



RESPONSE OF BOARDING SCHOOLS TO COVID-19: DYNAMICS AND THEOLOGICAL STRUGGLES OF BOARDING SCHOOLS IN MANDAILING NATAL

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Keywords:

Boarding School,
Covid-19, Mandailing
Natal

Abstract

The study of Islamic boarding schools has its dynamics and uniqueness. As an Islamic educational institution, the response of Islamic boarding schools to the issue of Covid-19 has had a sizable social impact in shaping the mindset and religious actions of the surrounding community. This study reveals the dynamics and theological struggles within Islamic boarding schools in response to the policy of handling Covid-19 in Mandailing Natal. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach, the data informants are residents of Islamic boarding schools consisting of leaders, clerics, students, and the community around the Islamic boarding school. The results of this study found that there were three styles of thinking in each Islamic boarding school in response to the handling of Covid-19, namely conservative, semi-conservative, and non-conservative. In general, Islamic boarding schools accept government policies in dealing with Covid-19, but in practice, Islamic boarding schools tend to ignore the rules. The clerics who are pro in handling Covid-19, provide theological enlightenment to the students and the surrounding community. On the other hand, the clerics who are resistant to handling Covid-19, give the view that Covid-19 is a game by the political elite in government. However, in this case, the resistant kyai did not provoke the students and the community.

Vol. 6, No. 01, 2023

 [10.20414/sangkep.v2i2](https://doi.org/10.20414/sangkep.v2i2).

Submitted: May 20th, 2023

Accepted: June 17th, 2023



A. INTRODUCTION

Since the Covid-19 pandemic hit Indonesia in 2019, life activities on various lines, both at the central and regional levels, have seemed paralyzed (Agustino, 2020). Covid-19 has caused an economic crisis (Novika, 2021). This outbreak is known to have first emerged from Wuhan, China. Its emergence is a threat to the health defense of every country. Its rapid spread has seriously threatened the world (Abdullah, 2020). The high mobility of the world community makes it easy for Covid-19 to infect everyone. Indonesia first learned of exposure to this virus through a mother and child. They have contact with foreign nationals (Kompas.com, 2020). Sometime later, news about Indonesian citizens being positive for Covid-19 increased dramatically in every region. Mandailing Natal is no exception. Statistically, the number of residents who tested positive for Covid-19 fluctuated from June 2020 to 2022 (Antaranews.com, 2020).

The wide spread of Covid-19 has made policies in the economic, political, cultural, and educational sectors change. So various government regulations to control the spread of Covid-19. The government has imposed large social restrictions (PSBB), lockdowns, semi-lockdowns, and regional quarantines, as well as various other policies. Rules were issued to keep the country running productively by implementing a work-from-home system. Specifically in the education sector. The government has established a distance learning system to avoid direct contact which can cause transmission (SKB 4 Menteri, 2020).

After three years, the spread of Covid-19 has not been completely resolved. This is inseparable from several factors. The first factor is structural. Namely the readiness and ability of the government. The second is cultural, namely people's awareness to follow the rules. And third, the societal paradigm in assessing Covid-19 on different theological grounds (Syarif, Mughni, & Hannan, 2021). This is evident from the emergence of various attitudes from religious leaders who are members of Islamic boarding schools. Some of them have shown resistance to handling Covid-19. One party refuses and the other party is accommodative to the rules set by the government. This is what makes researchers feel the need to explore the dynamics that occur in Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal.

In general, Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal are known to have *ahlussunnah waljama'ah* teachings. Organizationally, it is affiliated with Nahdatul Ulama (NU). The founders and kiai are graduates of Islamic boarding schools. The majority are alumni of the Musthafawiyah Islamic boarding school. The oldest Islamic boarding school in Sumatra (Rasyidin, 2017). The clerics who teach are some graduates from Mecca, Medina, and some from Egypt (Salam, 2022). However, what is interesting is that the existence of Islamic boarding schools in Madina gave birth to various styles of religious thought in responding to Covid-19. Regarding this pandemic phenomenon, Islamic boarding schools in

Madina are ideologically divided into three groups, namely conservative, semi-conservative, and non-conservative.

First, conservative, this group views Covid-19 as a political game and nothing to be afraid of. During the pandemic, the learning process was carried out as usual without following existing regulations. In fact, in their activities, they do not follow the health protocol according to the standards set by the government. This group tends to be closed. In thought, contrasting the phenomenon of covid-19 with religion. Covid-19 is opposed by a theological approach. Second, semi-conservative, this group practically follows government regulations. However, it is theologically resistant to the emergence of covid-19. Some of them call the issue of Covid-19 a political game. The three are non-conservative, this group generally responds wisely to the Covid-19 phenomenon. The way they do this is to make religious propositions the basis for educating students and the community. Promote healthy living and view Covid-19 as a dangerous virus. However, according to researchers' observations, Islamic boarding schools, which belong to the non-conservative group, have not fully followed health protocols properly.

Sociologically, the resistance of Islamic boarding schools in responding to the Covid-19 phenomenon indicates that there is still a tradition of anachronism among the kyai. That is viewing religion as something that must be understood strictly and emphasizing only textual understanding. Adhering to old opinions and old traditions (Latif, 2019). Such a religious approach strongly triggers a conservative style among Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools ignore Covid-19 as a pandemic that threatens national health. On the other hand, Islamic boarding schools are not able to embody religious goals for the development of science. In this case, Covid-19 is something that threatens the safety of the soul (*hifdz al-nafs*).

The urgency of this research was carried out with three fundamental objectives. First, we want to map the mindset of Islamic boarding schools in responding to Covid-19. Second, we want to deepen the polarization of views and practices imposed by Islamic boarding schools. The second reason is that the people of Mandailing Natal believe more in religious figures than others. This is reinforced by Islamic boarding schools as centers of community education in studying various issues, such as law, social, politics, and society. Thus, Islamic boarding schools are the spearhead of public trust in the dangers of Covid-19. Third, the contribution of this research will be directed at explaining the dynamics of thought between clerics in responding to the COVID-19 outbreak that hit Indonesia. On the other hand, this research will strengthen other research, that the influence of the kyai in Islamic boarding schools is very large in shaping people's behavior

B. METHODS

This research is field research, with qualitative descriptive data types. The research locations are in the Mandailing Natal district, namely the Musthafawiyah, Darul Ikhlas, and Roihanul Jannah Islamic boarding schools. The determination of this location was chosen based on the various paradigms that exist in Islamic boarding schools in response to Covid-19. Sources of research data are residents of Islamic boarding schools, consisting of leaders, teachers, and students, then the people who are in the Islamic boarding school environment were selected by purposive sampling (Sugiyono, 2013). Data collection techniques were carried out through several stages, namely first, observation, interviews, and document study. Then for the validity of the data using triangulation techniques, which consist of triangulation of data sources, triangulation of data collection techniques and time triangulation. The three triangulations that researchers use to ensure the correctness of the data obtained. At the data analysis stage, the researcher presented the data, reduced the data, analyzed the data, and drew conclusions (Sugiyono, 2013).

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dynamics of Covid-19 in Mandailing Natal

The first known case of Covid-19 in Indonesia occurred on March 2, 2020, in Depok, West Java. About two people, namely a mother and a child. They were previously in contact with the Japanese. A few days later, on March 10, 2020, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus sent a letter to the Indonesian president declaring a national emergency over the Covid-19 outbreak (Sabiila, 2022). One month after it was declared, on April 10, 2020, the spread of Covid-19 had reached all provinces of Indonesia. At that time, there were 3,512 positive cases of Covid-19 (Sabiila, 2022). Thus, through Presidential Decree (Keppres) Number 7 of 2020 a Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling Covid-19 was formed.

Covid-19 at that time became a global pandemic. Its spread is quite alarming for national health. As a result, the government must work hard to suppress the spread of Covid-19. The government is trying to issue policies so that all citizens practice social distancing. This policy diverts people's activities from outside the home to their respective homes, both office work and works outside the office.

The Indonesian government, in this case, is not firm in implementing policies for handling Covid-19. This can be seen from the number of violations committed. People are not disciplined and violate social distancing rules. Worse, not a few people within the government were involved in the violation (MPI, 2021). This indicates that government officials are resistant to Covid-19. Some of

them think that Covid-19 is engineered to make a profit. Some of them build "religious" arguments to strengthen this allegation.

This reality is experienced by the people of Mandailing Natal. Judging from the number of positive cases of Covid-19, Mandailing Natal is not a severe area compared to other areas such as South Tapanuli. Data on the number of confirmed positives as of October 1, 2020, there were 79 people (Juraidi & Holik, 2020). By the end of 2021, cumulatively the people of Mandailing Natal had confirmed positive for Covid-19 as many as 561 (Humas, 2021). Meanwhile, at the beginning of 2022, 41 people were confirmed positive for Covid-19 (Redaksi, 2022). This data shows that the covid-19 cases in the Mandailing Natal district experienced quite high turbulence from 2020 to 2022. In 2021 cases of the spread of covid-19 in Mandailing Natal caught the attention of the public. This is due to the emergence of fake news about Covid-19. There was an error by health workers in inputting patient data that were confirmed positive for Covid-19 (Suhardiman, 2021). The position of Mandailing Natal is in the level 4 category, which results in restrictions on community activities.

From a socio-religious perspective, the Mandailing Natal community can be categorized as a religious community (Rohman, Kasman, & Mukhlis, 2021). Supported by the many Islamic boarding schools built in the middle of the village. Daily community activities are very close to students. The religious knowledge of the Mandailing Natal community generally refers to kiai in Islamic boarding schools. These kyai became the main role models in religious matters. Religious knowledge is conveyed through recitation at the taklim assembly.

Since the issue of Covid-19 has infected the people of Mandailing Natal, public trust in the truth of Covid-19 is generally quite high. But his actions do not reflect the same. When the Covid-19 case reached a high level, people continued to carry out their daily activities as usual. The market remains plenty to visit. Schools and Islamic boarding schools are generally still operating normally. As if there was no emergency.

This reality occurs due to strong cultural and structural constraints. From a cultural point of view, this is reflected in the habitual attitude of underestimating every issue that develops, both at the national and international levels. This view states that the problems experienced by urban communities will not have a major effect on rural communities. They relate this to previous major issues, such as government politics, economics, and other social issues. From this trivial attitude, some people do not comply with the health protocol provisions set by the local government. Then, from a structural perspective, it is evident from the government's inconsistency in carrying out existing regulations. This can be seen from the lack of firmness in handling health protocol violators. Both from the ranks of government and those carried out by the community. It is known from the regional assembly representative council (DPRD) that they refuse to be given

the vaccine (Nasution, 2021). This is an illustration that the understanding of the truth of Covid-19 still has its pros and cons.

Existence of Islamic Boarding Schools and Handling of Covid-19 in Mandailing Natal

The role of Islamic boarding schools during the Covid-19 pandemic became very strategic to provide the public with the correct understanding of Covid-19, especially the people who live around Islamic boarding schools. The position and role of Islamic boarding schools in this regard can be seen from the role of the kyai in giving religious lectures in society, as well as providing a deepening of religious lessons to their students. In Zamakhsari Dofier's view, kyai in Islamic boarding schools are figures who are respected and glorified by society. So that the kyai is often referred to by the community in every event and phenomenon that occurs both related to religion, culture, society, and politics (Dhofier, 2015).

In reality, there is a large Islamic boarding school that stands in the middle of people's lives that has a history that is quite firmly embedded in people's social life. But there are also growing "small" Islamic boarding schools that are just starting to show their existence amid during in people's lives. In Mandailing Natal there are several Islamic boarding schools which have had a major influence on the deeply rooted religious patterns of the community. The symbols of religiosity and the religious way of thinking of the people often follow the traditions that exist in the life of Islamic boarding schools. For example, the tradition of using white sarongs and caps (in the Mandailing language "Lobe") is an example that comes from the tradition of Islamic boarding schools. Communities from various professions, grassroots level down to officials, such as public transportation drivers, pedicab drivers, and parking attendants to office officials use "lobes" and sarongs as followers of the traditions of the surrounding Islamic boarding schools.

The tradition of wearing a sarong and a "lobe" for the people of Mandailing Natal draws it to a certain degree as a parameter of one's obedience in carrying out religious teachings. This means that if someone wants to be said to be pious then it must be reflected in the clothes he wears every day. Islamic boarding schools in this case often emphasize religious symbols, in this case wearing sarongs and "lobes" in the daily lives of their students. It has become a standard rule for every Islamic boarding school in Mandailing Natal to use "lobes" and sarongs, both inside and outside the Islamic boarding school environment. Based on the field data that the author obtained, teachers at Islamic boarding schools and senior students (generally student council) are directed to always supervise and observe the activities of the students when they leave the Islamic boarding school area to pay attention to whether they carry out activities that are not permitted by the Islamic boarding school and whether they wearing sarongs and "lobes". From this fact, it can be seen that the influence of Islamic boarding

schools is very strong in shaping the pattern of religious behavior of the surrounding community.

Judging from the roles and functions of Islamic boarding schools, there are at least two roles and functions that have a very strategic impact on society, namely the socio-religious function and the educational function (Kariyanto, 2019). The socio-religious function of Islamic boarding schools is carried out through kyai who spread da'wah amid during in society through regular recitations at village mosques. The fact that in Mandailing Natal as a whole, there are quite a lot of mosques indicates that religiously the people pay enough attention to religion. It is from these recitations at the mosque that the kyai of the Islamic boarding school deliver studies that are in accordance with the books studied at the Islamic boarding school which in the end have a major influence and shape the mindset and behavior of the community.

The next role carried out by Islamic boarding schools is to carry out educational functions. This is of course the main role of Islamic boarding schools in shaping the thinking of the students and the surrounding community. Education in Islamic boarding schools is dominated by a curriculum that uses yellow books or Arabic books without lines written by previous scholars. Generally, the authors of the books studied in Islamic boarding schools are followers of Imam Shafi'i in fiqh, following Al-Asy'ari or Al-Maturidi in monotheism and following Imam Al-Ghazali in tasawuf (Zainuddin, 2017).

To master or at least understand the thoughts contained in the books studied in Islamic boarding schools, students are required to be able to master Arabic grammatical knowledge which is called nahwu science and sharf science. Based on the data the researchers obtained, there were, and oftentimes, students in several Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal, who were always focused on learning nahwu from first grade to upper grades. This is often caused by a way of learning that is wrong and not structured properly and the teacher who teaches has not mastered it properly. So that the students then ignore other fields of science that should be mastered and studied. The role of education that is inadequate in terms of mastery of the lessons in this pesantren in turn forms a narrow understanding among the community which is represented by alumni who are spread amid during in society. So that in turn raises various responses related to issues related to religion or scientific issues that deal directly with religion, in this case, Covid-19.

In Mandailing Natal, there is the Musthafawiyah Islamic boarding school which was founded in 1912 AD. There is the Darul Ikhlas Islamic boarding school which was established in 1987, and there is the Roihanul Jannah Islamic boarding school which was founded in the early 2000s. Ideologically, the style of thought of the three Islamic boarding schools is salafiyah syafi'iyah. From this boarding school, kyai were born who preached amid during in society.

Dynamics of Islamic Boarding School Thought in Mandailing Natal

Since the announcement of the Covid-19 case in Mandailing Natal by the local government and the issuance of an appeal to carry out the distance learning process (Kementerian Pendidikan, 2020), Islamic boarding schools in the Mandailing Natal area, in this case, Musthafawiyah, have taken a stance to continue carrying out face-to-face learning activities. The boarding school reasoned that the students were not allowed to leave the boarding school complex, to maintain relationships with other people. From the beginning, students were not justified in using communication tools in the form of mobile phones, so it would be difficult to carry out the learning process if it was carried out remotely or online (Fahmi, 2015). However, the Islamic boarding school is ready to follow all rules related to implementing health protocols, such as providing water and soap to wash hands before entering class, and ordering clerics and students to wear masks. Then after that the Islamic boarding school appealed to the kyai and students to take part in the vaccination program.

In terms of learning, the Musthafawiyah Islamic boarding school does not seem to have experienced any changes and obstacles in carrying out the learning process as usual, even amidst people's concerns about the spread of the coronavirus. This illustrates that Islamic boarding schools look rigid in carrying out the learning process. Islamic boarding schools have chosen to survive the current situation even though nationally the government has made it mandatory for every educational institution to carry out online learning for the safety and health of the nation.

The existence of Islamic boarding schools in maintaining their position to carry out the face-to-face learning process amid the outbreak of Covid-19 can be understood because of the anachronistic attitude possessed by Islamic boarding schools, namely the perspective that maintains old opinions (Azizah & Armoyu, 2021). Islamic boarding schools in this case tend to be closed to new problems that are contextual and tend to deny a truth obtained based on a new approach, in this case based on scientific and technological findings. That way, everything that has become an Islamic boarding school tradition is always maintained firmly.

Covid-19 as a disease outbreak that has been tested for medical truth and has even been reported nationally tends to be faced with a traditional perspective, namely responding to it based on belief without a clear foundation. The invisible Covid-19 has made the kyai and leaders of Islamic boarding schools pay less attention to how to deal with it optimally. However, institutionally, Islamic boarding schools state that they provide support to the government in tackling the problem of the spread of Covid-19. The Islamic boarding school symbolically accommodates the health protocol campaign by placing banners on the dangers of Covid-19 in the Islamic boarding school area, providing containers for washing hands in every office and several teachers wearing masks.

Not much different from the Musthafawiyah Islamic boarding school, two other Islamic boarding schools, namely Roihanul Jannah and Darul Ikhlas, institutionally also stated that they support the government in efforts to deal with the spread of Covid-19. However, in practice, these two Islamic boarding schools continue to carry out the learning process amid the rampant spread of Covid-19.

At the beginning of the outbreak of the Covid-19 case, the Roihanul Jannah Islamic boarding school temporarily closed its students for three months. After considering several parties related to the Covid-19 handling task force in Mandailing Natal and adding to parents' requests to ask the Islamic boarding school to carry out face-to-face learning processes, the Islamic boarding school is willing to call back its students to start studying at the Islamic boarding school directly. Meanwhile, the situation was still not normal.

At the start of the outbreak of the Covid-19 case, the Roihanul Jannah Islamic Boarding School had closed its students for three months. After considering several parties related to the Covid-19 handling task force at Mandailing Natal and adding to the parent's request to ask the Islamic boarding school to carry out a face-to-face learning process, the Islamic boarding school is willing to call back its students to start learning at the Islamic boarding school directly, even though at that time the situation was still not normal.

As a boarding school that is younger than the Musthafawiyah boarding school, the Roihanul Jannah Islamic boarding school in the ideological aspect tends to be "oriented" to the Musthafawiyah Islamic boarding school. This is understandable because almost seventy percent of the kyai who teaches at the Islamic boarding school are graduates of the Musthafawiyah Islamic boarding school. Even some of its leaders are graduates of the Mustafawiyah Islamic boarding school. This was also emphasized by the chairman of the Roihanul Jannah Islamic boarding school as follows:

"This Islamic boarding school tends to follow the more senior Musthafawiyah Islamic boarding schools in issues related to policies on global and national issues, as well as issues related to thinking because teachers at Musthafawiyah are known to be more experts and experienced in face problems in people's lives" (Arifin, 2022).

Meanwhile, the Darul Ikhlas Islamic boarding school at the start of the outbreak of the Covid-19 case continued to carry out the learning process as usual. The geographical position of the Darul Ikhlas Islamic boarding school is an area that is prone to the entry of Covid-19 and its spread to the students. This is due to the position of Islamic boarding schools which are in the middle of densely populated settlements and close to the city. Not to mention in terms of supervision, Islamic boarding schools often concede in controlling students who go in and out of Islamic boarding schools to residential areas. In addition, parents often visit their children who are studying at Islamic boarding schools without seeming to be strict about maintaining health protocols.

Unlike the Roihanul Jannah Islamic boarding school which tends to follow Musthafawiyah, the Darul Ikhlas Islamic boarding school is a little looser in terms of ideology, in this case, the Darul Ikhlas Islamic boarding school does not appear to have strict requirements for teachers teaching at it to be affiliated with the Nahdlatul Ulama organization or follow an imam Shafi'i. Based on the data, the researchers found that at the Darul Ikhlas Islamic boarding school, some of the teachers were affiliated with the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah organizations, and politically some were affiliated with PKS and PKB. In fact, on several occasions, young teachers who came to do community service at this Islamic boarding school were known to be affiliated with Salafi. Based on this reality, the Darul Ikhlas Islamic boarding school has significant diversity in responding to Covid-19. However, institutionally, the Darul Ikhlas Islamic boarding school continues to state that the Islamic boarding school is ready to support the government in handling Covid-19. Even though in practice it is not fully by following perunder the rules that have been set.

Based on the researcher's analysis of the reality that runs in the three Islamic boarding schools mentioned above, the position of Islamic boarding schools can be categorized as semi-conservative Islamic boarding schools. Where Islamic boarding schools institutionally state that they support the government in handling the spread of Covid-19, but in practice it is not implemented properly in the field. Some say studying is better than having to take time off because it is to avoid Covid-19 whose whereabouts are unclear.

Islamic Boarding Schools and the Pros and Cons of Handling Covid-19 in Mandailing Natal

The existence of Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal has links and affiliations with Islamic organizations. Islamic organizations in these two regions are dominated by Nahdlatul 'Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah. The attitudes of NU and Muhammadiyah as Islamic mass organizations are responsive to the issue of Covid-19. Support the government openly in dealing with the spread of Covid-19 in various sectors, especially in the education sector (Bastomi & Kasdi, 2022).

Although genealogically almost every Islamic boarding school in Mandailing Natal was originally affiliated with NU, due to the popularity of Islamic boarding schools which were quite good in the eyes of the community, not a few people outside NU included their children as students in NU-based Islamic boarding schools. There are even people outside NU who become educators at this Islamic boarding school. This happened based on the information obtained because in the early 2000s Islamic boarding schools did not focus on organizational issues. And indeed there is no limit for everyone to enter as a student from various organizational backgrounds. So that in the end from the kyai's point of view, Islamic boarding schools have their dynamics in responding to every problem that develops in society.

Islamic boarding schools as Islamic educational institutions theoretically have a great influence on people's lives, coupled with the existence of a fairly wide and strong network of Islamic boarding schools that extends to the government. One important factor is the support of alumni who are spread across various government sectors (Hidayat, Rizal, & Fahrudin, 2018). So Islamic boarding schools have considerable social capital in providing enlightenment to the community. In this case, the Islamic boarding school invites to avoid the spread of Covid-19.

However, apart from the strategic social role of Islamic boarding schools in people's lives, there are still problems in thinking among the kyai in addressing the issue of Covid-19. The typology of Islamic boarding school thought when examined in depth at the kyai level is divided into three schools of thought, namely conservative, semi-conservative, and non-conservative. This style of thinking is essentially born from different learning experiences. However, it can be emphasized here, that institutionally, Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal generally claim to support the government in dealing with the spread of Covid-19. However, most do not display attitudes and behaviors that reflect support. For more details, how the typology of thinking that occurs in Islamic boarding schools can be explained in the following description.

Conservative Attitude

Conservative language is defined as an attitude that maintains old prevailing circumstances, habits, and traditions (Sugono & al, 2008). In the context of this study, conservative is understood as an attitude that rejects the development of new understandings of religion, social and political developments. Thus, a conservative person closes himself to change, and holds on to old opinions, subjective understandings, or attitudes that tend to reject new knowledge.

Islamic boarding schools that are classified as having a tradition of conservative religious thought are resistant to government policies in dealing with Covid-19. Especially on the issue of restrictions on the implementation of worship. For them, death is a decree of God that has existed since time immemorial. Restricting or even forbidding people to worship at the mosque is a violation of the commands of Allah SWT and His religious teachings.

When investigated on the ground, Islamic boarding schools which have a tradition of conservative thinking consider that Covid-19 is a political game by the government. State games that aim to undermine the religious life of Muslims. For them, regulations issued by the government to limit the movement of social and economic life, actually symbolize the weakness of faith in Allah SWT.

The conservatism shown by Islamic boarding schools in Madina is reflected by their reluctance to follow government regulations regarding learning regulations and health protocols. At a time when the Covid-19 case was rampant, as central and regional government circulars were issued that prohibited activities

outside the home, Islamic boarding schools continued to carry out face-to-face learning as usual regardless of the circulars that had been issued.

Semi conservative

The meaning of the term semi-conservative in this study refers to Islamic boarding school policies that are not serious in responding to Covid-19. Islamic boarding schools have a dualistic attitude, namely between supporting the government and being reluctant to implement health protocol rules.

The semi-conservative attitude of Islamic boarding schools is reflected in the out-of-sync expressions of support for the government with concrete evidence carried out by Islamic boarding schools. Based on the data in the field, Islamic boarding schools that declare their readiness to support the government are Islamic boarding schools that have an organizational interest in government support. On the one hand, because Islamic boarding schools are based on NU, their attitudes and views are adapted to NU attitudes and views in general.

However, in practice, most of the kyai have a conservative attitude, so they don't follow the existing rules. Thus, operationally the implementation of the learning process in Islamic boarding schools has not fully implemented the health protocol. The fact is that there is still face-to-face learning, not wearing masks and not having adequate hand-washing facilities.

Nonconservative

The non-conservative attitude in this study is the opposite of the conservative attitude. This non-conservative view is a reflection of the attitude of Islamic boarding schools which tend to be pro towards government policies. Non-conservative views are moderate in understanding every religious teaching. Issues that arise related to religion and society are always addressed wisely. The non-conservative foundation rests on beneficial religious teachings. This means that any problems faced by the nation are always addressed with a scientific approach based on religious values.

Some kyai in Islamic boarding schools appear to provide enlightenment to students and the community. They align social and political issues with science, especially religious knowledge. This method is a form of moderation as a kyai in Islamic boarding schools. So the basic thinking of Kyai is based on new knowledge.

Based on the researcher's analysis, the kyai's non-conservative attitude is evident from their openness to new discourses. Knowledge according to this kyai is something dynamic and always changing. Have an open attitude to new knowledge. This perspective is in line with the dynamic nature of science. Knowledge for them is integral, sourced from Allah SWT. Religious knowledge and general science disciplines are knowledge that every Muslim must learn. The goal is to be able to overcome every problem in various areas of life. The clerics are of the view that Covid-19 is a problem for the people that must be dealt with properly. Islamic teachings must be interpreted to eliminate damage and give

birth to goodness. Especially in terms of health and sustainability of human life. Therefore, according to the clerics, the ban on going to mosques, and eliminating face-to-face learning during a pandemic, is an effort to avoid damage and guarantee the good of many people.

The Response of Islamic Boarding Schools in Madina to Covid-19; From Good Prejudice to Theological Enlightenment

The emergence of several forms of thinking in Islamic boarding schools has an impact on people's behavior at the grassroots level. Various responses were shown by the community, some were pro and some were contra, reactive, responsive, and doubtful. Those who are anti-Covid-19 tend to refuse to follow health protocols. Rejection is not only personal but also affects others. Students at Islamic boarding schools are classified as militant and always follow the opinion of the kyai (Fitriyah, Hamid, & Chusnul, 2018). The students spread among the people, then played a role in strengthening conservatism thinking.

Based on data in the field, the form of Islamic boarding school conservatism is evidenced by the ongoing learning at Islamic boarding schools amid the rise of Covid-19 in Indonesia. Islamic boarding schools do this for theological reasons. Kyai who are cons, strongly supports the implementation of learning.

However, in general, researchers can say that the leadership of the Islamic boarding school in Mandailing Natal has responded positively to government regulations regarding Covid-19. This is because the Islamic boarding school is affiliated with the NU organization. NU is a moderate organization on religious issues. The positive response of Islamic boarding schools to Covid-19 is carried out through moderate religious lectures. Moderate Kyai were ordered to give lectures with theological arguments to the public. Messages conveyed the importance of maintaining health and avoiding infectious diseases. The aim is to maintain the continuity of the life of Muslims. Strong faith and strong body. At the same time, the clerics asked the public to think positively about government policies in handling Covid-19. The purpose of enacting health protocol rules is for the common good

E. CONCLUSION

The real power of Islamic boarding schools is in the hands of the kyai. The Kyai of the Islamic boarding school in Mandailing Natal plays a major role in shaping the religious attitudes of the surrounding community. In this study, the response of Islamic boarding schools to Covid-19 in terms of thinking gave birth to three views, namely conservative, semi-conservative, and non-conservative which simultaneously occurred in one Islamic boarding school. The leadership of the Islamic boarding school is accommodative to government policies in dealing with Covid-19 in Mandailing Natal. The openness of Islamic boarding schools is a reflection of their affiliation with NU. Willing to accommodate health protocol

rules to maintain good relations. In addition, to obtain institutional support from the government and other stakeholders.

The nesting of conservative attitudes in Islamic boarding schools was born from some kyai who have different political choices. Always overly suspicious. This suspicion stems from a difference of opinion. While the attitude is semi-conservative because institutionally Islamic boarding schools have an interest in getting the government's attention. However, at the same time, religious conservatism is still strongly defended by some kyai. Islamic boarding schools in Mandailing Natal need to build internal and external communication forums. This forum is a place to find out the types of kyai's thoughts. In addition, to add to Kyai's knowledge and experience in dialogue about differences. Institutionally, this forum will make it easier for Islamic boarding school leaders to monitor kyai, so they can be controlled if they lead to radicalism. For future researchers, it is suggested to deepen the typology of Islamic boarding schools in studying social, economic, and cultural themes in Mandailing Natal.

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