

THE INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF THE STUDENTS OF AI IMDAD ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL BANTUL AS VOTERS IN THE 2024 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Marwiyah

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia
E-mail: marwiyah.mlis@uin-suka.ac.id*

Labibah Zain

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Aliva Diva Kamila

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Fadlan Agustina Firdaus

Universitas PGRI Semarang, Indonesia

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Abstract

A presidential election is an important national event where people use their right to vote as a form of their participation in affording a legitimate national leader. Santri is part of the community to vote in the 2024 Presidential Election. Santri are a community group that lives in an environment with distinctive characteristics such as a limited social environment, restrictions on the use of gadgets, and great obedience to kyai. This research aims to explore the students' behavior in retrieving the information they need to vote in the election, to find out both the internal and external aspects that influence them in making their decisions. This research involves 67 informants taken from the students of Al Imdad Top Islamic High School, who have the right to vote in the 2024 Presidential Election. Data collection is done by asking open questions concerning the aspects of information searching, such as information sources, information search, information evaluation, and information use. Then the data are analyzed in 3 steps: coding, identifying the theme, pattern, and relation, and summarizing the data. The research result shows that basically the santri (students) have performed the four important aspects of information seeking but in different level of implementation. Limited access to electronic information plays a role in the process of gathering information about the presidential election. Therefore, human information sources in the santri environment, such as kyai and teachers become an alternative source and consequently, these figures influence santris in making decision. Although the students evaluate the information provided by these figures, it is less critical than it should be. This study ultimately found that santri have participated in the democratic process in Indonesia, but on the other hand, santri still need to have information literacy skills to ensure that they are able to search for, evaluate, and use information to participate in civic engagement, so that in making decisions they are not influenced by authoritative figures, but rather depend more on authoritative information sources.

Keywords: information-seeking behavior, presidential election, santri, Islamic boarding school.

INTRODUCTION

A presidential election is basically about decision-making to vote for the legitimate person to lead the country. At the same time, it also becomes a way for the people to have good governance, leadership, and economic health, as it enables them to choose the right person at the right time (Ayinde et al., 2021). Therefore, it is crucial for people to have enough knowledge/information about presidential candidates, and the development of digital media has made it possible for them to get the information they need to make the right decisions. As we know it in Indonesia, social media has played a significant role in the development of democracy, particularly in encouraging people to express ideas and feelings (Harahap, 2020). Even social networking has now been an integrated part of political campaigns because it can be used by politicians for promotion purposes, like when they are having interactive communication with possible voters (Bronstein et al., 2018). The use of social media for political purposes is so common in many countries, like Russia and Kazakhstan (Sairambay, 2022), America (Sahly et al., 2019), and Indonesia (Ratnamulyani, 2018). We have to admit, however, that the form of information resources varies. In addition to social media, we have television (Ayinde et al., 2021) and also individuals who may serve as subjective information resources. During the campaign time, all these information resources influence the people in making their decisions about the presidential candidates they like to vote. Understanding the need to evaluate information related to politics is a crucial aspect of information literacy, which often poses a challenge for teenagers when engaging with political information sources; in fact, issues involving politicians are frequently treated as jokes, and information is often sourced from unverified sources that lack credibility (Alexander et al., 2009). Therefore, young people need to be able to understand and evaluate the political information they get. It is important to note here that the youth's disengagement in political processes and their ability to make critical information evaluations will leave significant impacts on the health and function of a democratic society (Smith & McMenemy, 2017).

In a santri society, or an Islamic boarding school, kyai (religious leader) is a person likely to serve as an information resource and a santri will normally listen to what the kyai says (Jati, 2023). In this type of society, kyai is the most respected person and a figure to follow (Rismawati & Adi, 2022) figure who fosters a nearly sacred teacher-student relationship (Zakiah, 2004) which leads students to dedicate themselves to the Kyai (Maghfiroh, 2021). He plays a significant role either in religious life or in social-political aspect (Jamil, 2020). On the other hand, santri is a person of a subordinate position and will always obey and listen to his/her superordinate, which is, in this case, the kyai (Rismawati & Adi, 2022). The absolute authority of the kyai and the santri's obedience to the kyai are the cornerstones of pesantren culture, resulting in a patron-client relationship between the two. This unequal dynamic, in which the santri serves as the client and the kyai as the patron, also the charisma and influence of the Kyai are often exploited for various political gains (Masruri et al., 2019).

In the 2024 Presidential Election, the santris of Al Imdad Islamic Boarding School became one of the social groups to vote for the first time. The political tradition of pesantren with kyai as its central figure, however, has its root to the coming of Islam to Indonesia, especially in Java (Ilham, 2020). It is written in the history that on October 22, 1945, kyais (who are activists of the big Islamic organization called NU) issued a policy called "jihad resolution" for re-establishing NKRI (Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia). Seen in this context, santris have every reason to be involved in political matters. The 2024 Presidential Election can be an important moment for them to put the "jihad resolution" in its social-political context (Thomafi,

2023). As the central figure in pesantren, kyai is highly powerful in influencing his students (santris) in making their decisions about the president candidate they want to vote for in the presidential election, and at the same time, the santris' obedience to their kyai may lead them to the lack of critical thinking in voting in the presidential election. The development of digital technology, however, enables the santris to get information, with which they will develop a different perspective. Therefore, it is expected that the santris will make use of digital technology to get the information they need for voting in the presidential election, even though the use of digital technology (handphone, for instance) in pesantren is restricted. Therefore, it is interesting to study how the santris get the information they need to vote in the presidential election. This is about information retrieval behavior that refers to how people get and use information (Kundu, 2022) and how people satisfy their curiosity and their need of information (Wilson, 2024), involving the four aspects of information seeking: information resource, information searching, information evaluation, and information use (Large et al., 2001; Wilson, 2000).

Located in Pajangan, Bantul, Yogyakarta, Pesantren AL Imdad (Al Imdad Islamic Boarding School) has a Madrasah Aliyah Unggulan (Top Islamic High School) with santris having the right to vote in the 2024 Presidential Election. Pesantren Al Imdad applies the rule that restricts the use of gadgets (handphones, for instance), but it has educational facilities, like a computer laboratory and a library managed by a professional librarian. The library is completed with supporting facilities, like computers and smart TVs, which enable the students to build digital literacy competence. The availability of library, with its professional librarian manager, has the potential to support the use of information about politics (Smith & McMenemy, 2017). Therefore, this research aims to answer the questions concerning the information retrieval behavior of the students of Top Islamic High School of Pesantren Al Imdad, putting emphasis on the four important aspects: information resource, information retrieval, information evaluation, and information use.

RESEARCH METHOD

In the perspective of Library Science, research on information retrieval behavior is to see if a library user has the general experience of information retrieval, which then can be articulated and explained (Kuhlthau, 2004). Qualitative approach is, therefore, more suitable to be used in such research. It can be used to explore the students' experience in retrieving information about the presidential election. This is in line with what Arikunto (2014) says that qualitative research is aimed at collecting information about the status of phenomena as they are, as when the research is conducted. In this research, qualitative approach is used to reveal the phenomena when santris (students of Islamic boarding school) are using their right to vote in a presidential election.

For this research, informants are selected by using purposive sampling technique, that is, selecting informants based on particular goals and consideration, like taking as informants only those persons who are well-informed of the object being studied. Those persons can be public figures, experts, or practitioners (Djamil, 2015). In this research, the persons taken as informants are santris as the persons voting in the 2024 Presidential Election. As this research aims at exploring the information-seeking behavior of santris in the 2024 presidential election, all santris who meet the requirements has the same opportunity to become voters are considered to become informants. Since the number of students reaches more than 100 santris,

it is necessary to conduct a sample size assessment using a saturation approach. Saturation refers to data collection where there are no more issues or additional insights, with indications of repeated answers indicating that an adequate sample size has been achieved (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Santris who were willing to participate in this study were given open-ended questions. Among all the students, there were varied answers which then led to similar responses, and when it reached respondent 67, the answers were considered saturated, so 67 respondents were sufficient.

In the qualitative research, surveys can be used as a data collection method in order to learn more about preferences, viewpoints, or beliefs, which are commonly used for social research with the aim of examining the traits and experiences of social groups (Chinyere & Val, 2023). In this research, a study was conducted on a certain community group, namely the students at Al Imdad Islamic Boarding School, to identify the information-seeking behavior patterns related to the presidential election. Data collecting is done by asking an open question consisting of 16 items developed from Ellis' theory, covering the 8 information retrieval steps: starting, chaining, browsing, differentiating, monitoring, extracting, verifying, and ending (Purnama, 2021). Asking an open question concerning critical information retrieval makes it possible for the informants to answer the question by referring to their voting experience in the 2024 Presidential Election, and this may result in a clear description of the santris' information retrieval behavior during their participation in the presidential election.

In terms of data analysis, this research basically uses the method developed by Miles and Huberman, which consists of data reduction, data model, and conclusion (Emzir, 2016). In its implementation, the data analysis is done in detail following three steps in qualitative research (Methodology Business Research, n.d.), they are: Coding, that is, categorizing data using 4 aspects of information retrieval behavior and stages of information retrieval; Identifying themes, patterns, and relations, that is, by comparing the data from the answers to the questions with the data from primary and secondary resources and interviews; Summarizing data, that is, by relating the findings to the research questions and the research goal, which is to see the students' information retrieval behavior when participating as voters in the 2024 Presidential Election.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As said earlier, this research aims to see how the santris (students) of Al Imdad Top Islamic High School retrieve information, emphasizing the four important aspects, they are, information source, information retrieval, information evaluation, and information usage. The research result is as follows.

The Use of Information Resources to Search for the Information of the President Candidates and the Presidential Election

As one of the social groups who have the right to vote and will participate as voters in the presidential election for the first time, the santris (students) have, in one way or another, tried to search for the information they need. In this digital era, there are a lot of electronic information resources that people can use to get information about the presidential election and the presidential candidates, in addition to printed information resources, such as new papers. In the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) Al Imdad, however, the use of digital media is restricted; it is allowed only at certain times, like when the santris receive family visits, or when

the santris are home for holidays. The santris of Al Imdad Islamic Boarding School, therefore, cannot benefit much from the development of digital technology. So, to satisfy the information needs of the presidential election they rely on the closest, available information resources, like kyai, teachers, pesantren organizers, family members, and friends. The posters of the presidential candidates, as seen in public so many spaces, may interest the students, but teachers, kyai, and pesantren organizers remain the most used information sources.

In the students' eyes, these figures are trustworthy, well-informed, and have the experience of presidential election processes as voters. This is the reason why the students take them as information resources. In fact, kyai and teachers are important because they are religious leaders and they play significant roles in community development, besides kyai is sometimes involved in politics. All this has made kyai a credible information resource for politics for the community (Mutuillah, 2024). This situation is also seen in this research. The students take for granted that the information coming from kyai is right, valid, and accurate. Only a few of them have different opinions, saying that the problem is that they do not have information resources, other than kyai, teachers, and parents. In the meantime, other information media, like newspapers, does not interest them much, although it is available in the pesantren. Only a few of the students use it as an alternative information resource. Most of the students trust kyai, teachers, and pesantren organizers more than newspapers because they are persons whom they can talk to and persons to whom they can ask questions about the presidential election. There is an indication that human information resources are more interesting for the students than passive information resources, like newspapers, are.

Table 2. Information sources used by santri for the Presidential Election

Number	Question	Answer	Amount of answer
1	Searching for information about presidential candidates before voting	1. Not searching 2. Searching	7 61
2	Used information resources	1. newspaper 2. Kyai, teachers, <i>pesantren</i> organizers 3. Friends and family 4. Other resources: Posters YouTube	5 41 26 3
3	Reasons for choosing the information resources	1. No other resources, except kyai, teachers, family, friends 2. It is easy to ask and talk to kyai, teachers, family, and friends	9 17
4	Other used information resources (electronic resource)	No, students start using social media after finishing education in the <i>pesantren</i> , that is, after June 2024	Most students do not use electronic resources

Information Searching

Information searching is a search for the needed information. It has two important aspects, they are, the use of the appropriate searching word and the use of the right strategy:

- a. The use of the appropriate search terms: factual searching, subject searching;

b. The use of the appropriate searching strategy to get specific results.

These aspects can only be used in electronic information searching. Since the students of Al Imdad use human information resources, they do not do these two aspects. The only strategy they do is by choosing the right human information resources, and they are, as said by the students, kyai, teachers, and parents. The other criteria for choosing human resources are a person they can discuss things with and a person who does not provoke them to vote for a particular candidate.

That they do not use electronic media for searching information of the presidential election does not mean they are incapable of doing it. They do it, especially with handphones, when they have a chance, like when they are having holidays or when they have finished their education in the pesantren. After the presidential election, again the santri searched for information on the presidential candidates using the search engine Google. They do it in a simple way, starting with using search terms like the presidential candidate's name, mission, and vision. In this simple information search, they do not use a searching strategy, like using an operator (for example, Boolean operators) or searching restriction, like which year and which website. This does not matter as the students search for general information about the presidential candidates and the presidential election, and Google can be used for searching for information about particular figures and events. Nevertheless, the students (particularly female students) know the authoritative websites that can be used to get valid information about the presidential election, that is, the website of KPU (General Election Commission) and that of BAWASLU (General Election Supervisory Agency) as official websites of the government to provide various information of the presidential election. In addition, the students also use the official website of the candidate and the websites of credible newspapers such as Kompas and Kumparan.

Table 3. Search strategy applied by santri

Number	Question	Answer	Amount of answer
1	Used searching word	Not using electronic information sources, but know how to search for information in electronic media:	
		1) Not using in a specific way	2
		2) Using the presidential candidate's name as searching word	28
		3) Using keyword: vision and mission of the candidate	2
		4) Valid websites of the government (KPU, Bawaslu, official websites of the government)	12
		5) Newspaper websites (Kompas, Kumparan)	4
		6) Searching in the social media: fyp, short video, youtube	10

2	Searching electronic resource	strategy for information	Not using strategy, not using electronic information resource	No strategy is used, for all the information they get
	Searching electronic resource	strategy for non-information	1. Choosing trustable, experienced person information resource 2. Discussion with person who is not provocative	53 1

In the information retrieval process, one thing the searcher has to do is to evaluate the information before using it. This evaluation will be about checking if the information is relevant, but because the students highly trust the person information resource they use, the information is already considered relevant and trustable. In other words, the students do not examine the relevance of the information in a specific way. The evaluation, instead, is done before they use the information for voting, which in David Ellis's theory, comes in verification and ending phases

Information Evaluation

Information retrieval is considered fruitful when the searcher is able to use it for, in this case, voting for the presidential candidate. Before using the information, the searcher must evaluate it, by comparing it with other information (to verify its validity) and by considering its supporting aspects. Table 4 below shows how the students evaluate (or do not evaluate) the information they get.

Table 4 Information Evaluation

Number	Question	Answer	Amount of Answer
1	Evaluate the information	1. Do not evaluate because: having no means to evaluate, do not know how to evaluate	9
		2. Do not evaluate because of trust	2
		3. Sometimes, when there is something peculiar	2
		4. Evaluate	29
2	How to evaluate	1. Comparing the information with another one	43
		2. Evaluate the information content	16
		3. Content writer	3
		4. Where the content comes from	2
3	Keeping updated on the presidential election information	1. Do not keep updated	28
		2. Do not keep updated at all	8
		3. Keep updated only when HP is at hand	3
		4. Keep updated	30

This table shows that some of the students do not evaluate the information they get because they trust the human information resources they use (kyai, teachers, pesantren organizers, and parents). Other than that, they do not evaluate the information because they are incapable of doing it and have no means to do it. A few other students, however, like to evaluate the information they get when they feel something peculiar in it. In general, most of the students

(29 students) evaluate the information they get. They evaluate the information in some ways: some by comparing it with other information (43 students), some by comparing opinions to draw conclusions and make decisions, and some others by evaluating the information content, like looking at the presidential candidate's reputation and his leadership history. The content writer (who writes the information) is the other thing they take into consideration in the evaluation. In addition, there are things the students like to note when searching for information on the presidential candidates, they are, the candidates' vision and missions, the programs, and the policies they will make if elected. This way of information evaluation, however, is only done when the students use electronic information resources. The fact that they use mostly non-electronic information resources and that they are still under educational rules in the pesantren, which means that they are not free to use digital media, indicates that this evaluation is not done by the students by the time they participate as voters in the presidential election. Furthermore, many of the students do not keep themselves updated on the information of the presidential election in social media, as a result of the restriction of digital media use in the pesantren. Some of the female students say that they follow the issues of the presidential election, but they do not say exactly how they do it, and the only possible way for them to do it is when they have handphones at hand

Information Use

The last phase of information retrieval is using the information to accomplish assignments, which is, in this research, voting in the 2024 Presidential Election. They use the information they get for voting, with consideration of some aspects:

- 1) Own thought
- 2) Information evaluation result
- 3) Information from the closest people
- 4) Recommendation and guidance from parents
- 5) What their hearts say

That they take some considerations for making decisions does not mean they are not influenced by external factors, as shown in table 5 below.

Table 5. External factors in information use

Number	Question	Answer	Amount of Answer
1	Is there any external influence	1. No	22
		2. Yes	47
2	Who Influence	1. Not clearly stated	24
		2. Family	15
		3. <i>Kyai</i>	18
		4. Friends	2
		5. Teachers	8
2	How strong the influence is	1. No influence	22
		2. Only suggestion	35
		3. Affirmation/Reinforcement	2
		4. Instruction	10

This table shows that 22 students, consisting of 12 male students and 10 female students, state that they are not influenced by external factors in making decisions on a presidential candidate they vote for. As mentioned earlier, the decision is actually on the students, the external factor's suggestions are just recommendations, making it possible for

them to vote for the presidential candidate they like. Most of the students (47 students), however, are really influenced by external factors in deciding which presidential candidate they want to choose. As stated by 28 students, kyai is the most influential figure, in addition to parents. As many as 15 students state that they are influenced by their parents. The other figures to influence the students (8 students) are teachers, and only 2 students are influenced by friends, which means that friends are not significant influencers for the students of Al Imdad. Meanwhile, 24 female students do not explicitly state that they are influenced by external factors in making their voting decisions. However, the data of the information resources they use, which shows that 31 female students use kyai and teachers as the main information resources (see Table, question number 3, about the information resources they like to use for searching the information of the presidential candidates), indicates that kyai and teachers are figures to influence the students in the presidential election process.

It is true that kyai, teachers, and parents are figures to influence the students in the process of the presidential election, but the influence they leave on the students contains no element of forcing. No student is forced to stick to what they say. As stated by the students (35 students), the external factor influences function as a recommendation only, the decision is on the students. Only ten (10) of the students feel they are instructed to choose a certain candidate, and only 2 of them say that the influence can only function as affirmation. The end phase of the information use is when the students, after all the processes of information selection and evaluation, decide for which presidential candidate they like to vote. In this research, the process results show that all of the female students are consistent in bringing their decision, of the presidential candidate they want to vote, to the polling booth (the place for voting). The same thing happens to the male students, but there is one student who states that he wants to change his decision if only he gets the chance, something which is fully impossible.

Based on the data analysis, done with triangulation data processing, in which the students' answers to the 16 open questions are compared, and based on the interview with kyai, the research shows that the students have done the process of information retrieval, covering the four aspects as seen in the table below.

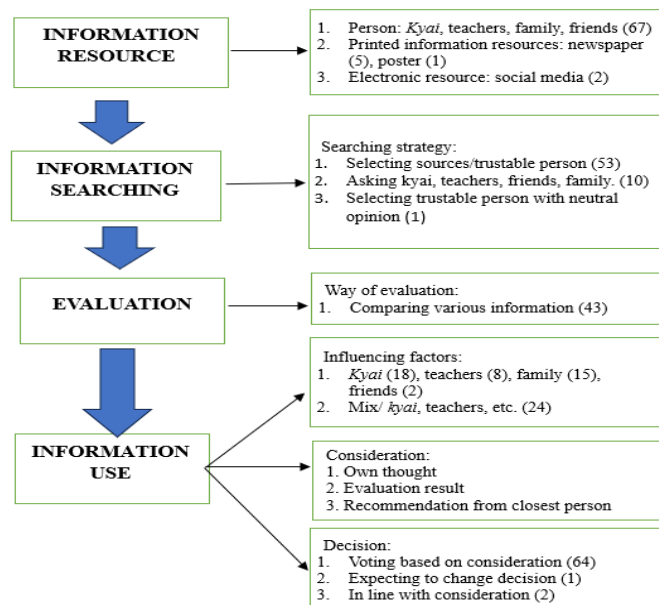


Figure 1 The information -seeking behavior of Santri at Al Imdad

The table shows that students participating as voters in the 2024 Presidential Election have done the information retrieval process as suggested by Wilson, covering the four important steps in information retrieval, they are, selecting information resources for getting information about the presidential election and presidential candidates, information searching process, information evaluation, and information use. The other thing to note here is that this research also shows what is specific in the world of santri and pesantren milieu, that is, the influence of the dominant figures, such as kyai and teachers, in the presidential election. This is shown in the way the santris (students) select the information resources. They rely much on kyai, teachers, pesantren organizers, and family, as a result of the lack of internet access in the pesantren. This lack of internet access is not because of the unavailability of internet networks and tools but because of the lack of time for using the internet in the pesantren (in the pesantren Al Imdad, the use of the internet is restricted). It is understandable, then, that only a few of the students have a chance to use the internet during their education in the pesantren, as explained by 2 students who use social media to get information about the presidential election only when they are home, or when they receive family visits. The availability of newspapers in the pesantren does not make any help in getting the information they need, and from the posters on the streets, they only know who the presidential candidates are. The limited access to online information caused by a lack of time to actively accessing internet or restrictions on gadget use in the pesantren environment results in students potentially experiencing low information, which can lead to becoming low-information voters, individuals who vote though having limited information about political issues, such as presidential candidates (Longley, 2021). However, regarding information use, Al Imdad santri also consider external factors who influence voting, including kyai, not as a necessity, as conveyed by most santri who think opinion from external parties (Kyai, family, friends) only as suggestions. In fact, some of them look for information on the official website of Bawaslu. This shows that even in low-information settings, as voters, santri can gain electoral knowledge (McDermott, 1997).

Another thing to note here is the santris' obedience to their kyai and teachers. The relation of the kyai's superordinate position, on the one hand, and the santris' subordinate position, on the other hand, is the potential to create a situation where the santris build high compliance and obedience to their kyai and teachers (Rismawati & Adi, 2022). In a pesantren community, kyai is a highly respectful figure as both a religious leader and social-political leader (Jamil, 2020), as implied by the students' preference to take him (and teachers) as the main human information resource. In the meantime, friends, for some students, can also become the alternative human information resource they can use. This situation is highly in contrast with that outside the pesantren community, where most adolescents take social media as an information resource and use it as an important method to collect political information (Amoncar, 2020; Morris & Morris, 2023; Sairambay, 2022). Several studies in Indonesia show that the use of social media can be a strategic tool to increase political participation of the younger generation in the 2024 presidential election and has a positive influence on voter behaviour (Cahyo et al., 2024; Fau, 2025). This shows that the use of web-based information sources by the younger generation generally plays an important role in political participation. This means that the ease of access to information owned by teenagers indicates an influence on political engagement compared to those who have access limitations, such as those faced by santris

The fact that most santris highly trust their kyai and teachers so that they do not feel the need to evaluate the information they get is the potential to lead the santris to become lower-

involvement decision-makers, who tend to make decisions out of something habitual and limited evaluation, as often happens to young voters (Winchester et. al., 2015). As stated by some santri, teachers and religious leaders are people who have sufficient knowledge and experience in presidential elections, that make them an authoritative source. This is related to authoritative trust in their kyai and teachers, where kyai are considered to have credibility and competence as sources of information. They use information from kyai and teachers not because of fear or control from the kyai, which is shown by the evaluation of information conducted by several santri. This is in accordance with the principle of authoritative trust; trust based on the recognized competence, credibility, and expertise of a person or source, not merely fear or control. The santri, will follow what their kyai and teachers do. Some santri, however, do information evaluation. They do it in a simple way, that is, by comparing the information they get from kyai, teachers, and family. The santri's lack of internet use becomes another reason why they do not do information evaluation, and at the same time, it pushes them to use a certain strategy to get more relevant information. As mentioned earlier, they have only limited time to use gadgets, even though they have the basic ability to search for web-based information, including valid information about the presidential election. They are also familiar with the use of gadgets, especially handphones, and the only problem for them is that they cannot optimally use them unless they have finished their education in the pesantren. The other fact of santri is that they are capable of using the computer in the laboratory, for the purpose of learning in particular.

In other words, the students of Al Imdad do the information searching to meet their information needs, which is, in this case, the information they need to vote in the 2024 Presidential Election. This information searching is done by using both manual information systems, one with no need for electronic devices, and an electronic-based information system. In the case of the information searching by Al Imdad students, the manual information resources are much more used than the electronic information resources because the use of gadgets or electronic devices is restricted in the pesantren. In this situation, the students passively do the information retrieval, by talking, face to face, with other people, like kyai, teachers, and pesantren organizers. In addition, they also do the information searching by reading the newspaper available in the pesantren. At the same time, the electronic-based information resources are less used. It is true that they are allowed to use handphones, but only when they are home or receive a family visit.

The use of manual information resources leads the students to passive information searching. This way, they rely much on the closest persons for the information they need and feel no need for a search strategy for the best result because kyai and teachers are satisfying enough for them. They do not even feel the need to do information evaluation because they take their kyai and teachers as valid, credible information resources. The only information evaluation they do is by comparing all the information coming from kyai, teachers, and family and by seeing which information is most neutral. Nevertheless, the strong influence of those significant figures functions as recommendation or advice only, containing no element of forcing. Whatever the information says, the decision is on the students.

CONCLUSION

The students' information-seeking behaviour has covered four important aspects: information resources, information search, information evaluation, and information use. Due to

limited access to web-based information sources, santri tend to use various information sources that may help meet their informational needs regarding presidential candidates, and most of them use human information sources; religious leaders (kyai), teachers, family, and friends. Thus, information search is also only limited to trusted human information sources that do not require specific strategies as is the case when searching in web-based information sources. However, the Santri have evaluated the information they obtained in a simple way, namely by selecting information from human information sources that is most appropriate and reasonable. This shows that obedience to the kyai, which is one of the characteristics of the santri, does not prevent santri from remaining critical of the information conveyed by the kyai, even though they acknowledge that the kyai and teachers are authoritative information sources. The use of rational thinking by adjusting to the conditions among the santri in the search for information demonstrates the adaptive rational aspect of this study. On the other hand, the potential of santri as learners shows a tendency in the aspect of critical thinking possessed by the santri. This will be even better if supported by training or a curriculum that supports information literacy so that santri in particular, and students in general, will have better competence in searching for information for various purposes, including political engagement

SUGGESTION

Based on the findings, Islamic boarding schools should strengthen santri's information literacy and civic literacy by integrating structured training on how to search, compare, evaluate, and use political information critically. Since the study shows that santri tend to rely on human information sources such as kyai, teachers, family, and pesantren administrators due to limited access to digital media, pesantren libraries and school institutions need to provide supervised access to credible political information sources, especially official websites such as KPU and Bawaslu, while still respecting pesantren regulations on gadget use. Kyai, teachers, and librarians should also be positioned not merely as sources of political information, but as facilitators who guide santri to verify information independently, compare different perspectives, and make voting decisions based on valid, balanced, and authoritative information. Future studies are recommended to involve pesantren from different regions and compare santri's information-seeking behaviour across varying levels of digital access, religious authority, and political literacy to obtain a broader understanding of young voters in pesantren contexts

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