

# Vernacular Politics Revisited: The Role of Ulama in the 2020 Simultaneous Local Elections in Indonesia

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## Abstract

Ulama is a vernacular social group with a strategic position in the community, comprised especially of groups of religious people. This research examines the political role of Ulama. It focuses on the political role of Ulama, and their preparation, and implementation of the 2020 Simultaneous Regional Elections. Although Ulama is a grassroots level social group, it is associated with winning the candidacy for the Regional Head Candidate position who then becomes a contestant.

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach as a method. To obtain data, in-depth interviews were conducted with three informants in October-November 2023. The research was conducted in two provinces that held the 2020 simultaneous regional elections: North Sumatra and West Sumatra. The results of the analyses are interpreted and validated into propositions to be drawn into conclusions and recommendations.

The research uncovers a dilemma in the relationship between the clerics and the politicians. On the one hand, Ulama maintains political morals, but on the other hand, many Ulama are carried away by political currents. Four types of people can win a regional head candidacy: political parties, respected community leaders and Ulama, who support and influence power. The fourth is power and money as political ammunition. However, some regions, such as the West Sumatra Province value the role of Ulama and community leaders. Ulama's impact on a leader's success can be positive or negative. Positive impacts include policies that benefit the community, while negative impacts include policies that do not include the Ulama's views.

**Keywords:** Ulama, Vernacular Politics, Experience, Simultaneous, Local Elections

## Introduction

Ulama is a vernacular social group with a strategic position in the community, comprised especially of groups of religious people. Ulama are role models in the society, especially in religion, but on the other hand, they also have a strategic political role in every

election in Indonesia (Nasution et al., 2023). The position of ulama as an heir of the Prophet has advantages in knowledge, good deeds, and morality. Thus, they have a relatively large congregation. Ulama becomes an asset considered successful in winning specific political candidates (Winarni, 2014; Fikri, 2016; Darban, 2012). An Ulama sometimes uses this strategic position to appear as a political actor by being actively involved in the successful team or sometimes advance as a candidate for the position of a leader himself.

In the political experience in Indonesia, several ulama have succeeded in practical politics to succeed themselves as leaders. The prominent political participation of ulama can be seen in Ma'ruf Amin (Chairman of the Indonesian Council of Ulama and Rois 'Am the Nahdlatul Ulama) successfully becoming the Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia for the 2019-2024 period. For example, several other cases referred to are Madura, i.e.,

- 1). Ramlan Ramdan Siradj has successfully become the Regent of Sumenep, and
- 2). Busyro Karim and Warits succeeded in becoming the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Sumenep DPRD for the 1999-2004 and 2004-2009 periods),
- 3). Kholilurrahman successfully became the Regent in (Pamekasan City,
- 4). Fanan succeeded in becoming the Regent of (Sampang City,
- 5). Still, in Sampang City, Mu'in Zain has become the number one person in the legislature as Chairman of the Sampang City DPRD,
- 6). Fuad Amin has also become a Regional Head (Regent) in Bangkalan Regency (Abdurrahman, 2012).

The 2020 Simultaneous Local Elections was a special election because of the strengthening of religious identity politics and the direct involvement of clerics in it. More than that, almost half of the regions in Indonesia: 270 regions held the election. The number of districts/cities and provinces in Indonesia in 2019 was 548 regions (100%), while election direct organizers were 270 regions (49.29%). The area is evenly distributed throughout Indonesia, including Medan City, a major city where this research is carried out. Given the increasingly strategic political role of the Ulama in the democratic system, coupled with the specialty of the 2020 Simultaneous Local Elections and the vulnerability of the Indonesian people to the impacts that the Indonesian political system will have, it is logical that this research is essential and urgent to be carried out.

## Theoretical Framework

### Ulamas, Politics and Democratic Elections

In Indonesia, some ulama or religious leaders participate in elections by forming political parties or joining existing parties. For instance, there are parties like "Partai Bintang Reformasi" and "Partai Keadilan Sejahtera" that have ulama as part of their leadership (Dirwan et al., 2012). However, not all ulama choose to be directly involved in politics. Some prefer to focus on their religious duties and avoid political involvement, believing that politics can be divisive and distract from spiritual matters. These ulama may still voice their concerns about political issues and the behavior of the politicians, but they do not actively campaign or hold political office (Saat & Muhajir, 2003).

Ulama, or religious leaders play a significant role in Indonesian politics, both directly and indirectly. They have been involved in various aspects of the political landscape, including forming political parties, joining existing parties and engaging in political debates and discussions. Some ulama have used their religious authority and influence to support political causes and candidates, while others have maintained a neutral stance and have focused on their religious duties (Bruinessen, 1990; Yani et al., 2022; Utama, 2024). The relationship between ulama and the political power has been ambivalent, with ulama sometimes acting as agents of reform and development, and at other times serving as a bulwark against radical Islamic groups or acting as political pawns (Feener et al., 2014).

The relationship between ulama and political power in Indonesia has been complex and ambivalent. In the early 20th century, ulama played a significant role in the political arena, with figures like K.H. Wahid Hasyim and K.H. Hasjim Asj'ari advocating for the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia (Bush, 2009). However, the relationship between ulama and

political power became more complicated during the 1920s and 1930s, when the ulama were divided between those who supported the secular nationalist movement and those who advocated for an Islamic state (Pelletier, 2021). During the Soeharto era, ulama were often used as political pawns by the government, with some ulama serving as agents of reform and development, while others served as bulwarks against radical Islamic groups (Rahmawati et al., 2018). The political involvement of ulama has been influenced by various factors, including the changing political landscape, the rise of Islamist movements, and the shifting allegiances of ulama themselves.

In the post-Soeharto period, ulama have continued to play a role in Indonesian politics, with some forming political parties or joining existing parties, while others have maintained a neutral stance and have focused on their religious duties (Fernando et al., 2023; Saputra et al., 2021).

Ulamas or religious leaders in Indonesia have been participating in elections in various capacities. Some ulama have formed political parties, such as the Partai Bintang Reformasi and the Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, and have been elected as members of parliament or political party leaders (Barton et al., 2021; Hasyim, 2020). Others have remained neutral or have taken sides in elections, with some supporting candidates like Anies-Muhaimin, Prabowo-Gibran, or Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud MD. In the 2024 Indonesian presidential election, religious leaders issued statements calling for fair, honest elections and encouraged people to exercise their right to vote responsibly and participate in maintaining the smooth implementation of the election.

The Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI) also issued a statement advocating for an honest and fair election (Barton et al., 2023). However, there are also ulama who shun politics and avoid involvement in formal politics, believing that the intrusion of politics into the religious realm is dangerous (Astari et al., 2020). These ulama prefer to focus on teaching and leading local religious schools and avoid the limelight and power contestations.

Ulama, politics, and social are concepts related to the role of ulama in the political and social world. Ulama are the leaders and specialists in the religion of Islam, and they have an important role in shaping and regulating culture, culture, and social systems (Nuryanti, 2021). In the world of politics, ulema must adhere to the conditions necessary to create social justice and keep the ummah from ignorance. They must possess individual qualities, moral integrity, and the ability to understand politics well. Ulama must also be responsible for behavior that results in immorality and corruption on earth (Yilmaz, 2020).

The relationship between ulama and political power remains complex, reflecting the diverse motivations and strategic calculations of religious leaders in engaging with the state and the political institutions. Religious leaders in Indonesia have influenced elections in several ways, such as follows.

1. **Political Parties and Campaigns:** Some religious leaders have formed political parties or joined existing parties to promote their views and influence political decisions. They may also participate in campaigns and rallies to support their chosen candidates (Halimatusa'diyah, 2023).
2. **Religious Narratives:** Religious leaders have used religious narratives and identity politics to mobilize their followers and influence voting behavior. This can involve promoting exclusivist religious narratives or using labels to describe politicians, which can sway voters based on their religious affiliations (Halimatusa'diyah, 2023).
3. **Ideology and Populism:** Religious leaders have played a role in shaping the political discourse, particularly during elections. For example, in the 2014 presidential election, religious notions were used as political instruments to criticize candidates and garner support (Widian, 2023).
4. **Peaceful Elections:** Some religious leaders have called for peaceful elections and rejected the politicization of religion to avoid a repeat of previous elections that divided the nation along religious and sectarian lines (Fossati, 2019).
5. **Education and Awareness:** Religious leaders have also emphasized the importance of voting responsibly and maintaining unity despite differences in

choices. Overall, religious leaders in Indonesia have used various strategies to influence elections, from forming political parties to using religious narratives and promoting peaceful elections. Their involvement in politics can have a significant impact on the political landscape and the outcomes of elections (Fossati, 2019).

### **Research Methodology**

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods (Creswell & Poth, 2016). It was conducted in two provinces that held the 2020 simultaneous regional elections, namely North Sumatra and West Sumatra. Data collection techniques include in-depth interviews, observations, and document studies.

Research results were interpreted and validated into propositions to draw conclusions and recommendations (Saldana, 2014). Data collection was carried out with in-depth interview and literature studies. Interviews extracted information related to thoughts, ideas, perspectives, and assessments of the existence of religious modernization institutions from three informants. They were conducted in October-November 2023. Literature studies collected documentary data and written materials related to the research subject.

Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman framework, which includes the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing

### **Locations and the Scope of the Study**

This research focuses on looking at the role of the ulama in the 2020 Simultaneous Local Elections. The condition is still a COVID-19 pandemic until this research is carried out in 2021. Researchers only chose two provinces that go directly to the field, while other provinces' researchers only used technology media for interviewing the informants needed in this research. The two provinces that represent the condition of Indonesia are heterogeneous, and some are homogeneous. The Province of North Sumatra represents regions whose people are heterogeneous, while the people who can be said to be homogeneous are the Province of West Sumatra. Furthermore, researchers in North Sumatra Province only went to the field in four areas: Medan City, North Labuhan Batu Regency, Labuhan Batu Selatan, and Sibolga City. As for West Sumatra, namely in Solok Regency, Bukit Tinggi Regency and Padang City.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **Overview of Ulama and Politics**

According to Geertz (1960) ulama as a cultural broker can be identified into four main categories. First is the role of ulama in teaching religious knowledge; Second is the role of the ulama as problem solvers, namely social problem solvers; Third is the part ulama as agents of control of the pace of social development and people's lives; and Fourth is as a catalyst, namely the liaison of social change itself.

If it is related to the world of politics, especially in Indonesia, then Geertz (1960) says that although it has been very long, it is still relevant. Thus, the role of the ulama is significant in the political world, especially in the simultaneous regional head elections held in 2020.

The argument is that Indonesia is a country with the largest Muslim population in the world. This is based on "The Pew Research Center Forum on Religion & Public Life" (2012), a global research institute in 2012. There are 209.1 million adherents of Islam in Indonesia or 87.2% of the total population. That number is 13.1% of all the Muslims in the world. A large number of Muslim people causes the ulama's role as religious figures in Islam to be significant. They have become a strategic and significant force to make great movements for the history and civilization of the nation. So far, ulama has contributed to building the Indonesian state and nation's framework and identity through Islamic organizations, such as Muhammadiyah and NU. During the colonial era, many ulama became leaders of the nation's struggle. While in the development era, the ulama became the driving force of the wheels of development. In other words, ulama has always played a strategic role in strengthening politics and democracy in Indonesia.

## Ulama and Politics Revisited

The ongoing democratization of Indonesia is marked by several indicators, among which the strong hands are direct elections (President and the regional head). This plan gave birth to what is known as procedural democracy. In the critique of the third wave of democratization, many social scientists have pointed out the spectacle of the achievements, even elections which are proud of as democratic by various serious malpractices that have explained it as an anti-democratic phenomenon. The third wave of democratization is also suspected of degrading many democratic countries, experiencing democratic deficits and even falling into despotism.

Ulama's role is very positive. If not positive, why did Jokowi cancel Mahfud MD's nomination as deputy and choose Ma'ruf Amin? In this regard, self-identifying all contestants as religious and even arranging ways to make them look more pious outside their daily routines were attempted as the front stage of the campaign. Whatever appears on the political scene, the ulama, with their current role, is the optimum result of the state's perspective on religion. During the New Order era, several ulama from the IAIN campus and several scientists from universities in Indonesia were included in the working group as election vote-getters and legislators.

Ridwan Lubis and Maratua Simanjuntak are two of Indonesia's most memorable names from the historical records of Islamic politics. This ulama became one of the societal nodes played by politics, including voting bags in Islamic boarding schools.

According to Anshor (28/7/2021), the state is hypocritical because it only needs votes. However, it is not the role of the ulama in politics and government. This treatment has led to the emergence of a culture of religious feudalism that is increasingly alien to the people. Many of them enjoy privileges and material wealth. Around them, they mill about without shame and sometimes behave themselves with what is thought to be psychologically stabbed, for example, with Arabic clothes. They are not scholars because they have deviated from the corridor of warath al-anbiya' (the heirs of the Prophets) for something of value that is traded cheaply. As an inverse comparison in the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera), several ulama do not regard themselves as artificial figures. Their worship is orderly, their views are not divided (religious and worldly), and many of them are hafidh several juz of the al-Qur'an to the encouragement of tradition that is strengthened not a day without reading the Qur'an.

As with other religious leaders, the ulama must have a decisive role in determining the political voice of the people. America still uses the same method, even though many political campaign speeches are drawn from the pulpit of the church. Candidates for President of the United States are even more afraid of being identified as less religious. Same thing was also stated by a Muslim figure, scientist, and scholar from the University of North Sumatra (USU); he is an expert in politics, as the head of USU's Masters (2) Political Science Study Program, he is also a columnist for the Waspada Daily, namely Warjio (9/8/2021).

According to him, the role of the ulama is still essential in political events in Indonesia because symbols still influence Indonesian people in the name of religion, which scholars inherently wear, such as Arabic clothes, turbans, koko clothes, and cloth. This symbol of religious life attracts the people's sympathy so that if the ulama supports the candidate, people may be affected. In addition, scholars also have scientific abilities, good character, and personality influences. If this is transformed in people's lives, it will significantly attract people's sympathy to support one candidate.

Furthermore, he explains that, on the other hand, there was a polarization of the ulama, such as what happened in the city of Medan, where one of the candidates was the President's son-in-law, Bobby Nasution. Nasution and his deputy, Ustadh or Salman al-Farisi, are from this position. The color is still visible despite the polarization of support for candidates and polarization from mass organizations, such as Muhammadiyah, NU, and Al-Washliyah, even though they are gathered at MUI. Thus, it is not easy to unite in terms of the interests of the Muslims reliably. However, what happens is a short interest or pragmatism of support made for its own sake or the interests of the Islamic mass organization itself. According to Warjio, when an official at the President's level is still active, a family member nominates one for a region. Thus, the political role of the ulama in a position like this is minor.

The President's son-in-law emerged victorious as the Mayor of Medan. This was predictable by the general public because the President is the highest executive officer who efficiently uses his power.

According to Katimin (9/8/2021), as an NU figure in North Sumatra, and Elly Warnisah (9/8/2021), as well as an NU figure in North Sumatra, when explaining the political role of the ulama in the 2020 simultaneous elections, both agreed that the ulama was still given a portion or trust by the community to take a role, at least giving directions on how to lead democracy. According to both, the ulema is divided into three parts in terms of 'democratic parties' especially the Simultaneous elections:

1. Ulama directly involves in practical politics as candidates for regional heads, whether as governors, mayors, or regents or as supporters of election candidates. They maybe the Success Team or participate in campaigning for their champion candidates to the people or congregation.
2. Ulama does not like politics because they understand that there is no actual law except God's law based on the al-Qur'an and sunnah. Ulama like this, rejects the democratic system but supports the caliphate, which, according to them, comes from the Islamic law. Ulama, like this, is forever in opposition to the government.
3. Ulama who do not care, do not support and reject, are apathetic.

Thus, they do not take any role in the society. According to them, whoever is elected, people's lives will not change at all for the better, including the life of the clerics.

## Discussion

The Muhammadiyah figure, Muhammad Qorib (14/8/2021), states that, in principle, the ulama are *uswantun hasanah* (the best role model) for their people. Ulama should be figures who are always present to enlighten their people. Concerning the political role of the ulama in the 2020 Simultaneous Regional Head Elections, he emphasizes that it is clear that they have an important role, either directly or indirectly, concrete or abstract, large or small, depending on whether the ulama has a significant role in people's lives. Furthermore, he reveals that the role of the ulama, which in the past until now has often been dubbed as a problem solver, so that their role greatly influenced the community. Thus, in political events, the ulama still plays an important role, even though its influence is less significant than it was in the past when the ulama were the central point of people's lives. In addition, the role of the ulama is significant; when the official who appears commits fraud, the ulema can act as an advisor to provide awareness of the mistakes made by the official.

According to Qorib (14/8/2021), revealing the Indonesian Ulema Council, this institution is a 'big tent for the Muslims'; it can be a medium for dialogue between scholars with different political affiliations. From here, how to convey religious values that are peaceful, cool, and enlightening can be developed. The ulama can reference the people in their various religious activities. Meanwhile, according to Maigus Nasir (20/8/2021), the political role of the ulama in the national political arena is significant. So far, scholars have only taken care of the people. In the Simultaneous elections in 2020, the role is to save the people. In the election of North Sumatra, the ulama and community leaders have played an essential role in winning the election for the Governor of West Sumatra, including the election in Bukit Tinggi.

Minangkabau people are egalitarians who have independence. There is a well-known term: *Tigo Sapilin* (three knots), Ulama, Umara, and Customary Stakeholders. All three are integrated into people's lives in West Sumatra. So that they become a power that no power can dictate. With the implementation of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (*Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar* or PSBB) in West Sumatra, mosques are not closed because of the ulama in people's lives. The results of the policies of the umara or the government contributed. The government should give a sense of justice; the problem now is the occurrence of disparities or gaps between rich and poor, and they do not have access. Second, the government's position must be fair, not to make a fire in the husk. Fourth, the government must firmly enforce the law; people who blaspheme religion, cornering the ulama, must be present in it by the state.

The government should make regulations about the election so there is no retribution in this Simultaneous election, which becomes a debt for those supported or financed by the Cukong (businessman). Hasibuan (23/7/2021) concludes that there is a significant relationship between the political role of ulama and the victory of regional head candidates and even heads of state. This has been proven by the victory of Jokowi, who took ulama as his vice-presidential candidate. The Labuhan Batu Selatan Regent's victory took an alumnus from the Postgraduate Program of the State Islamic University of North Sumatra Medan as his deputy regent. Even though the candidate for regent was ethnic Chinese, because of his deputy, the ulama increased their vote acquisition, thus winning the battle.

According to Anshor (28/7/2021), the victory of regional head candidates is directly related to the role of ulama; it is up to the candidates to admit it or not, and amid difficulties in finding methods to accurately and precisely measure the significance of their contribution, this role is significant. It is a big mistake if politicians do not have populist empathy because, in truth, democracy is indeed the people in power. Because of that, the aspirations of the majority are the winners. Democracy is a compact affair around the formula of majority and minority with a strong tolerance for plurality. The 2019 presidential election was carried out with the significant role of Ijma' Ulama. Same thing happens everywhere with way adjustments. Other religions also portray themselves like that.

In 2005, Syahrin Harahap wrote and published a book to support Abdillah-Ramli. Many candidates from the Teladan area have always visited Buya Marbun, and it is not uncommon for formal meetings to be held at his pesantren. Sometimes, certain religious rites are held, which seem to describe a vital prerequisite to 'pick up' God's destiny or his pleasure. There are times when the ulama has arrived frustrated. Thus, they choose passively to support political activities. On the other hand, many scholars understand that political events are nothing more than "devil's work mechanisms." A good Muslim cannot follow unless he becomes a devil first.

In Nurhayati's (20/8/2021) view, every struggle must have sacrifices; winning and losing in the presidential election is normal. The involvement of the ulama in practical politics in the 2020 elections is acceptable. Ulama, who supports the losing candidate, must be willing to accept the risk because that is the risk of struggle. The impact of the political role of the ulama in the 2020 Simultaneous election is there, for the ulama who support the winning candidate will be able to color the policies of the winning candidate. On the other hand, ulama who support a losing candidate must be prepared to become the opposition or become a neutral party.

Nurhayati's view is academic normative; that is how the ulama should act in political, national, and state life. However, society has many dimensions surrounding it; sometimes, no matter how strong a character is, it is difficult not to follow such a strong current in people's lives. The current that develops may be dimensional and of good and true value. However, there is also the opposite. On the other hand, according to Pagar Hasibuan (23/7/2021), the North Sumatran NU and the Advisory MUI in Medan City states that ulama in the political world has a very strategic role and determines the direction of development in Indonesia. According to Hasibuan (23/7/2021), long before the 2020 presidential election, Ma'ruf Amin as Raisy 'Am of NU as well as General Chairperson of the Central MUI, stated in Makassar that MUI cadres must take a significant political role, and must become a political actor because to seize the situation following the ideals of the MUI, one must fight from within as a power group, even as a central figure. MUI must be sensitive to the political situation and be a political actor, and the general chairperson of MUI must be at least a vice president.

The view of Neni Nurhayati (20/8/2021), an activist and Muhammadiyah Executive, and the Executive Director of the Democracy and Electoral Empowerment Partnership (DEEP), stated that ulama has a vital role in the political arena—politics in Indonesia, including the 2020 Presidential Election and Regional Head Elections (Pilkada). Ulama are still role models for the Islamic community. Ulama is expected to provide coolness and peace to the community, especially during the succession of elections, where the atmosphere will usually heat up due to the battle of the candidates. Nurhayati believes the political situation will tend to heat up in the

2020 simultaneous regional head elections. So, hoax information often appears troubling to the public, and irreverent behavior is blasphemous. In a situation like this, according to him, the role of the ulama is vital to provide direction and enlightenment for the community. However, according to Nurhayati, it is undeniable that there are still ulama who politicize religion for personal or group interests, not for the benefit of the people. Furthermore, Nurhayati, providing input to the ulama, should give a good education for the community against racial issues, hoaxes, and identity politics so that people do not get carried away with heated political currents due to the low level of public political literacy.

Meanwhile, according to Hasibuan, the ulama in Indonesia is classified into two, namely the first nationalist ulama and the textualist Islamist ulama. According to him, nationalist clerics support government policies, are accommodating, and greatly translate government policies. Meanwhile, textualist Islamists are more Salafi, somewhat extreme, with thoughtful expressions.

According to Hasibuan (23/7/2021), this textualist Islamist cleric has expressed his views through social media to find supporters. They are generally college alumni from the Middle East. Many are engaged in education and mosques. They build educational institutions starting from the Kindergarten level. The symbol of their clothing is so distinctive, with good morals and manners, that it is easy to integrate with the community. According to Hasibuan (23/7/2021), Salafi Ulama tends to be stronger in Indonesia, and they control social media, so there are more supporters. According to him, there will be a fierce battle between these two groups of clerics in the future, but at the moment, nationalist clerics are still more decisive.

According to Hasibuan (23/7/2021), many ulama are directly involved in the Success Team for regional head candidates such as governors, mayors, regents, and even presidential candidates. The candidate believes that the ulama has a significant time to gain election votes. Many ulama are involved directly or indirectly in the Success Team. Their role is still very calculated in the political scene in Indonesia. Furthermore, Hasibuan's view is strongly influenced by the primary reference for Muslims, namely the al-Qur'an and sunnah. In the al-Qur'an, it is emphasized that Muslims are the best people on condition that they carry out the commandments of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* based on faith. This view affirms that Muslims are the best people by carrying out *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* based on faith. In society and the state, inviting others to do good is very easy, but adequate strength and power are needed to prevent evil deeds—political power. With political power, the work of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* is straightforward to carry out.

In contrast to Shohibul Anshar (28/7/2021), Muhammadiyah figures, and North Sumatran political experts, he is explained at length. There is a great paradox here. First, the history of direct elections in Indonesia was initiated by the desire for the domination of the Dutch colonialists about the importance of effectively presenting the political power of the rulers throughout the colonies through the village power network. In 1854, the first rule of governance included the direct election of village heads in the Dutch East Indies. Second, when it comes to establishing an independent Indonesia, the formulation of Pancasila, seen as the value of the living reality of Indonesian society and culture, only appreciates the direct election at all except for the legislature alone. Based on Pancasila, there is only one direct election, namely the legislative election. After that, the elected representatives determine who the President is (Populists led by wisdom in deliberation/representation).

The political role of the ulama in the 2020 election shows an impact on the ulama themselves, which is part of the risk of the struggle. If the candidate he supports wins, then the position of the ulama concerned will be very strategic. The ulama can color the ruling party's policies; their ulama will be respected, appreciated, and involved in many things. On the other hand, if the candidate supported by the ulama is on the losing side, then the ulama will usually be sidelined, even looking for weak points, let alone openly proclaiming himself as the opposition party. According to Hasibaun, society also often becomes divided due to the splitting of the ulama they follow, so that between Muslims themselves, there is often hostility that will benefit the enemies of Islam. Instead, the ulama must be united to defend and fight for the truth.

According to Qorib (14/8/2021), because Islam brings rahmatah al-‘alamin (mercy to all creation), all activities of the ulama and the people should spread peace and brotherhood, not hostility and cornering each other. However, a political adage in political life is undeniable: "There are no eternal friends and eternal enemies; eternal interests are interests," either as a promoted figure or as a Success Team. Suppose it is drawn from the Islamic doctrine, namely hadith. In that case, Muslims should understand the substance of their lives so as not to be marginalized by anyone, either by the rulers or by people who have hegemony affiliated with the rulers. According to his approach, it can be said that the impact of the political role of the ulama. There are two approaches to the political role of the ulama. First is the normative approach, namely that the ulama are the inheritors of the Prophets, as well as anything attached to the title of ulama, those whose knowledge is qualified and whose morals are genuinely noble. Second, the empirical approach, that is, if the political role of the ulama is approached with a practical approach, then the goal is interesting. If the interests are the same, then there will be mutual support. On the contrary, if the interests differ, they may kill and corner each other.

Based on that, restore the role of the ulama in various fields of life, including their political position. So, the ulama does not fall into what they are doing; they only see the interests of the moment pragmatically, which makes the people's respect for them low. Based on the explanations put forward, especially from the views of experts, it shows that ulama and politics are forms of a relationship that has two dimensions, namely that on the one hand, the role of ulama as role models for the community is needed to be able to guide the community. On the other hand, the involvement of the ulama in politics is only part of the effort to politicize the ulama for political purposes. Still, it also results in the emergence of ambiguous attitudes in politics. In the context of Indonesia's experience, the number of leaders or regional heads involved in the ulama is more in the aspect of gaining victory over political opponents. In contrast, the role of the ulama itself is not seen in the ongoing political context. Reviewing the ulama with politics, especially the political involvement of the ulama, is more in getting political support. In contrast, the function of the ulama as religious leaders and community guides is not visible in it. So, ulama and politics cannot be separated, but repositioning ulama as a community companion is more permanent than just using the ulama as part of politics.

## Conclusion

It can be concluded that the ulama's character has influenced the 2020 Simultaneous election. The relationship between the political role of the ulama and the candidate's victory in the 2020 simultaneous regional head elections show that four components can win the regional head candidacy.

1. The political party that proposes it and the character quality of the candidate to be promoted.
2. The respected community leaders or traditional leaders.
3. The ulama who support it.
4. The influence of power that supports it, both the power of government officials and the influence of "money."

Of the four components that won the regional head candidate in the 2020 simultaneous elections throughout Indonesia, the fourth component is power and money as political ammunition. However, some areas highly respect the role of ulama and community or customary leaders, such as in West Sumatra Province. In West Sumatra, the Minangkabau people are well known for their tigo Stalin, namely Ulama, Umara, and traditional stakeholders. These three are integrated with people's lives, which are difficult to separate, so they support each other for the progress of the Minangkabau community.

The impact that arises due to the political role of the ulama on the candidate winning in the 2020 election for the regions is twofold; some are positive, and some tend to be negative. The positive impact is that if the ulama continues to be considered after the candidate's victory, the policy has many inputs from the ulama. The policy will be pro to Muslims and society in general. The impact tends to be harmful if the winning candidate, the ulama who supports him, is ignored or abandoned after his victory. In this position, it is clear that all the policies produced

by the winning regional heads will not include the views of the ulama, which will have an unfavorable impact on the lives of Muslims and society in general.

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