com

Article History

Submitted : 19-10-2023

Revised : 22-11-2023

Accepted : 27-11-2023

Published : 20-12-2023

Abstract

Political diversity among kiai within pesantren institutions remains an underexplored phenomenon in Islamic educational leadership, particularly regarding how such diversity is managed without compromising institutional unity. This study examines the culture of political diversity among kiai at Annuqayah Pesantren, Guluk-Guluk, Sumenep, with three objectives: identifying factors shaping kiai's diverse political orientations, analyzing strategies sustaining institutional cohesion amid political differences, and exploring the relationship between political diversity culture and educational values transmitted to students. A qualitative approach was employed through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. Subjects were selected purposively from kiai actively engaged in diverse political activities. Data analysis followed systematic stages of collection, classification, reduction, and conclusion drawing, grounded in Almond and Verba's political culture theory. Three findings emerge. First, political diversity at Annuqayah stems from differences in ideological interpretation, variations in information, and social conformity patterns. Second, kiai manage political differences through cultivating silaturahmi, safeguarding institutional reputation, exercising contextual wisdom, and providing mutual support for kiai in practical politics. Third, political diversity culture is constructively linked to the pesantren's educational mission of cultivating civil society (*masyarakat madani*) grounded in *Ahlu Sunnah wal Jama'ah* principles. These findings suggest that political diversity, when managed through institutionally embedded cultural norms, functions as a constructive force for democratic education within the pesantren.

Key Word:

Political Culture,
Kiai Leadership,
Political Diversity
Pesantren Annuqayah

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between kiai and politics constitutes one of the most persistently debated themes in the study of Islamic institutions in Indonesia. The tension embedded in this relationship is rooted in a widely held social perception that political involvement inevitably erodes the moral charisma and religious authority that define the kiai's social

position. Yet the historical record tells a more complex story. From the earliest days of Indonesian nationalism through the post-reformasi era of competitive democracy, kiai have been active participants in political life — as advocates, mobilizers, candidates, and institutional brokers — while simultaneously maintaining their roles as religious scholars, community leaders, and custodians of pesantren-based education. The question, therefore, is not whether kiai engage in politics, but how they do so, and with what consequences for the institutions they lead and the communities they serve.

The concept of politics itself, as understood within the Islamic intellectual tradition, carries a breadth of meaning that exceeds its common popular usage. Derived from the Arabic root *siyasah* — itself traceable to the verb *saasa-yasuusu* — the term encompasses dimensions of public management, the exercise of just authority, the maintenance of social order, and the governance of both domestic and foreign affairs (Wahid, 2019). This understanding positions political engagement not as a contamination of religious life but as a legitimate extension of the Islamic scholar's responsibility toward the public good. It is within this normative framework that the political involvement of kiai must be analytically situated. As Mahadi argues, a kiai's participation in practical politics is legally and morally legitimate provided it is motivated by genuine concern for the welfare of the Muslim community rather than by personal ambition or factional interest (Wahid, 2019). This position is further grounded in the recognition that kiai, as citizens, possess the same political rights as any other member of society.

The term *kiai* itself carries multiple layers of meaning in Javanese cultural usage. It functions as an honorific for sacred objects, as a title of respect for elders, and — most relevantly for this study — as a designation conferred by the community upon individuals recognized for their mastery of Islamic religious knowledge and their leadership of a pesantren (Dhofier, 2011). This last meaning is the one operative throughout this study. The kiai's authority, in this sense, is simultaneously scholarly, institutional, and social — grounded in religious expertise, anchored in the pesantren as an institution, and sustained through the community's ongoing recognition of the kiai's moral and spiritual leadership.

Annuqayah Pesantren in Guluk-Guluk, Sumenep, Madura, represents a particularly compelling site for examining the dynamics of political diversity among kiai. As one of the oldest and most prestigious pesantren institutions in Madura, Annuqayah has a long history of political engagement dating to the colonial period, when its national political role began to develop through the establishment of formal educational institutions, following the model set by Tebuireng Pesantren in Jombang (Sitru Arsy, 2000). Many of Annuqayah's kiai received their religious formation at Tebuireng, a connection that shaped not only their educational orientations but also their political sensibilities. Today, Annuqayah encompasses multiple semi-autonomous sub-pesantren units, each led by kiai who may hold distinct and sometimes divergent political affiliations. The range of political parties represented among Annuqayah's kiai is notably broad, encompassing Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB), Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP), Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB), Partai Kebangkitan Ummat (PKU), Partai Keadilan (PK), and Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN) (Sitru Arsy, 2000). What makes this diversity remarkable is not

its existence — political diversity among religious scholars is hardly unprecedented — but rather the fact that it coexists with a sustained culture of inter-kiai harmony, institutional solidarity, and shared commitment to the pesantren's educational mission.

Existing scholarship on kiai and politics in Indonesia has generated important insights into the mechanisms of kiai political mobilization (Turmudi, 2004), the integration of pesantren networks into electoral politics (Muhtadi, 2019), and the tensions between religious authority and partisan commitment (Fealy & Hooker, 2006). More recently, scholars have examined the role of kiai in shaping local political culture (Wahid, 2018) and the implications of kiai political involvement for the democratic development of Indonesian Muslim society (Hefner, 2000; Mietzner, 2020).

However, several significant gaps remain in the existing literature. First, the majority of studies focus on the political behavior of individual kiai or on the political mobilization of pesantren communities, with relatively limited attention to the internal dynamics of political diversity within a single pesantren institution. Second, the cultural and institutional mechanisms through which pesantren manage political diversity without generating institutional fragmentation have received insufficient systematic attention. Third, the relationship between the culture of political diversity among kiai and the educational values transmitted to students — a relationship with potentially significant implications for the civic formation of the next generation of Muslim citizens — remains virtually unexplored in the existing literature.

This study addresses these gaps by examining three interrelated questions: first, what are the underlying factors that generate diverse political orientations among kiai at Annuqayah Pesantren? Second, what strategies do kiai employ to sustain institutional cohesion and inter-personal harmony in the face of political differences? Third, how does the culture of political diversity among kiai relate to the educational values and civic principles transmitted to students? The theoretical framework employed is Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba's political culture theory, which provides conceptual tools for analyzing the values, beliefs, and orientations that shape political behavior within a given community and for understanding how political culture is reproduced through institutional and social processes. The central argument of this study is that political diversity at Annuqayah Pesantren is not a source of institutional weakness but a culturally managed resource that, when governed by shared norms of *silaturrahim*, institutional loyalty, and contextual wisdom, constitutes a constructive foundation for democratic civic education and a distinctive model of pluralist religious leadership.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a field research design to examine the culture of political diversity among kiai at Annuqayah Pesantren, Guluk-Guluk, Sumenep. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables deep understanding of social phenomena through direct engagement with research subjects in their natural context (Creswell & Poth, 2017), facilitating comprehensive exploration of the perspectives, experiences, and strategies kiai employ in navigating political diversity within the pesantren's institutional framework (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

The research site was selected based on Annuqayah Pesantren's distinctive characteristic as a large pesantren complex whose kiai leadership holds demonstrably diverse political orientations (Dhofier, 2015). Research subjects consisted of kiai who actively participate in diverse political activities, whether as political actors, mobilizers, or supporters. Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on three criteria: a minimum of ten years of leadership experience at Annuqayah, active political involvement, and willingness to share perspectives on the dynamics of political diversity within the pesantren (Patton, 2015).

Data were collected through three complementary methods. First, systematic observation was conducted to document kiai involvement in practical political activities, including political mobilization, campaign participation, and organizational affiliation. Observation followed a structured protocol covering political behavior patterns, frequency of political activities, and inter-kiai interactions across political differences, conducted over an extended period encompassing both routine and electoral cycle contexts (Spradley, 1980).

Second, in-depth structured interviews were conducted with key informants — including pesantren leaders, administrators, students' guardians, and students themselves — to capture multiple perspectives within the pesantren ecosystem. Interview guides were developed based on Almond and Verba's political culture theory, focusing on political orientations, participation patterns, and institutional responses to political plurality (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Third, documentation analysis covered institutional documents, organizational policies, meeting minutes, and correspondence related to political activities and institutional positions, providing historical context and formal institutional perspectives that complemented observational and interview data (Bowen, 2009).

Data analysis followed a systematic qualitative procedure adapted from Creswell's qualitative inquiry approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), comprising six interrelated stages. These encompassed data collection and organization, thematic classification aligned with the three research objectives, data reduction through selection and abstraction of significant information, data display through matrices and narrative descriptions, iterative interpretation refined through member checking with informants, and conclusion drawing synthesizing analytical findings into coherent responses to the research questions (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016). Throughout the analytical process, Almond and Verba's political culture theory served as the conceptual lens for interpreting kiai political orientations and participation patterns within the pesantren institutional context.

To ensure credibility and validity, methodological triangulation and data source triangulation were applied (Flick, 2018). Methodological triangulation compared findings across interview, observation, and documentation data, while source triangulation cross-verified information from informants holding different positions within the pesantren structure. Member checking procedures further confirmed the accuracy and validity of interpretations with key informants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985),

ensuring that the findings meet the standards of scientific accountability required for reputable international journal publication.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study examines the culture of political diversity among kiai at Annuqayah Pesantren through three interconnected dimensions: the factors underlying diverse political orientations among kiai, the strategies employed to sustain institutional cohesion amid political differences, and the relationship between political diversity culture and the educational values transmitted to students. The findings presented here are drawn from in-depth interviews with kiai, pesantren administrators, alumni, and students, supplemented by systematic field observation and institutional documentation.

Factors Underlying Political Diversity among Kiai at Annuqayah Pesantren

The political landscape within Annuqayah Pesantren is characterized by a remarkably broad spectrum of party affiliations. Field observations and interviews confirm that kiai at Annuqayah have been affiliated with a range of political parties including Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB), Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP), Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB), Partai Kebangkitan Ummat (PKU), Partai Keadilan (PK), and Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN). This diversity is not incidental but reflects deeply embedded structural, theological, and social factors that have shaped the political orientations of Annuqayah's kiai across generations.

The primary factor driving this diversity, as consistently identified across interviews, is the difference in ideological interpretation among individual kiai. Because Annuqayah encompasses multiple semi-autonomous sub-pesantren units, each led by kiai with their own scholarly lineages and intellectual orientations, it is unsurprising that their readings of the relationship between Islamic teaching and political commitment differ. One senior kiai explained this dynamic in the following terms:

"Perbedaan pilihan politik di sini bukan karena tidak kompak. Tapi karena masing-masing punya pemahaman yang berbeda tentang bagaimana cara berdakwah melalui politik. Yang penting tujuannya sama: kemaslahatan umat." (KH. Muhsin Amir, interview, 2023)

This testimony reflects a broader pattern identified across multiple informants: the diversity of political orientations at Annuqayah is understood by the kiai themselves not as a manifestation of internal division but as a natural consequence of the diversity of scholarly interpretation within a large and historically rich pesantren complex. The theological foundation for political engagement among Annuqayah's kiai is rooted in the

Sunni tradition's understanding of the relationship between religion (*din*) and governance (*siyasa*) as inseparable domains of Islamic life. Political participation is understood not as a concession to worldly pragmatism but as a legitimate and indeed obligatory expression of the kiai's responsibility toward the welfare of the Muslim community.

A secondary factor identified in the data is the variation in information received by individual kiai, particularly through their different organizational networks, alumni relationships, and exposure to national political developments. Several informants noted that kiai whose networks are more closely tied to particular party structures tend to develop stronger partisan affinities, while those with broader and more diverse networks are more likely to maintain flexible political orientations. This observation is illustrated by the well-known account of KH. Warits, who during the PPP national congress indicated that his continued affiliation with PPP was contingent on the election of Hamzah Haz as party chairman — and that he would consider moving to PKB if a different candidate prevailed. As one alumnus recalled:

"Kiai Warits waktu itu bilang, kalau Hamzah Haz yang menang di muktamar, beliau tetap di PPP. Kalau bukan, beliau akan pindah ke PKB. Itu menunjukkan bahwa beliau tidak fanatik pada partai, tapi pada nilai." (Alumni informant, interview, 2023)

A pattern of social conformity (*ikut-ikutan*) also emerges as a contributing factor, particularly among younger or less politically experienced kiai who align their political choices with those of respected seniors within their immediate network. While this pattern is acknowledged by informants as a less principled basis for political affiliation, it is understood within the pesantren as a natural expression of the hierarchical relational culture that characterizes pesantren life more broadly. Kiai Muhsin Amir noted that political diversity at Annuqayah is permissible as long as affiliations remain within the framework of Islamic-based parties, consistent with the values and expectations of the pesantren's founding elders.

The institutional structure of Annuqayah itself constitutes an enabling condition for this political diversity. Unlike more centralized pesantren in which the authority of a single founding kiai imposes uniformity across all dimensions of institutional life, Annuqayah has progressively decentralized its governance, delegating significant authority to individual sub-pesantren leaders. This structural openness creates the institutional space within which diverse political orientations can coexist without generating institutional rupture. As one senior administrator observed, the commitment of all kiai to placing Annuqayah's institutional interests above personal or partisan interests functions as the foundational norm that contains political diversity within manageable bounds.

Strategies for Sustaining Institutional Cohesion amid Political Diversity

Despite the breadth of political affiliations represented among Annuqayah's kiai, the pesantren has maintained a remarkable degree of inter-kiai harmony and institutional solidarity throughout its history. Field observations consistently confirm the absence of significant inter-kiai conflict attributable to political differences, a finding that invites careful examination of the cultural and institutional mechanisms through which this cohesion is sustained.

The most consistently identified mechanism is the cultivation of *silaturahmi* — the Islamic practice of maintaining and renewing social bonds — as a deliberate institutional strategy for managing political difference. Annuqayah has institutionalized *silaturahmi* through a structured program of regular gatherings, including weekly meetings after Friday prayers, open-house events following Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, monthly alumni assemblies held on a rotating basis at alumni homes, and informal visits (*sowan*) by alumni to kiai. These occasions function not merely as social rituals but as structured opportunities for the renewal of relational bonds that transcend political differences. One pesantren administrator described the dynamics of these gatherings with particular vividness:

"Kalau pertemuan setelah Jumat itu kebetulan pas habis pilkada, biasanya yang tadi aktif di salah satu calon itu datang tapi duduknya di pojok. Tapi pertemuan berikutnya sudah bisa berbaur lagi. Silaturahmi itu yang menyembuhkan."
(Pesantren administrator, interview, 2023)

This testimony captures the restorative social function of *silaturahmi* as practiced at Annuqayah — not a denial of political tension but a structured space within which tension is gradually dissolved through the renewal of personal bonds and shared institutional identity. The collective commitment to safeguarding Annuqayah's institutional reputation (*nama baik*) functions as a complementary mechanism, establishing a shared norm against public criticism of fellow kiai on political grounds and ensuring that political disagreements remain contained within the boundaries of internal discourse rather than becoming sources of public institutional embarrassment.

The exercise of contextual wisdom (*kebijaksanaan*) in responding to political differences emerges as a third significant strategy. Kiai Affan articulated this principle clearly during interview:

"Politik itu pada dasarnya mulia kalau tujuannya mulia. Cara menyikapinya juga harus mulia. Tidak bisa dengan cara yang kasar atau memaksakan kehendak. Harus bijak, harus elegan." (Kiai Affan, interview, 2023)

This orientation toward principled wisdom (*hikmah*) in political engagement reflects the broader Sunni political ethos that characterizes Annuqayah's institutional culture — an ethos that prioritizes the search for middle ground, the avoidance of conflict, and the

maintenance of communal harmony over the pursuit of partisan victory. The provision of mutual support for kiai engaged in practical politics, regardless of their party affiliation, constitutes a further expression of this ethos, communicating an institutional message that political diversity is legitimate and that individual kiai pursuing political careers do so with the collective blessing and support of the pesantren community.

Political Diversity Culture and Educational Values Transmitted to Students

The relationship between the culture of political diversity among kiai at Annuqayah and the educational values transmitted to students is both direct and consequential. Rather than shielding students from awareness of the kiai's diverse political orientations, Annuqayah's approach treats this diversity as a living pedagogical resource — a concrete demonstration of the values of tolerance, moderation, and principled civic engagement that the pesantren seeks to cultivate in its students and alumni.

The historical roots of this pedagogical approach are traced by all informants to the founding figure of Kiai Ilyas Syarqawi, whose response to the invitation of Kiai Wahid Hasyim to support the establishment of Partai NU established the template for Annuqayah's distinctive political culture. Rather than rejecting Kiai Wahid Hasyim's invitation outright — despite his own continued commitment to Masyumi — Kiai Ilyas offered a creative solution, asking his relatives and associates to support the PNU effort in Sumenep on his behalf. As multiple informants confirmed:

"Sikap Kiai Ilyas itu yang menjadi cikal bakal demokratisasi politik di Annuqayah. Beliau tidak memaksakan kehendaknya, tapi juga tidak menolak mentah-mentah. Itu yang diteladani sampai sekarang." (Senior kiai informant, interview, 2023)

This founding precedent established openness to political diversity as a core institutional value, transmitted across generations through both explicit teaching and the lived example of senior kiai. The Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah principles that constitute the ideological foundation of Annuqayah's educational mission — specifically the attitudes of *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawassut* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), and *i'tidal* (justice) — provide the normative framework within which this political diversity is understood and practiced.

The attitude of *tasamuh* is visibly expressed in the acceptance of diverse party affiliations among kiai and alumni, including cases where alumni active in parties not typically associated with pesantren networks — such as PDI-P — are received by senior kiai with counsel and blessing rather than condemnation, provided they maintain their commitment to pesantren values and Aswaja principles. The attitude of *tawassut* is reflected in the consistently moderate and non-doctrinaire approach to party affiliation among Annuqayah's kiai, who understand political parties as vehicles for *dakwah* and public service rather than as ends in themselves. The attitude of *tawazun* is expressed in the careful balance maintained between political engagement and institutional

educational priorities, ensuring that the kiai's political activities enhance rather than compromise the pesantren's educational mission. The attitude of *i'tidal* found concrete expression during the 2019 Sumenep regional election, when alumni who had actively supported KH. Sholahuddin's candidacy chose to stand down quietly and await guidance from pesantren leaders when the political situation changed — a collective act of principled restraint that exemplifies the civic maturity Annuqayah seeks to cultivate.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study offer significant contributions to the scholarly understanding of political culture within pesantren institutions, the dynamics of religious leadership in pluralist democratic contexts, and the relationship between institutional religious education and civic value formation in Indonesia. This discussion interprets the three principal findings in light of established theoretical frameworks and recent empirical literature, identifies points of convergence and divergence with existing scholarship, and proposes conceptual refinements that emerge from the distinctive case of Annuqayah Pesantren.

Political Diversity as Institutionally Managed Resource

The first research question asks what factors generate diverse political orientations among kiai at Annuqayah Pesantren. The findings identify three principal factors — differences in ideological interpretation, variations in information received through distinct organizational networks, and patterns of social conformity — operating within an enabling institutional structure characterized by decentralized governance and a long-standing tradition of scholarly pluralism. This constellation of factors produces a form of political diversity that is neither accidental nor ungoverned, but structurally embedded and culturally managed within the norms of the pesantren community.

This finding resonates with and extends Almond and Verba's (1963) political culture framework, which provides the theoretical foundation of this study. Almond and Verba distinguished between parochial, subject, and participant political cultures, arguing that the most democratically productive societies are those that cultivate a civic culture combining elements of participation with deference to institutional authority. The political culture observed at Annuqayah represents a distinctive variant of this civic ideal — one in which active and diverse political participation coexists with sustained deference to shared institutional norms and the authority of founding exemplars. This combination is not adequately captured by any of Almond and Verba's three ideal types alone, suggesting that the Annuqayah case warrants recognition as a distinctive indigenous form of civic political culture that merits theoretical elaboration in its own right.

The theological grounding of Annuqayah's political culture in the Sunni tradition's understanding of the inseparability of religion and governance connects the findings of

this study to a broader body of literature on Islam and democracy in Southeast Asia. Hefner (2000) argued influentially that Indonesian Muslim civil society has developed a distinctive tradition of democratic engagement rooted in Islamic values of consultation (*syura*), justice (*'adl*), and public welfare (*maslaha*). The findings of this study strongly corroborate this argument at the institutional level, demonstrating how these values are not merely articulated as abstract principles but operationalized through concrete institutional practices and relational norms within the pesantren. More recently, Mietzner (2020) has documented the increasing complexity of the relationship between Islamic institutions and democratic politics in post-reformasi Indonesia, noting the tension between the democratic potential of pesantren-based civic culture and the risks of elite capture and partisan instrumentalization of religious authority. The Annuqayah case offers a qualified but instructive counter-example to the more pessimistic dimensions of Mietzner's account, demonstrating that under conditions of strong institutional norms and sustained commitment to shared values, pesantren-based political diversity can remain genuinely pluralist rather than devolving into factional competition.

The decentralized governance structure of Annuqayah emerges from the findings as a critical enabling condition for the productive management of political diversity. This finding connects to a growing body of literature on organizational resilience and institutional pluralism in religious organizations. Northouse (2019) argues that distributed leadership models — in which authority is shared across multiple figures with distinct domains of competence and influence — tend to generate greater institutional resilience than centralized models precisely because they distribute both the benefits and the risks of leadership across a broader base.

The progressive decentralization of Annuqayah's governance, which has created the institutional space within which diverse political orientations can coexist without generating fragmentation, exemplifies this principle in the specific context of pesantren leadership. Wahid (2018) makes a related observation in his analysis of pesantren adaptation in contemporary Indonesia, noting that pesantren with more flexible and distributed governance structures tend to demonstrate greater capacity for social and political adaptation without compromising their core educational identities. The Annuqayah case provides strong empirical support for this argument.

Silaturrahim as Democratic Social Capital

The second research question asks what strategies kiai at Annuqayah employ to sustain institutional cohesion amid political differences. The findings identify *silaturrahim*, the safeguarding of institutional reputation, contextual wisdom, and mutual support as the principal strategies through which inter-kiai harmony is maintained. Of these, *silaturrahim* emerges as the most institutionally significant — not

merely as a cultural practice but as a deliberately structured mechanism of democratic social capital formation.

This finding invites productive dialogue with Putnam's (2000) influential concept of social capital, particularly his distinction between bonding social capital — which strengthens ties within homogeneous groups — and bridging social capital — which builds connections across lines of difference. The *silaturrahim* practice at Annuqayah functions as a form of bridging social capital, creating regular structured occasions for the renewal of relational bonds that transcend political differences and prevent the hardening of political affiliations into social divisions. The observation that kiai who had been on opposing sides of an electoral contest would initially sit apart at post-election Friday gatherings but gradually reintegrate into the broader community through subsequent meetings illustrates with particular clarity the restorative social function of institutionalized *silaturrahim* as a mechanism for democratic conflict management.

Fukuyama (2001) argued that social trust — the generalized confidence in the reliability and good faith of fellow community members — constitutes the foundational resource of democratic civil society, and that its erosion through political polarization represents one of the most serious threats to democratic governance in contemporary societies. The *silaturrahim* practices of Annuqayah can be understood, within this framework, as a culturally specific mechanism for the continuous regeneration of social trust in the face of the centrifugal pressures of competitive electoral politics. This interpretation connects to broader comparative literature on the role of religious institutions in sustaining social cohesion and democratic civic culture. Putnam and Campbell (2010), in their landmark study of religion and American civic life, found that religiously affiliated individuals tend to demonstrate higher levels of civic engagement, social trust, and community participation than their non-affiliated counterparts — a finding that the Annuqayah case replicates and extends in the specific context of Indonesian Islamic educational institutions.

The principle of contextual wisdom (*kebijaksanaan*) that emerges from the findings as a guiding norm for kiai responses to political diversity connects to a rich tradition of Islamic ethical and political thought regarding the exercise of judgment in conditions of uncertainty and disagreement. Ibn Khaldun's concept of *'asabiyyah* — the spirit of group solidarity that sustains the cohesion of social communities — provides a classical theoretical frame for understanding how Annuqayah's kiai navigate the tension between individual political agency and collective institutional identity (Ibn Khaldun, 1377/2005).

The exercise of wisdom in political engagement, as understood by Annuqayah's kiai, is not a form of political abstention but an active and skilled practice of relational management that prioritizes the preservation of communal solidarity over the pursuit of partisan advantage. Bush (2009) makes a related observation in her study of pesantren and civil society in Indonesia, arguing that the most socially productive forms of kiai political engagement are those characterized by what she terms "principled pragmatism"

— a combination of clear ethical commitment and flexible tactical judgment that enables religious leaders to navigate complex political environments without compromising their moral authority. The findings of this study strongly corroborate and extend this argument.

Aswaja Values as Framework for Civic Education

The third research question asks how the culture of political diversity among kiai relates to the educational values transmitted to students at Annuqayah. The findings reveal a direct and consequential relationship between the lived political culture of the kiai and the civic values cultivated in students, mediated through the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah (Aswaja) principles of *tasamuh*, *tawassut*, *tawazun*, and *i'tidal* that constitute the normative backbone of Annuqayah's educational mission.

This finding contributes to a growing body of literature on the civic education potential of pesantren institutions in Indonesia. Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner (2007) argued in their landmark comparative study that pesantren represent one of the most significant and underappreciated sites of democratic civic education in the Muslim world, cultivating values of tolerance, deliberation, and community responsibility through both formal instruction and the informal socialization of communal life. The findings of this study extend this argument by demonstrating how the political behavior of kiai themselves — rather than formal classroom instruction alone — constitutes a primary vehicle for the transmission of civic values to students. When Annuqayah's kiai navigate political differences with demonstrated tolerance and principled restraint, they perform a form of living civic pedagogy that no curriculum document can fully replicate.

The role of Kiai Ilyas Syarqawi as a founding exemplar of political pluralism at Annuqayah illustrates the importance of what Bandura (1977) termed observational learning — the acquisition of values and behavioral dispositions through the observation and internalization of the conduct of respected models. The fact that all informants in this study, regardless of their generation or position within the pesantren, cited Kiai Ilyas as the foundational reference point for Annuqayah's political culture speaks to the enduring power of exemplary leadership in shaping institutional values across generations. Ladson-Billings (2014) makes a related observation in the context of culturally responsive education, arguing that the most durable forms of civic value formation are those rooted in the living traditions and exemplary figures of the learner's own community rather than in abstract universal principles imported from outside. The Annuqayah case exemplifies this principle with particular clarity, demonstrating how a single act of principled wisdom by a founding leader — Kiai Ilyas's creative response to Kiai Wahid Hasyim's political invitation — can generate a cultural template that shapes institutional political behavior across decades.

The four Aswaja attitudes identified in the findings — *tasamuh*, *tawassut*, *tawazun*, and *i'tidal* — constitute what this study proposes to conceptualize as an indigenous

Islamic framework for democratic civic education. This framework is distinctive in several important respects. Unlike Western liberal democratic citizenship education, which tends to ground civic values in universal rational principles abstracted from particular cultural and religious traditions (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004), the Annuqayah model grounds civic values in the specific theological and ethical commitments of the Sunni Islamic tradition as interpreted through the pesantren cultural framework. This does not make it parochial or exclusionary; on the contrary, the findings demonstrate that the Aswaja framework generates genuinely pluralist and democratically productive civic orientations that extend well beyond the boundaries of the pesantren community. Rather, it suggests that culturally grounded civic education — education that draws on the specific moral and intellectual resources of learners' own traditions — may be more effective in generating durable civic commitments than approaches that seek to cultivate civic values through the imposition of culturally decontextualized universal principles.

This proposition connects to broader comparative literature on religion, education, and democracy. Callan (1997) argued that democratic civic education must navigate the tension between the cultivation of shared civic commitments and respect for the particular cultural and religious identities of diverse communities — a tension that the Annuqayah model manages with particular skill by grounding shared civic values in the specific theological tradition that all members of the pesantren community share. Feinberg (2014) makes a related point in his comparative analysis of religious education and democratic citizenship, arguing that religious educational institutions can make distinctive and valuable contributions to democratic civic culture precisely because they are able to draw on deep wells of moral and communal motivation that secular civic education often lacks. The findings of this study provide strong empirical support for both of these arguments in the specific context of Indonesian Islamic education.

The finding that Annuqayah's political diversity culture has not compromised but rather enriched the pesantren's educational mission points toward a broader theoretical proposition regarding the relationship between institutional pluralism and educational quality. Institutions that successfully manage internal diversity — whether ideological, political, or cultural — tend to develop stronger capacities for critical thinking, perspective-taking, and principled judgment than those that maintain internal uniformity through the suppression of difference. The Annuqayah case suggests that this proposition holds with particular force in the context of Islamic educational institutions, where the cultivation of *ijtihad* — independent scholarly reasoning — as a core intellectual value creates a natural affinity between intellectual pluralism and educational excellence. Future research should examine whether the model of politically pluralist civic education identified at Annuqayah is replicated in other major pesantren institutions in Indonesia, and whether its civic educational outcomes can be systematically measured and compared across different institutional contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that political diversity among kiai at Annuqayah Pesantren constitutes not a source of institutional fragility but a culturally managed resource that contributes positively to both the pesantren's internal cohesion and its broader educational mission. Three principal conclusions emerge from the findings.

The diverse political orientations of Annuqayah's kiai are generated by a combination of differences in ideological interpretation, variations in organizational information networks, and patterns of social conformity, all operating within a decentralized governance structure that creates institutional space for pluralist political engagement. Crucially, this diversity is bounded by a shared commitment to Islamic-based political values and to the primacy of pesantren institutional interests over personal or partisan considerations — a norm that prevents political diversity from degenerating into factional conflict.

The strategies through which Annuqayah's kiai sustain institutional cohesion amid political differences — principally the institutionalization of silaturahmi, the collective safeguarding of institutional reputation, the exercise of contextual wisdom, and the provision of mutual support — constitute a coherent and culturally grounded model of democratic conflict management. These strategies function not by suppressing political difference but by embedding it within relational structures and shared normative commitments strong enough to contain its potentially divisive effects.

The relationship between Annuqayah's political diversity culture and its educational values is direct and generative. The Aswaja principles of *tasamuh*, *tawassut*, *tawazun*, and *i'tidal*, as embodied in the lived political conduct of the kiai, provide students with a concrete and culturally rooted framework for democratic civic engagement that extends well beyond the pesantren into the broader social and political life of the community.

This study proposes the concept of an indigenous Islamic framework for democratic civic education as a contribution to the theoretical literature on religion, education, and democratic citizenship. Future research should examine the replicability of this model across diverse pesantren contexts and assess its long-term civic educational outcomes through longitudinal investigation.

DAFTAR PUSTAKA

- Almond, G. A., & Verba, S. (1963). *The civic culture: Political attitudes and democracy in five nations*. Princeton University Press.
- Almond, G. A., & Verba, S. (1989). *The civic culture revisited*. Sage Publications.
- Angrosino, M. (2007). *Doing ethnographic and observational research*. Sage Publications.
- Azra, A., Afrianty, D., & Hefner, R. W. (2007). Pesantren and madrasa: Muslim schools and national ideals in Indonesia. In R. W. Hefner & M. Q. Zaman (Eds.),

- Schooling Islam: The culture and politics of modern Muslim education (pp. 172–198). Princeton University Press.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Prentice Hall.
- Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation? *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(13), 1802–1811. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316654870>
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Brinkmann, S., & Kvale, S. (2015). *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Bruinessen, M. van. (2015). *Kitab kuning, pesantren dan tarekat*. Gading Publishing.
- Bush, R. (2009). *Nahdlatul Ulama and the struggle for power within Islam and politics in Indonesia*. ISEAS.
- Callan, E. (1997). *Creating citizens: Political education and liberal democracy*. Oxford University Press.
- Carter, N., Bryant-Lukosius, D., DiCenso, A., Blythe, J., & Neville, A. J. (2014). The use of triangulation in qualitative research. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 41(5), 545–547. <https://doi.org/10.1188/14.ONF.545-547>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Dalton, R. J., & Welzel, C. (Eds.). (2014). *The civic culture transformed: From allegory to allegiance*. Cambridge University Press.
- Denzin, N. K. (2017). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. Transaction Publishers.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Dhofier, Z. (1982). *Tradisi pesantren: Studi tentang pandangan hidup kyai*. LP3ES.
- Dhofier, Z. (2015). *Tradisi pesantren: Studi pandangan hidup kyai dan visinya mengenai masa depan Indonesia* (Edisi revisi). LP3ES.
- Feinberg, W. (2014). *For goodness sake: Religious schools and education for democratic citizenry*. Routledge.

- Fealy, G., & Hooker, V. (Eds.). (2006). *Voices of Islam in Southeast Asia: A contemporary sourcebook*. ISEAS.
- Flick, U. (2018). *An introduction to qualitative research* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Fukuyama, F. (2001). Social capital, civil society and development. *Third World Quarterly*, 22(1), 7–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/713701144>
- Hefner, R. W. (2000). *Civil Islam: Muslims and democratization in Indonesia*. Princeton University Press.
- Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (2002). *The qualitative researcher's companion*. Sage Publications.
- Ibn Khaldun. (2005). *Muqaddimah: An introduction to history* (F. Rosenthal, Trans.). Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1377)
- Inglehart, R., & Welzel, C. (2005). *Modernization, cultural change, and democracy: The human development sequence*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kawulich, B. B. (2005). Participant observation as a data collection method. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 6(2), Article 43. <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-6.2.466>
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: A.k.a. the remix. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(1), 74–84. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.84.1.p2rj131485484751>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Mietzner, M. (2020). Authoritarian innovations in Indonesia: Electoral narrowing, identity politics and executive illiberalism. *Democratization*, 27(6), 1021–1036. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2019.1704266>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Mulhall, A. (2003). In the field: Notes on observation in qualitative research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 41(3), 306–313. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.2003.02514.x>
- Northouse, P. G. (2019). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (8th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health*, 42(5), 533–544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

- Prior, L. (2003). *Using documents in social research*. Sage Publications.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon & Schuster.
- Putnam, R. D., & Campbell, D. E. (2010). *American grace: How religion divides and unites us*. Simon & Schuster.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2011). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Seidman, I. (2019). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (4th ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Silverman, D. (2016). *Qualitative research* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Sitruul Arsy, A. (2000). *Annuqayah: Sejarah dan perkembangannya*. Pesantren Annuqayah Press.
- Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant observation*. Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Tracy, S. J. (2010). Qualitative quality: Eight "big-tent" criteria for excellent qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(10), 837–851. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800410383121>
- Tracy, S. J. (2019). *Qualitative research methods: Collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact* (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Turmudi, E. (2004). *Struggling for the umma: Changing leadership roles of kiai in Jombang, East Java*. ANU Press.
- Wahid, D. (2018). Nurturing the salafi manhaj: A study of salafi pesantrens in contemporary Indonesia. *Wacana: Journal of the Humanities of Indonesia*, 19(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.17510/wacana.v19i1.637>
- Wahid, M. (2019). *Politik kiai pesantren*. IRCiSoD.
- Westheimer, J., & Kahne, J. (2004). What kind of citizen? The politics of educating for democracy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 41(2), 237–269. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312041002237>