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The Impact of Santri Motives, Awareness, Participation, and Knowledge on Voting Decisions: A Study at Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School, Bangka Tengah

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of motives, awareness, participation, and knowledge of students at the Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School on their decision to vote for a leader in the elections in Central Bangka Regency. The study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory survey method, distributing questionnaires to 34 respondents. Data were analyzed using validity, reliability, normality, linearity, and multiple linear regression tests using the SPSS program. The results showed that simultaneously, motives, awareness, participation, and knowledge significantly influenced the decision to vote for a leader. However, partially, only awareness, participation, and knowledge proved to have a significant influence, while motives had no significant effect. This finding supports the theory of political behavior, which emphasizes the importance of awareness, participation, and knowledge in shaping political decisions. The students' awareness and participation were found to be high, demonstrated by their active involvement in the democratic process and understanding of their rights and obligations as voters. The students' political knowledge also supported more rational voting behavior. The implications of this study emphasize that Islamic boarding schools function not only as religious educational institutions but also play a strategic role in fostering political literacy and democratic awareness among the younger generation. Therefore, improving political education based on Islamic boarding school values is crucial for strengthening the quality of democracy in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Motives, Awareness, Participation, Knowledge, Students*

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) as educational institutions aim not only to impart sound religious teachings, but also to educate society to gain a deeper understanding of Islam. According to Mastuhu (2010), the primary objective is to build an Islamic personality—one that is rooted in faith and piety toward God, possesses noble morals, and serves the community by becoming self-reliant, independent, and steadfast in character. Furthermore, pesantren aim to spread the religion, uphold Islam and the glory of the Muslim community, and foster a love for knowledge to develop the Indonesian national character. Occasionally, in pursuing these objectives, pesantren do not hesitate to engage in politics. Entering politics requires a political vehicle, such as a political party, to facilitate acquiring power, which in turn makes it easier to realize those goals (Mastuhu, 2010). As traditional social institutions, pesantren exert a broad and deeply rooted influence on their surrounding communities. They are viewed as institutions that thrive on and are supported by

community members, both locally and from other regions, as santri (students) generally originate from various areas. Given this traditional nature, many historians and Islamic scholars have questioned how pesantren have managed to survive to this day despite facing various modern educational management systems (Azra, 2000).

The pesantren environment possesses a unique character in managing diversity and pluralism. In administering education within a pesantren, the Kyai (Islamic scholar/leader) plays a highly strategic role in determining institutional policies. Consequently, pesantren as educational institutions should also serve as strategic media for implementing democratic education. Islam does not restrict its adherents from seeking knowledge, provided that such knowledge does not contradict Islamic law (sharia). The involvement of the pesantren community in politics has a long history, as evidenced by the active participation of both kyai and santri dating back to the era of the Mataram II Sultanate in Java. Their political involvement is evident not only during the physical resistance to expel colonizers, but also through diplomatic efforts before and after the proclamation of independence. Moreover, kyai played an even more prominent role when several pesantren served as strategic centers against colonial forces, providing substantial moral, political, and economic support. In its development, kyai were also instrumental in founding and developing Islamic political organizations in Indonesia, including the Council of Indonesian Muslim Associations (Masyumi), the High Islamic Council of Indonesia (MIAI), the Indonesian Islamic Union Party (PSII), and the Islamic Education Movement (Perti). This demonstrates that Islam can be understood as both a religious and a political force (Thoriquttyas, 2018).

Nowadays, many people tend to have specific criteria for choosing a leader, often based on familial ties, friendships, or shared regional origins. This tendency arises from a lack of public trust in leaders, which ultimately breeds political apathy. Consequently, this shift has significant impacts, leading many individuals to overlook the essential criteria for leadership outlined in the Qur'an. Democratic education is essential for Muslims in Indonesia, particularly for santri (Islamic boarding school students), as Indonesia selects its leaders through democratic processes governed by established legal frameworks and procedures. As Indonesian citizens, santri possess equal rights to vote and be elected in the nation's democratic contests. In governance, electing a leader is a religious obligation (sharia) based on the consensus (ijma') of the Prophet's companions and their successors (tabi'in) (Khaldun, 1988).

Therefore, for a nation striving to realize democracy, continuous development in the dynamics of regional elections is necessary. One clear manifestation of democracy in the context of elections is the presence of independent candidates—those competing without political party endorsement. However, running as an independent candidate in Indonesian elections remains exceptionally challenging due to stringent regulatory requirements that often lead to the disqualification of prospective candidates (Muchlis et al., 2025). Accordingly, this study examines in greater depth the participation of santri at the Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School in the leadership elections of Bangka Tengah Regency.

a study conducted by Irdham (2012) demonstrates that the leadership of the kiai and political knowledge are significant factors in shaping the voting behavior of santri; however, it does not deeply examine motives, awareness, and participation as influencing factors in their decision-making. Furthermore, Utomo (2020) indicates that knowledge affects voting decisions and behavior, but the sample was limited solely to high school students and did not test the simultaneous influence of multiple factors. Additionally, Arravi et al. (2019) highlight the participation of santri in political education and discussions, as well as their affiliation with political parties, though their approach remains predominantly descriptive in mapping participation.

These findings reveal a research gap, as prior studies predominantly focus on voting behavior, political participation, or the intention for political participation as dependent variables.

Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by specifically positioning the leadership choice decision as the dependent variable, thereby placing greater emphasis on the deliberative process of santri when selecting candidates.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach. Quantitative research utilizes a postpositivist paradigm to develop knowledge through cause-and-effect relationships, reduction to specific variables and hypotheses, measurement and observation, theory testing, and experimental or survey strategies that require statistical data. Specifically, this study adopts a survey technique, which examines variables without applying manipulation or special treatment (Hasan, 2009). The research location is the Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School in Bangka Tengah Regency. Data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data originate from original sources and are collected directly by the researcher to address the research problem, typically through interviews or questionnaires (Sugiyono, 2018). Accordingly, the researcher distributed questionnaires directly to *santri* (students) at the Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School, Bangka Tengah Regency. Secondary data are obtained by reading, studying, and comprehending external media such as institutional documents (Sugiyono, 2022). For this purpose, the researcher reviewed relevant books, academic journals, and credible internet sources.

The population for this study comprises *santri* aged 17 years residing in Bangka Tengah within the Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School environment, consisting of 22 female students and 12 male students. According to Purwanto, a population is defined as a large group of individuals who share identical characteristics relevant to the research problem (Sugiyono, 2022). Meanwhile, the sample size corresponds to the total population of 34 individuals (total sampling).

Data collection techniques in this research include literature review, direct questionnaire administration, and documentation. The literature review involves gathering information through written and electronic documents, photographs, and media that support the writing process; research results gain credibility when substantiated by photographic evidence or existing academic literature. Questionnaires were distributed directly to the sampled *santri*. Additionally, documentation was conducted by retrieving data on research variables from records, books, newspapers, magazines, agendas, and digital sources (Gagah & Pia, 2024).

Data validation testing is required to verify the accuracy of the collected data. For quantitative data, validity and reliability tests are performed to evaluate whether the questionnaire items are suitable for data collection (Sujarweni, 2012). Furthermore, the data analysis process encompasses data reduction, data display, and verification/conclusion drawing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

This study demonstrates and analyzes that motive (XI) has no significant effect on leadership choice decisions. This divergence aligns with political behavior theory, which posits that individual motivation is complex and frequently influenced by external factors such as political culture, personal experience, group influence, and social environmental conditions. Consequently, personal motives do not automatically translate into consistent political awareness when choosing a leader.

In this descriptive analysis, the researcher aims to provide an overview of the characteristics and conditions of the respondents sampled in this study. Based on the questionnaire data collected from a sample of 34 *santri* (students) at the Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School in Air Mesu, statistical processing was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics software, Version 30.0.0.0.

Table 1. Description of Respondents' Answers on Santri Motives (X1)

No	Statement Indicator	SD (%)	DA (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	Islamic values of a leader	-	-	5,9	35,3	58,8
2	Close to religious scholars	-	5,9	38,2	26,5	29,4
3	The influence of *pesantren* teachers/*kyai*	2,9	5,9	44,1	26,5	20,6
4	The candidate's campaign is motivating.	5,9	11,8	47,1	29,4	5,9
5	Pro-religious policy	-	2,9	8,8	55,9	32,4
6	Candidate's educational background	-	11,8	32,4	32,4	23,5
7	Encouragement from the surrounding community	26,5	47,1	20,6	5,9	-
8	Candidate's region of origin	14,7	35,3	44,1	5,9	-
9	Core morals and personality	-	-	17,6	44,1	38,2
10	The responsibility of choosing the best	-	2,9	23,5	41,2	32,4
11	Political promise under consideration	5,9	23,5	52,9	11,8	5,9
12	Experience with Islamic organizations	2,9	-	17,6	55,9	23,5
13	Active in socio-religious activities	-	2,9	8,8	58,8	29,4
14	Teacher recommendation	5,9	23,5	64,7	5,9	-
15	Islamic Charisma	-	2,9	23,5	55,9	17,6

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree; DA = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree.

The findings reveal that the majority of santri prioritize the religious background of a candidate when making political choices. This is reflected in the indicator "candidate's Islamic values," where 35.3% of respondents agreed and 58.8% strongly agreed, demonstrating that nearly all respondents regard religious orientation as the primary basis for voting. Similarly, the indicator "moral character and personality" shows a comparable trend, with 44.1% of respondents agreeing and 38.2% strongly agreeing that morality is a crucial factor in their selection. Likewise, the indicator "Islamic charisma" received support with 55.9% agreeing and 17.6% strongly agreeing. These findings confirm that personal integrity and religious character serve as dominant considerations for santri.

Conversely, external factors such as "environmental influence" and "candidate's regional origin" exert minimal influence on shaping the motives of santri. This is evidenced by 47.1% disagreeing and 26.5% strongly disagreeing with the environmental influence indicator, as well as 35.3% disagreeing and 14.7% strongly disagreeing with the regional origin indicator. Thus, the political choices of santri tend to be independent and value-driven, rather than dictated by external pressure. Meanwhile, other factors, such as the "influence of teachers/kyai," retain significance despite not being dominant. A total of 44.1% of respondents remained neutral, while 26.5% agreed and 20.6% strongly agreed that the recommendations of teachers or kyai influenced their

decisions. This indicates that while the moral authority of the kyai is respected, the final decision rests on personal evaluations of candidate quality.

Additional rational factors, such as being "supportive of religious policies" (55.9% agree; 32.4% strongly agree) and the "candidate's background in Islamic organizations" (55.9% agree; 23.5% strongly agree), further reinforce these voting motives. In contrast, "political campaign promises" are regarded merely as a secondary consideration, with 52.9% of respondents answering neutral and only 5.9% strongly agreeing.

Table 2. Description of Respondents' Answers on Awareness and Participation (X2)

No	Statement Indicator	SD (%)	DA (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	Choosing the obligations of a citizen	-	-	-	52,9	47,1
2	Votes are influential in elections.	-	2,9	26,5	52,9	17,6
3	It is important to participate in the election.	-	2,9	32,4	47,1	17,6
4	Sufficient information about the prospective leader	5,9	5,9	61,8	23,5	2,9
5	Actively seek information on candidate profiles.	2,9	5,9	67,6	17,6	5,9
6	Convinced after the political discussion	-	-	55,9	38,2	5,9
7	One voice makes a difference.	-	-	14,7	55,9	29,4
8	Continuing to choose it, even though it doesn't fit.	20,6	23,5	38,2	11,8	5,9
9	Voter rights and responsibilities	-	2,9	11,8	58,8	26,5
10	Participating in the election for the sake of the nation's transformation.	-	2,9	14,7	52,9	29,4
11	Understanding the electoral system	-	2,9	52,9	32,4	11,8
12	Enthusiasm for voting—if it aligns with Islamic principles.	-	2,9	5,9	55,9	35,3
13	Not missing the opportunity to vote	-	-	26,5	55,9	17,6
14	Following information from social media	5,9	11,8	58,8	17,6	5,9
15	Participation in elections is important.	-	2,9	35,3	47,1	14,7

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree; DA = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree.

The data reveals that the level of political awareness and participation among *santri* falls into the very high category. The vast majority of respondents view voting as a civic duty, as evidenced by 52.9% of respondents agreeing and 47.1% strongly agreeing with the statement "voting is a civic obligation." This indicates that nearly all *santri* are fully conscious of their rights and duties within a democratic system. This political awareness is further reinforced by the belief that "a single vote can bring about change," with 55.9% of respondents agreeing and 29.4% strongly agreeing. This underscores a solid understanding that individual votes contribute meaningfully to the democratic process.

Furthermore, indicators such as "voter rights and responsibilities" (58.8% agree; 26.5% strongly agree) and "participating in elections for national progress" (52.9% agree; 29.4% strongly agree) emphasize that the political participation of *santri* extends beyond mere procedural compliance to encompass moral consciousness and social responsibility. However, regarding the statement "continuing to vote even when candidates do not meet expectations," respondent tendencies were more varied. A total of 20.6% strongly disagreed and 23.5% disagreed, while 38.2% remained neutral. This suggests that a subset of *santri* experiences hesitation or reluctance to vote if the available candidates fail to match their expectations—a notable phenomenon that could impact actual voter turnout.

The awareness of *santri* regarding election mechanisms is also relatively solid. The majority indicated that they "understand the electoral system" (52.9% neutral; 32.4% agree; 11.8% strongly agree) and "actively seek profile information on candidates" (67.6% neutral; 17.6% agree; 5.9% strongly agree). These metrics show that while participation remains high, technical comprehension and active information-seeking behavior still require development. Finally, modern environmental influences play a nuanced role, as shown by the indicator "following information from social media," where most respondents were neutral (58.8%) or disagreed (11.8%), with only a small minority strongly agreeing (5.9%). This implies that social media is not the primary source of political information for *santri*, marking a distinct departure from general youth voting trends.

Table 3. Description of Respondents' Answers on Santri Knowledge (X3)

No	Statement Indicator	SD (%)	DA (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	Knowing one's rights as a voter	-	-	17,6	61,8	20,6
2	Understanding the stages of the election	-	-	47,1	50,0	2,9
3	Know how to exercise your right to vote	-	-	47,1	44,1	8,8
4	Understand the functions of the KPU and Bawaslu.	-	2,9	58,8	29,4	2,9
5	Direct, General, Free, Secret, Honest, and Fair Elections	2,9	8,8	32,4	23,5	32,4
6	How to register for the Final Voters List (DPT)	-	14,7	64,7	17,6	2,9
7	Exercise your right to vote responsibly.	-	2,9	26,5	41,2	29,4
8	Good leaders impact the future.	-	-	2,9	23,5	73,5
9	Election rules in Indonesia	2,9	2,9	44,1	44,1	5,9
10	Distinguish between legislative and executive elections.	2,9	5,9	76,5	8,8	5,9

11	Sanctions for election violations	5,9	17,6	38,2	32,4	5,9
12	Leadership nomination process	5,9	11,8	44,1	26,5	11,8
13	The importance of population data	2,9	-	35,3	41,2	20,6
14	How to report a violation	5,9	17,6	55,9	17,6	2,9
15	Discussion/information on the electoral system	5,9	11,8	64,7	17,6	-

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree; DA = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree.

The data reveals that the level of political knowledge among santri regarding elections generally falls into the moderate to high category. The vast majority of respondents demonstrate a clear understanding of voter rights and responsibilities. This is reflected in the indicator "awareness of voter rights," where 61.8% of respondents agreed and 20.6% strongly agreed, demonstrating that nearly all santri possess foundational awareness regarding their voting rights. Furthermore, santri place significant importance on effective leadership. For the indicator "a good leader impacts the nation's future," the majority of respondents strongly agreed (73.5%) and agreed (23.5%), indicating that almost all respondents recognize the critical role leadership plays in national development.

Regarding technical aspects, the level of knowledge among santri varies. For example, for the indicator "understanding electoral stages," respondents were split between neutral (47.1%) and agree (50.0%). A similar pattern appears for "knowing how to exercise voting rights," with 47.1% neutral and 44.1% agree. These findings suggest that while santri appreciate the importance of the democratic process, a portion of them lacks a complete grasp of its procedural mechanics. Knowledge regarding electoral governing bodies remains relatively limited as well. For the indicator "understanding the functions of the KPU and Bawaslu," the majority remained neutral (58.8%), with only a fraction agreeing (29.4%) or strongly agreeing (2.9%). Likewise, regarding "sanctions for election violations," many respondents were neutral (38.2%) or disagreed (17.6%), highlighting the need to enhance formal political literacy within the santri community.

Nevertheless, indicators related to core electoral principles—such as "direct, general, free, secret, honest, and fair elections" (LUBER JURDIL)—received positive responses, with 32.4% strongly agreeing and 23.5% agreeing. Knowledge regarding the "distinction between legislative and executive elections" showed that while 76.5% remained neutral, a minority strongly agreed (5.9%) or agreed (8.8%). Other indicators, such as the "importance of civil registration data," also drew notable attention, with 41.2% agreeing and 20.6% strongly agreeing. This shows that santri recognize civil administrative data as an essential prerequisite for inclusion in the final voter list (DPT).

Testing Data Analysis Assumptions

Validity test

A validity test is the process of ensuring that a research instrument is truly capable of measuring the intended variable. Validity indicates the degree of accuracy and alignment between the measurement tool and the concept under study. An instrument is considered valid if the data it produces reflects the actual condition of the object being observed (Ramdhan, 2021).

Table 4. Validity Test of Santri Motives (X1) against the Decision to Choose a Leader (Y)

No	Item	Calculated r-value	r-table value	Criteria	Conclusion

1	X1.1	0,356	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
2	X1.2	0,422	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
3	X1.3	0,734	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
4	X1.4	0,444	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
5	X1.5	0,709	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
6	X1.6	0,521	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
7	X1.7	0,612	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
8	X1.8	0,453	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
9	X1.9	0,682	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
10	X1.10	0,595	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
11	X1.11	0,621	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
12	X1.12	0,643	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
13	X1.13	0,486	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
14	X1.14	0,530	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
15	X1.15	0,574	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**

Table 5. Validity Test of Awareness and Participation (X2) against the Decision to Choose a Leader (Y)

No	Item	Calculated r-value	r-table value	Criteria	Conclusion
1	X2.1	0,356	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
2	X2.2	0,628	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
3	X2.3	0,723	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
4	X2.4	0,422	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
5	X2.5	0,419	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
6	X2.6	0,538	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
7	X2.7	0,679	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
8	X2.8	0,447	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
9	X2.9	0,610	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
10	X2.10	0,580	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**

11	X2.11	0,492	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
12	X2.12	0,706	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
13	X2.13	0,501	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
14	X2.14	0,530	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
15	X2.15	0,482	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**

Table 6. Validity Test of Santri Knowledge (X3) against the Decision to Choose a Leader (Y)

No	Item	Calculated r-value	r-table value	Criteria	Conclusion
1	X3.1	0,497	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
2	X3.2	0,625	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
3	X3.3	0,563	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
4	X3.4	0,703	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
5	X3.5	0,566	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
6	X3.6	0,580	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
7	X3.7	0,612	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
8	X3.8	0,734	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
9	X3.9	0,654	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
10	X3.10	0,563	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
11	X3.11	0,674	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
12	X3.12	0,603	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
13	X3.13	0,596	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
14	X3.14	0,652	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**
15	X3.15	0,564	0,339	r_calculated ≤ r_table	**Valid**

Validity testing was conducted to determine the extent to which each questionnaire item accurately measured what it was intended to measure. In this study, validity was assessed using the Pearson Product Moment correlation by correlating the score of each individual item with the total score of the respective variable. Based on the results of processing the questionnaire data using the SPSS program and manual calculations, the following results were obtained:

Variable X1 (Santri Motives)

Out of the 15 statement items tested, all 15 items were declared valid, as their calculated r-values ($r_{\text{calculated}}$) exceeded the critical table value (r_{table}). This indicates that every statement item under the *santri* motives variable accurately measures its intended dimension.

Variable X2 (Awareness and Participation)

The test results indicate that all 15 items were declared valid, as each item exhibited a correlation coefficient above the threshold of 0.339 ($r > 0.339$). This signifies that every item within the awareness and participation variable maintains a statistically significant correlation with the total variable score. Consequently, all statement items are considered suitable for measuring the level of awareness and participation among *santri* in this study.

Variable X3 (Santri Knowledge)

Similarly to Variable X2, the validity test results demonstrate that all 15 statement items were declared valid, given that their calculated r-values ($r_{\text{calculated}}$) were greater than the critical table value (r_{table}). This confirms that each statement consistently measures the targeted constructs.

Thus, it can be concluded that all research instruments are declared reliable, as the Cronbach's Alpha value for each variable is above the minimum threshold of 0.60. This indicates that the research instrument possesses a good level of consistency and is dependable for use in subsequent data analysis.

Normality Test

A normality test is conducted to determine whether the research data is normally distributed (Jonathan Sarwono, 2011). This test uses the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk (S-W) tests with a significance level of 0.05.

Table 7. Normality Test Results

Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Sig.)	Shapiro-Wilk (Sig.)	Information
Santri Motif (X1)	0,200	0,123	Normal
Awareness & Participation (X2)	0,200	0,475	Normal
Knowledge (X3) – certain items	0,000	0,000	Abnormal

As shown in Table 7, the majority of variables met the threshold for normal distribution ($p > .05$). Although a single item within the knowledge variable (X_3) deviated from normality, the assumption was maintained on the basis of sample size adequacy ($n = 34$) and the Central Limit Theorem.

Linearity Test

Table 8. Linearity Test Results

Variable	Linearity (Sig.)	Deviation from Linearity (Sig.)	Information
Motif (X1)	< 0,001	0,030	Non-linear (there is deviation)
Participation (X2)	< 0,001	0,881	The linear relationship is significant
Knowledge (X3)	< 0,001	0,753	The linear relationship is significant

Motive (X_1) has a linearity significance value of < 0.001 (< 0.05), but its deviation from linearity value is 0.030 (< 0.05). This indicates the presence of a deviation, meaning that the relationship between motive and the decision in choosing a leader is not fully linear.

Participation (X_2) has a linearity significance value of < 0.001 (< 0.05) and a deviation from linearity of 0.881 (> 0.05). Thus, there is a significant linear relationship between participation and the decision in choosing a leader.

Knowledge (X_3) has a linearity significance value of < 0.001 (< 0.05) and a deviation from linearity of 0.753 (> 0.05). This means that there is a significant linear relationship between knowledge and the decision in choosing a leader.

Based on the linearity test results, it can be concluded that the variables Participation (X_2) and Knowledge (X_3) have a significant linear relationship with the dependent variable (Decision in Choosing a Leader). Meanwhile, the Motive variable (X_1) is not fully linear due to a deviation from linearity (< 0.05).

Hypothesis Testing

The F-test is used to determine whether all independent variables (X_1, X_2, X_3) simultaneously have a significant effect on Y.

a) H_0: There is no significant simultaneous effect of $X_1, X_2,$and X_3 on Y.

b) H_1: There is a significant simultaneous effect of $X_1, X_2,$and X_3 on Y.

Decision-making criteria:

a) If Sig. < 0.05 → H_0 is rejected, meaning $X_1, X_2,$and X_3 simultaneously affect Y.

b) If Sig. > 0.05 → H_0 is accepted.

Based on the SPSS data processing results (ANOVA regression), the Sig. value was obtained as < 0.05, so H_0 is rejected. Thus, $X_1, X_2,$and X_3 simultaneously have a significant effect on Y.

The t-test is used to determine the individual effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable.

a) H_0: There is no significant effect of variable X on Y.

b) H_1: There is a significant effect of variable X on Y.

Decision-making criteria:

a) If Sig. < 0.05 → H_0 is rejected → there is a significant effect.

b) If Sig. > 0.05 → H_0 is accepted → there is no significant effect.

Test results:

1. Motive (X_1) → Sig. value > 0.05 (due to significant linearity deviation), meaning it has no significant effect on Y.
2. Participation (X_2) → Sig. value < 0.05 → has a significant effect on Y.
3. Knowledge (X_3) → Sig. value < 0.05 → has a significant effect on Y.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) indicates how much the independent variables are able to explain the variation in the dependent variable. Based on the SPSS output, the R^2 value is > 0.70 (strong). This means that $X_1, X_2,$and X_3 are able to explain more than 70% of the variation in Y, while the remaining portion is influenced by other factors outside the study.

Discussion

Based on the results of the data analysis conducted, a comprehensive overview was obtained regarding the relationship between the independent variables—consisting of Motive (X_1), Participation and Awareness (X_2), and Knowledge (X_3)—and the dependent variable, Decision in Choosing a Leader (Y). The findings of this study will be discussed in greater depth with reference to relevant theories and previous research.

Normality Test Results

The normality test results indicate that most of the variables, namely Motive (X_1), Participation and Awareness (X_2), and Y, are normally distributed because the significance values of both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests are > 0.05. Meanwhile, the Knowledge variable (X_3) has a significance value of < 0.05, indicating a non-normal distribution. Nevertheless, since the sample size of this study is 34 respondents ($n > 30$), according to the principles of the Central Limit Theorem (CLT), the data distribution is still considered approximately normal. Therefore, the assumption of normality is met, allowing for the use of parametric analysis.

These results reinforce the finding that the quality of the respondents' data is relatively stable and suitable for further analysis using linear regression tests.

Linearity Test Results

The linearity test results demonstrate that Participation and Awareness (X_2) and Knowledge (X_3) have a linear relationship with Y, as their Deviation from Linearity values are > 0.05. Conversely, the Motive variable (X_1) has a Deviation from Linearity value of 0.030 (< 0.05), indicating that its relationship with Y is not fully linear. This suggests that the influence of motivation on the decision to choose a leader does not necessarily increase consistently with higher motivation scores. In other words, other factors influence how individuals manifest their voting behavior. Political behavior theory explains that individual motivation is often influenced by external conditions, such as the social environment, political culture, and the voter's experience in the democratic process.

This finding aligns with several previous studies stating that personal motives tend to have a more complex relationship compared to participation, awareness, and knowledge factors, and thus are not always strictly linear.

Hypothesis Testing Results

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing using multiple linear regression analysis, the following conclusions were obtained:

F-Test (Simultaneous): A significance value of less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) indicates that Motive, Participation and Awareness, as well as Knowledge simultaneously have a significant effect on the Decision in Choosing a Leader. This means that the research model is suitable for explaining the phenomenon under study.

t-Test (Partial):

Motive (X_1) does not have a significant effect on Y because the significance value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). This result is consistent with the linearity test, which indicates a deviation, suggesting that the relationship between X_1 and Y is not fully linear.

Participation and Awareness (X_2) has a significant effect on Y because the significance value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). This finding demonstrates that a higher level of individual

participation and awareness in the political process corresponds to a higher level of involvement in the decision to choose a leader.

Knowledge (X_3) also has a significant effect on Y because the significance value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). This proves that sound knowledge regarding politics and leadership will enhance an individual's informed decision-making in choosing a leader.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2): An R^2 value greater than 0.70 ($R^2 > 0.70$) indicates that more than 70% of the variation in Y can be explained simultaneously by X_1, X_2, and X_3, while the remaining variance is influenced by other factors outside the scope of this study.

Based on the results of the SPSS data processing, the distribution of respondents' answers was obtained in the form of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Generally, the mean value for each variable falls into the high category, indicating that the students' (*santri*) motives, awareness, participation, and knowledge regarding elections are at a good level. The results of this study offer several important findings. First, although individual motives are among the psychological factors that can influence political behavior, the results show that:

Motives do not have a significant partial effect on the awareness of choosing a leader. This may occur because individual motives are often not directly manifested in voting actions, but are instead influenced by external factors. This aligns with political behavior theory, which states that individual motivation is complex and frequently influenced by external factors such as political culture, experience, group influence, and social environmental conditions. Thus, personal motives do not automatically translate into consistent political awareness when choosing a leader (Fitria B & Robi C, 2020).

The political role of *santri* in national political dynamics can be developed to become more productive. A shift in interpretation and authentic teachings will foster a more constructive political dialogue and communication between *santri* and constituents who, in Geertz's typology, belong to the *priyayi* and *abangan* categories. Through this process, *santri* political activists and Islamic parties can develop political policies and programs that better serve the public interest of the electorate. From this, the political practice of *santri* is developed as a religious transformation aimed at fostering a more democratic political life and empowering the social and economic conditions of the Muslim-majority population (Ilham, 2020). Voting behavior is part of political behavior; explanations regarding the political behavior patterns of *santri* in each Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) are generally influenced by organizational factors, which are heavily considered when making political choices (Widiyaningrum, 2020).

Participation is proven to be the dominant factor in increasing voting awareness. Respondents who are more active in political activities tend to have a better understanding and awareness when choosing a leader. This is consistent with political participation theory, which emphasizes that the higher a person's involvement in political activities—whether through discussions, organizations, or social activities related to leadership—the greater their awareness in exercising their right to vote (Sastroatmodjo S, 1995).

The involvement of the younger generation, particularly the *santri*, in instilling democratic values within *pesantren* also exerts a significant influence. The *pesantren* environment possesses a unique character in managing existing diversity and pluralism. In organizing education within *pesantren*, advisors play a highly strategic role in determining institutional policies (Alfitri, 2008). As educational institutions, *pesantren* are strongly expected to participate in cultivating and fostering democratic values. Thus, conveying democratic values to *santri* through the development of civic disposition enables them to navigate social realities in life. The cultivation of these democratic values is carried out to guide *santri* so that they remain rooted in genuine

democratic cultural values when confronting socio-cultural realities in the era of globalization (Zaini, 2023).

Political knowledge also makes a major contribution to voting awareness. A solid understanding of politics enables voters to be more rational and responsible in making their choices. This aligns with political education theory, which stresses the importance of a clear comprehension of the political system, the vision and mission of prospective leaders, and public issues (Filsa Soraya et al., 2023). Adequate knowledge allows voters to make more rational and responsible political decisions. Achieving high levels of participation requires broad knowledge, which can be acquired through education. Education equips individuals with extensive knowledge, thereby transforming public political participation into an active form (Talaoho, 2022).

The findings of this study demonstrate that religious factors exert a dominant influence on *santri*'s motives for choosing a leader. The political awareness and participation of the *santri* are classified as high, as evidenced by their commitment to participate in elections and their understanding of their rights and responsibilities as voters. The *santri*'s knowledge further supports this, with the majority of respondents possessing a strong understanding of electoral systems, rules, and procedures. Overall, this study demonstrates that *santri* are not merely objects of religious education, but also play a significant role in Indonesia's democratic practice.

In conclusion, this study reinforces political behavior theory, which emphasizes the importance of participation and knowledge as the main factors shaping public political awareness, whereas motives serve as an additional variable that does not always exhibit a linear and significant relationship.

CONCLUSION

This study provides empirical insights into the factors influencing the voting decisions of *santri* at the Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School in Central Bangka Regency. The findings demonstrate that political awareness, active participation, and political knowledge collectively play a pivotal role in shaping candidate selection during elections. However, a key empirical nuance reveals that individual motives do not exert a direct or significant partial influence on voting decisions. This non-linear relationship suggests that psychological motives do not automatically manifest in voting actions unless supported by sound political understanding and active civic involvement. Consequently, *santri* demonstrate value-driven and rational political behavior, prioritizing candidate integrity, religious values, and democratic responsibility over passive external influences or unaligned personal motivations.

The theoretical contribution of this research refines classical political behavior models by illustrating that youth within traditional religious institutions function as conscious and deliberative voters. Rather than acting purely out of allegiance to socio-religious authority, their voting decisions are strongly driven by cognitive literacy and a clear understanding of civic rights and duties. From a practical standpoint, the study highlights the strategic importance of *pesantren* as crucial spaces for fostering democratic values and civic dispositions. Enhancing formal political education and collaboration between electoral management bodies and *pesantren* leadership remains vital to further strengthening electoral literacy, particularly regarding technical procedures and oversight mechanisms.

Despite these insights, the study carries limitations related to its localized scope and small sample size within a single institution, which restricts broader generalizability. Additionally, the non-significant role of individual motives points to potential underlying mediating or moderating factors. Future research should expand the scope through multi-site studies across diverse *pesantren* models, incorporating additional variables such as digital political literacy, social media consumption, and the nuanced leadership dynamics of religious scholars.

DECLARATIONS

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Author Contributions

Iskandarwin: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft; **Hatamar Rasyid:** Supervision, Validation, Writing – Review & Editing; **Indah Kusuma Dewi:** Data Curation, Writing – Review & Editing. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Ethical Approval and Informed Consent

This study was conducted with permission from the leadership of Nurul Falah Islamic Boarding School, Central Bangka, Indonesia. Participation was voluntary, and all responses were anonymized and treated confidentially.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. The data are not publicly available because they contain responses from minors and are restricted to protect participant confidentiality and privacy.

Declaration of Generative AI Use

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) solely for language editing (grammar, spelling, and readability). The authors reviewed and edited the output and take full responsibility for the content of the publication. Generative AI was not used to produce data, analyses, findings, or references, and is not listed as an author.

Declaration of Originality

The authors declare that this manuscript is original, has not been published previously, is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, and is free from plagiarism. Its publication has been approved by all authors.

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