Modernization of *Al Washliyah* Educational Institutions

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ABSTRACT

The potential of an educational institution to effectively respond to quickly evolving circumstances significantly influences its long-term viability. Consequently, the ability for educational institutions to adopt modern practices is critical. *Al Washliyah*, founded in 1930 in Medan, is one of the most sizable Islamic organizations and is credited with establishing numerous educational institutions. Consequently, the objective of this study is to investigate the effect and contribution of *Al Washliyah*, with a particular focus on the realm of education. Additionally, it seeks to identify the typology of modernization implemented by *Al Washliyah* educational institutions and to scrutinize the various facets of modernization undertaken by said institutions. For the purpose of accomplishing this objective, a historical lit review was conducted. The findings of this study indicate that the *Al Washliyah* educational institution has implemented a revitalization strategy, which entails preserving venerable old traditions while incorporating better-regarded innovations into the realm of educational advancement. The modernization of the *Al Washliyah* educational institution is evident in its human resources (HR), courses of study, institutions, and objectives.

Introduction

Historical records attest that *Al Washliyah* has significantly advanced Islamic civilization, particularly in the domains of education, *da'wah*, and social philanthropy. Despite not having accomplished as much in terms of quantity as Muhammadiyah and NU, Al Washliyah's legacy of a dazzling clerical and intellectual tradition, particularly in North Sumatra, is extremely significant. Presently, *Al Washliyah* is confronted with modernization challenges progressively more intricate, and these challenges have caused a multitude of setbacks for the city. Compared to its former grandeur, the impact of modernization on *Al Washliyah* appears to have been significantly diminished in terms of quality (at least this is acknowledged by *Al Washliyah* figures).

Modernization can be classified into various typologies, among which revitalization is one (Nurmahmudah, 2023). Within the framework of Islamic education's modernization, some individuals implement innovations or substantial (radical) overhauls of the established

educational systems. The stark contrast between modern Islamic boarding schools and *Salafi* Islamic boarding schools serves as a conspicuous illustration of the immense division that exists between modernist and reactionary factions. Both of them are in the process of maturing and possess unique qualities, including both advantages and disadvantages. Similarly, the proliferation of modern Islamic educational institutions (Islamic Schools/Integrated Islamic Schools), which theoretically operate under the Ministry of Education and Culture but bear the Islamic label, poses an ever-increasing threat to the very existence of *madrasa*s, which stand in contrast to modern Islamic boarding schools and adhere to *Salafi* principles.

The *Al Washliyah* educational institution is distinguished by its capacity to simultaneously uphold tradition and accommodate the requirements of modernization. Although this tradition is beginning to wane, the *Al Washliya* educational institution continues to demonstrate resilience or resistance. This article aims to examine the philosophy and typology of Al Washliyah's renewal, as well as elements of educational modernization, its contribution, and its influence, through the lens of literature review analysis.

Modernity is characterized primarily by progress (Broo et al., 2022). However, this progress can only be realized through the empowerment of human resources (HR). It is recognized that modernity is a cultural condition marked by constant change. Thus, adaptation is the only determinant of survival, advancement, and growth. Similarly, the *Al Washliyah* educational organization should adhere to the tide of transformation, and it can sustain its existence. Simultaneously, *Al Washliyah* must amass the necessary resources or militant cadres to ensure the continuation of the narrative and history in the coming years. This section evaluates the renewal of *Al Washliyah* and its typology from a philosophical standpoint.

Historically, there are at least two things behind the birth of *Al Washliyah*, namely colonialism and the Christianization mission in East Sumatra. *Al Washliyah* took part in expelling and fighting colonialism in Indonesia. With the spirit of his preaching, *Al Washliyah* succeeded in spreading Islam and became a stronghold of faith for the Muslim community in North Sumatra. So, from a historical perspective, *Al Washliyah* has actually modernized because, of course, it would not be possible for Islamic ideas in this case to be developed in a colonial atmosphere. Likewise, if Christian preaching is not balanced with better Islamic preaching, perhaps the story will be different. Muslims today may become a minority in North Sumatra.

In terms of quantity, *Al Washliyah* is the third-largest organization after NU and Muhammadiyah. This statement was put forward by a famous scientist from the Netherlands, Karel A. Steenbrink. With this strategic position, *Al Washliyah* must be able to contribute more or at least equal the organization that previously existed. At the very least, *Al Washliyah* was able to contribute significantly to his homeland (North Sumatra). In the author's opinion, the most real

and widely enjoyed contribution is through educational institutions.

In terms of definition, the name of the organization, *Al Washliyah*, means an association that wants to connect. There is a kind of desire from *Al Washliyah* to connect humans with God, relationships between humans, tribe with tribe, nation with nation, and so on. It is said that *Al Washliyah* was born to connect two large organizations that were born earlier and had different characteristics (Muhammadiyah and NU). Even though there is no reliable written source to clarify this, a number of important figures or people in *Al Washliyah* have stated this. For example, in a lecture, the late Ustadz Ramli Abdul Wahid once stated that *Al Washliyah* was an organization that was founded with the spirit of being a liaison, wasilah, or mediator between two groups, which at that time were being divided by the colonialists, where Muhammadiyah was called the old people and NU was referred to as the young people.

It is interesting to note that the birth of *Al Washliyah* was not dependent on one central or charismatic figure, as in Muhammadiyah, it was greatly influenced by KH. Ahmad Dahlan and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari at NU. The presence of *Al Washliyah* is a joint effort by the figures in their respective roles. From this, it can be understood that *Al Washliyah*, from the start, has instilled democratic values, which are very much in line with the spirit of modernization, not centralized, but all the characters play a role and have their own strengths.

In terms of its emergence, *Al Washliyah* was born from the Debating Club, or association of Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli (MIT) students, which was founded in 1928. This forum was initially aimed only at discussing their lessons. But then there was an enthusiasm to expand the spirit of establishing an association with a much larger focus. It was further explained that MIT is known as the first formal Islamic educational institution in the city of Medan, whose educational activities try to combine traditional and modern systems. Based on this fact, it can be assumed that *Al Washliyah* emerged because of the advanced thoughts of its predecessors. These thoughts come from academics and from scientific forums that have long been established.

Next, *Al Washliyah* formally stated that this organization is an independent organization, carrying out its work actively. Fighting for, maintaining, and fulfilling independence and reforming it towards a new Indonesia. In the theological aspect, *Al Washliyah* believes in *Ahlussunnahwaljama'ah*; in jurisprudence, it prioritizes the *Syafi'i* School of Thought and emphasizes its efforts in the fields of education, *da'wah*, and social charity (Burhanuddin et al., 2022; Pengurus Besar Al Washliyah, 2020a). Specifically, stated that *Al Washliyah* is an open organization, does not hesitate to learn and collaborate with *Muhammadiyah*, and is not awkward about taking a position in conflict with the *Naqsyabandiyah* Order.

Among the most important contributions of *Al Washliyah* are the extraordinary written works of the founders of *Al Washliyah*, which are used as authoritative references in the field of Islamic

knowledge (Ja'far et al., 2022). Even though it is not as big as *Muhammadiyah* and *NU*, in the early generation of *Al Washliyah*'s founding figures, they were the ones who left the most works in written form. As an example, Abdurrahman Sihab wrote the book Penuntun Hadji, Udin Syamsuddin wrote Politeness in Islam (1939), and several other works. Adnan Lubis wrote the Book of Imam Syafi'i's Journey and several other works. Hasan Maksum wrote, among other things, Quthufah as-Saniyah (strong arguments for rejecting ushalli [intention to pray] as not being sunnah or even heresy). It is recorded that he has written 17 books. Arsyad Talib Lubis, who is known as the most productive author of Al Washliyah, has written at least 34 books, among which the most famous are Sabil War Guidelines and Comparison of Christianity and Islam. Nukman Sulaiman is also active in writing; among his famous works is Warning: *Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah* ¼ Century, which is used as an important reference for *Al Washliyah* researchers. His work is recorded as 16 books that were born from his thoughts (Rozali, 2018).

Al Washliyah possesses a remarkable intellectual heritage. One of the intellectual traditions of *Al Washliyah*, is the transmission of ideas and concepts through writing. Asserts that *Assabiqunal Awwalun Al Washliyah* possesses an exceptionally robust writing culture. These works continue to serve as significant references for *Al Washliyah* researchers. Extensive dissertation-level research has been derived from the ideas put forth by *Al Washliyah* figures.

Al Washliyah, which is best run by a charismatic *ulama*, is a legacy of *ulama*. Following reform, however, this organization has undergone a leadership transition. Considering the last three leaders of *Al Washliyah* at the North Sumatran level, it appears that the tradition of ulama assuming leadership roles has started to give way to politicians and academics. A politician and bureaucrat, Dr. H. Hasbullah Hadi, SH. M.Kn served as chairman of the *Al Washliyah* Regional Leadership from 2010 to 2015. Prior to that, he was an officer of the North Sumatra Regional House of Representatives. Following that, State Islamic University of North Sumatra academic Prof. Dr. Saiful Akhyar Lubis, MA, chairman of the *Al Washliyah* Regional Leadership (2015–2020), was appointed. Following this, Dr. H. Dedi Iskandar Batubara, S.Sos, SH, MSP, chairman of the Al Washliyah Regional Leadership (2020-2025), is a politician who was a member of the Indonesian House of Representatives at the time this document was composed. According to this historical fact, *Al Washliyah* appears to be increasingly dominated by politicians as opposed to ulama figures.

Without a doubt, *Al Washliyah* has made significant contributions across multiple domains. Notably, in North Sumatra, Al Washliyah has established a multitude of educational institutions spanning from pre-school to tertiary level. The number of kindergartens (TK) in Al Washliyah is fifteen. As stated by Ismed Batubara (2020), there are 418 primary education institutions in *Al Washliyah*, North Sumatra (I. Batubara, 2020). In contrast, according to Batubara, *Al Washliyah* comprises 122 units at the secondary education level (D. I. Batubara, 2020). Dja'far Siddik and

Rosnita (2019) report that there are 627 *Al Washliyah* educational institutions in North Sumatra, which encompass a curriculum spanning from kindergarten to high school (Siddik & Rosnita, 2017). *Al Washliyah*, which has generated a large number of alumni, is also credited with establishing nine universities across Indonesia (D. I. Batubara, 2020). In addition to operating within the realm of educational institutions, *Al Washliyah* actively participates in the construction of non-profit social institutions that provide housing, care, and education for orphaned children states that *Al Washliyah*, located in North Sumatra, is home to twelve orphanages (I. Batubara, 2020). *Al Washliyah* established the Sharia People's Credit Bank (BPRS), which is headquartered at Jl. Mount Krakatau No. 28 in Medan, on November 8, 1994. On the political front, it is indisputable that *Al Washliyah* has exerted significant influence in Indonesia ever since its inception. *Al Washliyah* actively contributed to the movement for independence against the colonialists. One could argue that *Al Washliyah* constituted a constituent element of the conflict. Subsequent to attaining independence, *Al Washliyah* similarly contributed to the realization of independence. Throughout the New Order period, *Al Washliyah* consistently cast his ballot in support of the United Development Party (PPP). According to Dedi Iskandar Batubara, institutional pressure to abstain from political participation is not always harmful. *Al Washliyah* can concentrate on religious movements, *da'wah*, education, and the development of community charities under this constraint. Furthermore, he stated that *Al Washliyah*'s efforts to saturate national politics persist due to the inseparability of Islam and politics. Nevertheless, *Al Washliyah*'s endeavours were not overt but rather encompassed *da'wah*, education, economic empowerment, and community mobilization (I. Batubara, 2020). Politically speaking, *Al Washliyah* fulfils its function by engaging in "accommodative politics" in an effort to gain strategic positions that can subsequently be utilized to advance the interests of *Al Washliyah* residents and bring the community closer to the authorities. The assertion regarding the ongoing involvement of *Al Washliyah* in the advancement of a democratic society is indeed intriguing. The engagement of its cadres in political parties, elections, and regional head elections serves as evidence of this dedication. Due to the considerable membership of *Al Washliyah*, this organization saturates with election momentum and transforms into a highly strategic vote bank each time.

This research specifically looked at how the Al Washliyah educational institution modernizes. This research uses a historical approach to literature study methods. According to Sugiyono, library research is theoretical studies, references and other scientific literature related to culture, values and norms that develop in the social situation being studied (Sugiyono, 2019), The research data of this study was obtained through interviews with Specifically, the steps taken in this research citing the opinion of Zed, namely: 1) determining the general idea about the research theme, 2) looking for supporting information, 3) emphasizing focus and organize reading material,

4) searching for the necessary materials, 5) reorganizing the materials and make research notes, 6) reviewing and enrich the reading materials and 7) writing a research report (Zed, 2018).

Based on the author's search, no research has been found that specifically examines the modernization of the *Al Washliyah* educational institution. Several studies touch on the attitude of *Al Washliyah*, who was in a position between rejecting and accepting Western modernization, especially in the field of education, between 1930 and 1942 (Sumantri et al., 2021). This research is clearly limited to the Dutch colonial period and over a period of 12 years only. Likewise, the results of research conducted by Harahap stated that since the inception of *Al Washliyah*, which came from Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli (MIT), it has made modernization efforts, as seen in the education system implemented, namely a combination of traditional and modern education systems (Harahap, 2020). The scope of this research also still discusses the birth of *Al Washliyah*. Based on previous research, there has been no comprehensive study regarding the modernization of *Al Washliyah* educational institutions, especially those relating to modernization typologies and complete aspects of modernization in the education sector. This research is presented to fill this gap in the literature.

Discussion

Philosophy and Typology of Al Washliyah Renewal

Al Washliyah is among the modernized Islamic organizations. The aforementioned evidence suggests that educated and enlightened individuals among the ethnic Mandailings do not always hold conservative views, despite Usman Pelly's assertion that ethnic Mandailings founded *Al Washliyah* and that the character of Mandailing people is generally conservative. Alakulli, irrespective of their ethnic background, will undoubtedly think modernly once they have acquired established knowledge. Although modernity can be negative at times, conservatism can also be beneficial. *Al Washliyah* has demonstrated that this organization has effectively maintained traditions while modernizing.

It may turn out to be quite accurate when looking at the typology of modernization that *Al Washliyah* has implemented. *Al Washliyah* needs only to revitalize the previously splendidly constructed intellectual tradition. Consequently, the grandeur of the past, which has begun to fade away, must be reignited. Local sagacity from the Minangkabau, "*mambangkik batang tarandam*" (reawakening a long-buried or neglected spirit or honour due to certain circumstances), appears to be an apt description of *Al Washliyah*'s modernization. Concerning the causes of the decline in dignity and honour, it would appear that an entirely separate discourse is required.

The point is that *Al Washliyah* needs to revive the spirit of the writing tradition, revive an education system oriented towards the regeneration of ulama, and revive a moderate attitude as

a link between extreme and conservative religious understandings. If in the past *Al Washliyah* participated in fighting for this nation, today the *Al Washliyah* generation must try hard to contribute to achieving independence with real work. The factors that influence the modernization of an educational institution are at least largely determined by ideology, culture, government systems, and technological development (Alfurqan, 2020). In this context, *Al Washliyah* has an ideology that is in line with reform. Educational institutions also live in a very plural cultural reality. Meanwhile, as an educational institution, the *Al Washliyah* school or madrasah complies with and submits to government regulations, meaning that the *Al Washliyah* educational institution follows the applicable educational regulations. As for what is related to technological developments, it cannot be avoided by anyone.

Modernization Aspects of Al Washliyah Educational Institution

Al Washliyah, as an organization operating in the education sector, really needs to carry out modernization in all lines, including the education system. Because times continue to change, human needs also continue to change. Likewise, people's needs for religious teachings also need more contextual adjustments. Understandably, the importance of modernization does not relate to the main points of religion (*ushuluddin*), such as *qath'i* (standard) beliefs, worship, and sharia. Modernization here refers to aspects beyond that. In the past, *Al Washliyah* had a strong clerical tradition. To ensure that this tradition is not lost, it is essential to maintain it. At the same time, extraordinary technological developments and market needs that are no longer simple need to be addressed by *Al Washliyah* educational institutions. The explanation below only focuses on the extent to which *Al Washliyah* has modernized its educational aspects.

Modernization of Educational Goals

Educational modernisation typically begins with updating educational goals. The first step that must be taken is to review the objectives of Islamic education, which prioritize the spirit of Islamic teachings. This can be realized by bringing back dialogue between Islamic teaching texts and the real-life conditions that occur in the field (Ilham, 2020). Initially, *Al Washliyah*'s educational goals were in line with *Al Washliyah*'s own goals, namely: "Trying to fulfil the guidance of the Islamic religion" (Rozali, 2018). It was further explained that Al Washliyah education aims to develop cadres, or prospective ulama. From this, it can be understood that *Al Washliyah*'s educational goals in the past were still very simple and limited. Simple, because education aims to simply fulfil the guidance of religious teachings. Limited, because the aim is to develop future ulama candidates. No matter how simple the goal of education is, it is very important. Because the need for ulama never seems to fade with changing times, Muslims really feel the scarcity of ulama (Wahid, 2014). This is because Islamic educational institutions are busy managing the modern education system and forget about efforts to regenerate the ulama. Perhaps this also happened to *Al Washliyah*.

The modernization of *Al Washliyah*'s educational goals can only be seen in real terms since 2012, since the publication of the Guidelines for the Implementation of Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, and *Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah* Secondary Education. Here it is explained that Al Washliyah education aims to become a modern educational forum that can sow the values of *rahmatan lil'alamin* to produce quality human beings based on Islam in order to create a state of *baldatun thayyibatun wa rabbun ghafur*. From here, it is further detailed that the aims of *Al Washliyah* education are as follows:

1) Producing devout believers, have extensive knowledge and good morals;

2) Developing and disseminating science, technology or art, and striving for development to improve people's standard of living to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter:

3) Producing quality human resources cadres to continue the struggle and charity of Al Washliyah:

4) Producing *uswatun hasanah* scholars who become role models for the people (Pengurus Besar Al Washliyah, 2020b).

From these goals, it is clear that *Al Washliyah* wants its educational institution to become a place for modern and Islamic-based education. What is interesting is that *Al Washliyah* has not forgotten the clerical tradition as one of the most important goals in education. This means that *Al Washliyah* accepts modernization and continues to maintain tradition based on the principles of ushul fiqh. *Al Washliyah* practices what is called "*al-muhafazah, 'ala qadim as-shalih wal akhzu bil Jadidi al-ashlah*".

In this case, it is in line with what was conveyed by the Chairman of *Al Washliyah* North Sumatra below:

"*Al Washliyah*'s educational orientation has long been to produce alumni who will later become ulama, and to this day we still maintain that".

The results of the interview above clearly show that the *Al Washliyah* educational institution continues to maintain its educational goals, which are oriented towards clerical traditions. At the same time, the *Al Washliyah* educational institution also accepted the current form of educational modernization. This was also confirmed by one of *Al Washliyah*'s educational figures as follows:

"For a long time, *Al Washliyah*'s selling point has been its yellow book and its alumni who have succeeded in becoming reference scholars in society. So we want to bring it back again".

Modernization of the Education Curriculum

Initially, the *Al Washliyah* curriculum was prepared in accordance with educational objectives, which were also determined as explained above. *Al Washliyah*'s educational curriculum at that time was clearly dominated by religious studies because its alumni were prepared to become

ulama. In relation to curriculum modernization, the most important principle that must remain in Islamic educational institutions is to continue to use moral and religious values as the most basic reference. In this case, the writer, *Al Washliyah*, thinks he has succeeded in doing so.

According to Rozali's notes (2018), for the *ibtidaiyah* level, the curriculum used is *al-Lughah al-'Arabiyah*, *an-Nahwu*, *as-Sharaf*, *al-Imla'*, *al-Khath*, *al-Fiqh*, *at-Tauhid*, *al-Akhlaq*, *al-Qur'an*, *at-Tajwid*, *at-Tarikh*, *al-Mahfuzat*, *Tafsir*, *al-Balaghah*, *al-Fara'id*, *al-Hadith*, *Reading Latin*, Counting, Earth Science, Indonesian History, Natural Science, and Language Indonesia (Rozali, 2018). Meanwhile, the curriculum applied at the *Tsanawiyah* level is *Tafsir*, *al-Hadis*, *al-Fiqh*, *at-Tauhid*, *al-akhlaq*, *Ushul Fiqh*, *al-Fara'id*, *at-Tarikh*, *al-Balaghah*, *al-Lughah al-'Arabiyah*, *Qawa'id al-Fiqhiyah*, *an-Nahwu*, *al-Mantiq*, *Musthalah al-Hadis*, Indonesian, English, Natural Sciences, Life Sciences, Earth Sciences, Indonesian History, and World History. As for the *al-Qismul 'Aly/Muallimin/Aliyah* level curriculum, the curriculum used is *at-Tafsir*, *al-Hadis*, *al-Fiqh*, *Ushul al-Fiqh*, *Qawa'id al-Fiqhiyah*, *at-Tasawuf*, *at-Tarikh*, *al-Adyan*, *al-Wad'i* Science, *al-Munazarah* Adab, Indonesian, English, Life Sciences, *Tabi'i* Sciences, History of Earth Sciences, and *al-Wa'zu wa al-Irsyad*. According to the statement of one of *Al Washliyah*'s educational figures:

> "*Al Washliyah,* as an educational institution, continues to maintain the *diniyah* curriculum as a characteristic of *Al Washliyah* itself. Likewise, we will continue to implement the national curriculum."

This curriculum has survived for quite a long time, since the *Al Washliyah* educational institution was founded. It is interesting to quote Steenbrink's opinion that until 1970, *Al Washliyah* did not receive subsidies from the Ministry of Religion because it maintained its own curriculum. Until then, the Ministerial Decree 3 was issued in 1975, which required that the composition of the madrasa curriculum consist of 70% general secular subjects and 30% Islamic subjects (Asari, 2019). This rule then had a very broad impact on the quality of Islamic boarding school and madrasah graduates. As stated by Hasan Asari, in the past, Islamic boarding schools were absolutely dominated by the yellow book, but recently this dominance has changed drastically by replacing the yellow book with the latest references and also using books in Indonesian (Asari, 2018).

It is very interesting what was expressed by *Allahu Yarham Ustaz Ramli Abdul Wahid* that this SKB 3 Ministers has resulted in mastery of religious knowledge becoming weak and mastery of general knowledge becoming a liability (Wahid, 2014). This condition indirectly forces the modernization of the curriculum at the *Al Washliyah* educational institution. *Al Washliyah* implements the curriculum as required by SKB 3 Ministers while still adding distinctive characteristics of religious lessons that are still visible. According to Rozali, the curriculum used after modernization at the *Ibtida'iyah* level is *Akhlak*, *Hadith*, Arabic, *an-Nahwu* and *as-Sharaf*,

Fiqh/Worship and *at-Tauhid*. Meanwhile, for the *Tsanawiyah* level, the curriculum used is *Musthalah al-Hadis*, *Tarikh*, *Mantiq*, *as-Sharaf*, *Tafsir*, *Tauhid*, *Hadith*, *Nahwu*, *Ushul Fiqh*, *Faraid*, *Akhlak*, *Balaghah* and *Qawa'id Fiqhiyah*. Meanwhile, at the *Qismul 'Aly/Muallimin/Aliyah* level, the curriculum used is *al-Balaghah*, *Nahwu*, *as-Sharaf*, *Mantiq*, *Fiqh*, *Ushul Fiqh*, *Qawa'id al-Fiqh*, *Tauhid*, *Tarikh*, *Akhlak*, *Tafsir*, *Hadith*, *Al-Adyan*, *Tahfiz Al-Qur'an* and *Kealwashliyahan* (Rozali, 2018).

If you look closely, there are two interesting things from the description above. First, before modernizing the curriculum, it turns out that *Al Washliyah* had thought modernly by including general subjects such as Natural Sciences, Earth Sciences, Life Sciences, Indonesian History, World History, Indonesian and English. Second, after receiving the Ministerial Decree, which means that the curriculum must be modernized, *Al Washliyah* still includes lessons in Islamic sciences. If these sciences are mastered well, in the author's opinion, this is sufficient for a person to become a scholar. Again, *Al Washliyah* continues to accept modernization, but at the same time also preserves traditions.

Modernization of Learning Methods

Prior to modernization, the *Al Washliyah* educational institution used traditional methods by teaching classical yellow books (*kitab kuning*) through dominant lectures (Rozali, 2018). However, after modernizing the *Al Washliyah* educational institution, it developed a demonstration learning method by applying learning material in everyday life. Presumably, this is what is currently known as Contextual Teaching and Learning. Furthermore, the *Al Washliyah* educational institution is also developing discussion methods, especially on religious subjects, which are becoming more and more dynamic every day. Specifically, Rozali said that the learning methods used by the *Al Washliyah* educational institution were lectures, questions and answers, assignments, demonstrations, discussions, memorization and several other methods (Rozali, 2018).

According to the Deputy Secretary of *Al Washliyah* North Sumatra, the learning methods implemented at the *Al Washliyah* educational institution are as follows:

"In practice, *Al Washliyah* mostly uses the yellow book reading method. This has always been the case, since I was at school, it has been like that until now".

The learning methods developed at the *Al Washliyah* educational institution seem to have been carried over from the *Al Washiyah* ulama in the early generation, who studied in the Middle East, so they indirectly apply Middle Eastern-style learning methods, which are dominated by memorization and lectures. This method has been passed down to the current generation of educators, so it is very difficult to change to a more modern learning pattern.

In this case, the modernization of Islamic educational institutions can also be measured by how specific learning methods are used in the classroom. According to Zahraini and Zainudin (2021),

what is meant by modernizing learning methods is combining traditional and modern methods (Zahraini & Zainudin, 2021). In this case, the *Al Washliyah* educational institution has also implemented this, through classical learning and still maintaining the traditional study of the yellow book (*halaqah*).

Modernization of Human Resources

The future of the Al Washliyah organization is in the hands of the current generation; therefore, preparing militant *Al Washliyah* cadres is a necessity. *Al Washliyah* requires superior human resources and can only be produced through a superior education system. Professionalism and nepotism appear to be human resources issues that all organizations with educational institutions must contend with, as is the case with *Al Washliyah*. It is proper and acceptable for an Islamic educational institution to employ cadres as individuals in positions of authority (Arifianto, 2019), as this constitutes a collective organization. However, in the event that the individuals bestowed with this responsibility lack adequate qualifications, the educational establishment will not progress but rather fall further and further behind. It seems that this is very in accordance with the message of the Prophet that: "if a matter is handed over to someone who is not skilled, then wait for his destruction."

Al Washliyah must provide housing for its cadres who may return to *Al Washliyah* educational institutions and contribute to the community's development. Furthermore, *Al Washliyah* scholars concur that dialogue or discussion is necessary to further the *Al Washliyah* institution. This is evident from the following interview results:

> "Even though I am a *Washliyah* person, there is nothing wrong with criticizing from within. Washliyah people are difficult to get together with, let alone discuss. This is what I don't see enough, the decline in discussions among *Al Washliyah* ulama compared to previous ulama."

To facilitate the modernization of Islamic educational institutions, the development of more mature personnel is crucial (Ilham, 2020). Due to the fact that they will be at the forefront of this transformation. It appears that *Al Washliyah* is beginning to understand this, as educational institutions, particularly universities, have granted professional membership access. Irrespective of their affiliation with *Al Washliyah* cadres or not. Consideration must be given, nevertheless, to the prioritization of Human Resources over internal cadres. At the very least, a broader range of benefits will be acquired. In addition to assisting institutions and empowering cadres, this organization assumes a more significant function.

Institutional Modernization

When considering institutional modernization, with a specific focus on Islamic educational institutions, Zarkasyi's (2020)theory is highly pertinent. As per his assertion, the madrasah and

Islamic residential school models must be integrated (Zarkasyi, 2020). Islamic boarding institutions represent conventional Islamic education, whereas madrasas symbolize contemporary thought. Machmud echoes this sentiment, stating that traditional and contemporary educational institutions continue to contribute equally to the advancement of Islamic education (Machmud, 2020). Therefore, institutional modernization cannot obviate the existence of Islamic residential schools entirely. Nevertheless, madrasas cannot be relied upon as sole exemplars of modernization. The two must therefore be integrated.

If you observe the educational institutions founded by *Al Washliyah*, it will be clear that *Al Washliyah* not only founded religious educational institutions (Riza, 2021), but also established general educational institutions such as high schools and vocational schools. This kind of thing is continued up to the tertiary level. *Al Washliyah* has a University, College of Economics (STIE), College of Social and Political Sciences (STSIP), and College of Teacher Education (STKIP). This indicates that *Al Washliyah* has carried out institutional modernization from initially focusing on developing religious educational institutions, to developing multi-disciplinary educational institutions.

Then, several other institutions that support education also began to be developed by Al Washliyah, such as the Centre for *Al Washliyah* Studies (CAS), which operates in the field of religious research. Later, the *Al Washliyah* Strategic Studies Institute (LKSA) emerged, whose function was to conduct strategic studies on *Al Washliyah* and publish them. Recently, the *Al Washliyah Tilawatil Qur'an* Development Institute (LPTQ) has also been formed, which aims to explore the potential of the young generation of *Al Washliyah* in the field of Al-Qur'an sciences. Apart from that, efforts to digitize *Al Washliyah* programs and activities are also starting to be enlivened with the presence of the YouTube channel AW Chanel and kabaarwashliyah.com. All of this is a form of institutional revitalization that has been carried out by *Al Washliyah*. This is in accordance with what was stated by the Leader of *Al Washliyah* North Sumatra as follows:

> "...Next, *Al Washliyah* has a special *Qur'an Tilawatil* Development Institute (LPTQ) *Al Washliyah*. The chairman is Ustaz Sibawaihi. We hope that our clerics will have expertise in their respective fields, of which clerics in the field of Al-Qur'an probably mostly carry out coaching at LPTQ. "That's what I think is being done specifically through the PW *Al Washliyah* sector"

One thing that is quite encouraging about institutional modernization, especially in the field of education, is that *Al Washliyah*, since 2022, has formed the *Ulama* Cadre Education (PKU). The presence of PKU cannot be separated from the hope of the *Al Washliyah* people to restore the clerical traditions of the past. In the past, charismatic ulama, especially those active in East Sumatra, were dominated by *Al Washliyah ulama*. However, nowadays, especially after the

reformation, this tradition is decreasing. This reality is recognized by the fact that not only *Al Washliyah* but the Muslim community in particular is currently in a condition of scarcity of *ulama*.

This was also confirmed by the Deputy Secretary of *Al Washliyah* North Sumatra as follows:

> "Yes, we must honestly admit that most of the *ulama* in North Sumatra come from *Al Washliyah*. Even though there is no mapping yet. But in reality, the majority of ulama in North Sumatra, in particular, come from *Al Washliyah*. Because many of them were born from *Al Washliyah* institutions. *Qismul 'Aly* is not only in *Ismailiyah*, but it is also in Batu Bara and it is also in Rampah. So there are still many qualified people who can be used as references. "If I look at *Al Washliyah*, this is the education brand".

UNIVA Medan is committed to continuing and developing this clerical tradition by opening the Islamic Religious Education program, *Ulama* Cadre Development Class, which was later abbreviated to the term PAI, Ulama Cadre Development Class, which is intended as UNIVA Medan's effort to produce ulama who will take part in the midst of the people. PAI *Ulama* Cadre Development Class is one of the takhassus classes in the Islamic Religious Education Study Program, Faculty of Islamic Religion, UNIVA Medan, which focuses on deepening religious knowledge (*tafaqquh fi al-din*) by accommodating prospective students with Islamic boarding school/*madrasah Muallimin*/Al educational backgrounds. *Qismul 'Aly,* who is to be trained to become an ulama cadre.

The PAI Program for the FAI UNIVA Medan Ulama Cadre Development Class is intended to produce Islamic Religious Education graduates with character and a clerical outlook, with the following indications:

1) Being able to read and understand the *turast* books (yellow book) well;
2) Being able to master Islamic sciences (*dirasah Islamiyah*) based on turast (yellow book) in depth;
3) Memorizing at least 4 Juz of the Koran (Juz 30, 1, 2 and 3);
4) Memorizing at least 100 Hadiths (Book of Arba'in, 60 Other *Ahkam* Hadiths);
5) Being skilled in Arabic and English;
6) Having stability in beliefs, worship, spiritual depth and noble morals (Napitupulu, 2023).

As with undergraduate level in general, the study period in the PAI *Ulama* Cadre Development Class is taken for 8 (eight) semesters with a period of approximately 4 (four) years, which is divided into two types of semesters, namely odd semesters and even semesters. The lecture system applied in the clerical cadre development class at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, *Al Washliyah* University (UNIVA) Medan continues to use a limited semester credit (SKS) system, with further explanation as follows:

1) Learning is the process of student interaction with lecturers and learning resources in a

learning environment.

2) A semester is a unit of time for an effective learning process for at least 16 (sixteen) weeks/meetings, including mid-semester exams and final semester exams (Napitupulu et al., 2023).

Semester Credit Units (SKS) are the amount of learning activity time charged to students per week per semester in the learning process through various forms of learning or the amount of recognition for the success of students' efforts in participating in curricular activities in a study program.

Conclusion

Al Washliyah is an Islamic organization that dates back to the time of the earlier ulama. This organization is distinguished by the generation of ulama and its exceptionally robust intellectual heritage. To ensure its ongoing contribution to independence, *Al Washliyah* must effectively adjust to the ever-increasing rate of change in contemporary society. *Al Washliyah*'s approach to modernization appears to be characterized by revitalization, or the adoption of new and improved elements while preserving old customs; this is referred to as "*al-muhafazah 'ala qadim as-shalih wal akhzu bil Jadidi al-ashlah*" in the fiqhi terminology. Sustaining the clerical and intellectual traditions at the *Al Washliyah* educational institution constitutes the genuine course of action. Real contribution made by *Al Washliyah* continues to accrue benefits to the greater community as long as the organization is capable of adjusting to the ever-changing, more dynamic environment.

In particular, *Al Washliyah* must recollect information regarding all owned assets, including educational institutions. Simply because *Al Washliyah* "officials" have neglected to monitor the situation, several educational institutions have vanished or even been "stolen" and managed as private property. *Al Washliyah* officials, who are currently dominated by young, dynamic individuals, must implement this recommendation promptly. Finally, it is critical to implement modern management practices without delay in order to safeguard the assets of *Al Washliyah*. This is only possible through the careful selection of those who currently and in the future will hold leadership positions at *Al Washliyah*.

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