

Modernization and Formulation of Educational Content of *Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah* in North Sumatra, 1930-1942

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Abstract: This study aims to elaborate on how Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah had been modernizing their educational content in 1930-1942. During that period, they owed a lot from their predecessors (Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama) in formulating their educational content. They focused on the educational content adapted to the situation at that time by combining religious education and general education selectively and situationally. There was a different model between Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama in the educational context. Muhammadiyah focused more on common education, whereas Nahdlatul Ulama focused more on religious education. Therefore, Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah as the youngest Islamic organization had tried to synergize the two models through their educational institution but still adjust to the situation and condition under pressure from the Dutch colonial government. As the result, the modernization of the educational content of Al Washliyah at that time had succeeded and participated in coloring the existing education for people in North Sumatra.

1 INTRODUCTION

Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah is the youngest Islamic organization compared to Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama are Islamic organizations originally established in Java then expanded to Sumatra by having a number of embranchment, especially in education. Muhammadiyah was established in North Sumatra in 1927 by the existence of Muhammadiyah schools in the area, while Nahdlatul Ulama in 1947 (Pulungan, 2009). Therefore, Nahdlatul Ulama schools were not a comparator in establishing a more advanced school for Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah. This is proved by Chalijah Hasan who has known that Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah has similarities with Muhammadiyah in the preparation of educational materials and some subjects used. Generally, the traditional education in North Sumatra has similarities with Pesantren, teaching *kitab*, *bandongan*, *sorogan*, and Islamic teachings before the 20th century (Nasution, 2002).

The Islamic teachings generally consist of *Fiqih*, *Kalam*, *Sufism*, and *Aqidah* that have already existed

in Islamic schools in North Sumatra. Such contents are also implemented in Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah school when the formulation of educational content has been formed. The learning materials have been separated by taking the required subjects in Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah schools. Therefore, not all educational materials are included in the school. Their educational contents highly prioritize appropriate subject matters and time efficiency.

Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah has experimented by formulating the educational contents through the schools in North Sumatra. It is important that the formulation be a part of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah teaching materials that Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah become more advanced and have its own statute.

Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah statute implements the demands of the Islamic religion to happiness in the world and the hereafter (Hasanuddin, 1998). A. Wahhab Siregar gave his foreword in the 25th anniversary of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah which mentioned that in 1930 the purpose of this organization was to bring forward, concern and increase the spread of Islam. Then in 1934, the purpose was to fulfill the demands of Islam. This

purpose shows the importance of Islamic teachings spread, implemented and studied so that Muslims can achieve their life destination.

Islamic teachings according to Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah are very urgent and are the foundation of learning materials. The teachings would be the first component for the education contents of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah delivered to the *ummat* generally as well as to the students. The establishment of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah had been mentioned in the local daily newspaper *Sinar Deli* in which the founders in a *vergadering* (meeting) were agreed to establish an Islamic Studies Association (Sulaiman, 1956). The development of Islamic teachings does not mean that other lessons (general sciences) are excluded in their educational activities.

Based on above arguments, the modernization and formulation of the educational content of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah organization especially between the 1930-1942 are important to investigate although having the similarity with Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, but it is relevant to look at how the process of modernization and the formulation of its educational content. Thus we will find the fundamental differences with other organizations in Islamic organization history in North Sumatra in the colonial era.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses the historical method with a social approach. It means that this research focuses more attention on the historical concepts such as chronologic, diachronic, continuity and change. Diachronic is an object in the past, with concerning space and time dimensions. History gives a diachronic dimension to the synchronic dimension in social sciences about historical events. This research discusses the modernization of the educational content of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah in 1930-1942 written in historiography. The social and historical context of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah is suitable to analyze in the period since the organization exists in developing education for indigenous people. "Continuity" is always continuous from one event to another and does not stop. And "change" is different from each event after event. The concept of change is so important in history because history itself is about the change (Supardan, 2009).

History is the science of time so that this research discusses on the things related to time like development, continuity, repetition, and change.

History has a social meaning and usually directs the motion of an event. It is caused by factors from the social factor itself. This research is concerned much about the study of the time and place of the historical events. Therefore, this research focuses on the years of 1930 to 1942, especially in Sumatra as Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah was geographically established in Medan, North Sumatra.

The authors are using the social history approach because some aspects of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah organizational development in activities of individuals in the modernization of educational content are included. The emergence of activities and roles among individuals cause social interactions and conflicts in political and intellectual struggles when this organization chooses to establish an organization and formulate their educational content. Methodologically, a study of social history as explained by Sartono Kartodirdjo is aimed to understand the subjective meaning of social behavior, rather than objective one (Kartodirdjo, 1992), and from here, it will be arisen the functionalization of the social science to conduct the historical writing to find the meaning intended by the individual action with the collective events. Therefore, it theoretically guides historian in finding the motives of actions or factors for an event when there is a change in modernizing the educational content of whole events in Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah organization.

This study covers the social, politic and thought process that happened around the interaction of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah organization in modernizing the educational content. The authors will describe the social situation of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah organization during 1930-1942, and express totally and globally, including the individual's activities which strive in the organization globally by presenting their educational activities in the past on the process of changing the educational content of those three organizations.

The authors assume that life of the Indonesians during the colonial era (20th century) brought a great change in colonialist behavior (politically) towards indigenous people that emphasized the Dutch education system rather than economic policy. This situation brought to the appearance of organizations that orientate their targets to education as a path to the advancement of particular Muslim. Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah organization has an important role to change the educational system especially in the structure of science in education. It is hoped that the Islamic community is more intelligent and qualified and active in all sectors especially the "output"

of education in creating human resources that can be aligned with the Dutch in education at the time.

Looking at the educational content of this organization, it can be closer to the social education history. According to Hasan Asari, it is more potentially profitable in its application because it can provide an understanding of the practice of Islamic education comprehensively specifically on the motives of changes in the educational content of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah (Asari, 2006). A specific and exhaustive study can contribute to social Islamic education history. Therefore, the method of interpretative analysis has significantly emphasized the principle and detail on the contents of the discussion by Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah organization. As a historical analysis of an event at a specific time, this study methodologically used the historical method with the approaching of social history that reveals the role of individuals and groups in carrying out its functions on changing the educational content activity.

3 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The Islamic educational material is experimenting the first school established by Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah in 1932 namely *Maktab al-Djamiatoel Washliyah* (Yunus, 1979). In memorial book *Al Djamijatul Washliyah ¼ Abad*, this establishment is mentioned with the following explanation: "On August 1, 1932 the first Madrasah al Djamijatul Washliyah was opened, and it was at Sinagar street Medan on initiative of A. Rahman Sjihab and Udin Sjamsuddin as well as the other board's approval" (Hasanuddin, 1998). In this *Maktab*, the religious materials become the educational contents of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah. It taught about the Islamic teachings, such as *Fikih*, Arabic (Nahu and Sharaf) and recitation of the Qur'an, and also *Tafseer* and *Hadith*. The *Maktab* has not taught the general sciences as shown in its form letter when receiving new students as mentioned in Chalijah Hasan's book. In the form letter, it is described that Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah learning has levels of intelligence although it is not yet clear. Because of the level of intelligence of students in accepting the learning, they can move or go up the class. Based on this, the levels of teaching materials at Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah are formulated in the form letter.

In the same year, at the end of 1932, Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah school progressed with the two levels of system education: *Tajhizi* 2 years and

Ibtidai 4 years. The *Tajhizi* level is held in the morning and afternoon; the afternoon accommodating students studying in public schools in the morning. In 1933, the Islamic teachings with a variety of Islamic religious knowledge occur after many *Madrasahs* around the city and outside Medan also joined the Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah *maktab* (Hasanuddin, 1998). The management of this school invited the admiration of other school managers in Medan because after the merger, the schools progressed. Merging several *Madrasahs* to Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah's organization, Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah was very active in doing some of the establishment of *Madrasahs* in that year. The inflowing of science teachings to this *Maktabh* is as a mixture for the development of religious knowledge added with Islamic History and *Khat*, while the general education is not found in the *Madrasah*.

The merging of this madrasah changes the name of the *Maktab* into *Madrasah Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah* that the religious education still runs without the presence of general sciences, even the level of education increases with the 2 year *Tajhizi* or *Ibtidaiyah* of 4 years. In 1934 the *Tajhizi* and *Ibtidaiyah* became 6 years, especially after the comparative study of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah to Minangkabau by looking at the modern School Institution in Minangkabau in 1934. The results of this comparative study began to shift the science which is not only Islamic science but also the general science which began at *Madrasah Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah*. The envoy consisted of Arsyad Thalib Lubis, Udin Syamsuddin, and Nukman Sulaiman, with visits to *Adabiyah School*, *Normaal School* and *Diniyah School* (Hasanuddin, 1998). In the book of *Al Djamijatul Washliyah ¼ Abad*, it is mentioned that the envoy was preceded by Baharuddin Ali who had followed Udin Arsjad Sjamsuddin and M. Th. Lubis. Nukman Sulaiman's name is not mentioned in the mission as stated in the book ---"Untuk mengadakan perobahan Lembaga Peladjaran di Madrasah al-Dj. Washliyah, jangakan dimadjukan pada konprensi bulan Desember 1934, maka diutuslah tuan Baharuddin Ali ke Bukit Tinggi pada tanggal 30 Nopember 1934. Selain daripada mengadakan hubungan da-lain soal kitab2 peladjaran maka diadakan djuga peninjauan-peninjauan pada Sekolah2 Agama di Sumatera Tengah di antaranya Tawalib school, Normaal Islam, Madrasah Dinia hentjik Rahmah dll.nja. Keberangkatan tuan Baharuddin Ali ini disusul pula oleh tuan Udin Sjamsuddin dan M. Arsjad Th. Lubis. Sekembalinja beliau2 itu dari Sumatera Barat,

banjaklah rupa2 Lembaga2 Peladjaran di sana yjang dibawa untuk mendjadikan katja perbandingan bagial. Dj.Washlijah jang akan dimadjukan kedalam konperensi”--- (Sulaiman, 1956) (To make changes in the Institute of Learning in Madrasah Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah, which will be presented at the 1934 conference of December, Baharuddin Ali was sent to Bukit Tinggi on 30 November 1934. In addition, to establish other relationships on the lesson scriptures, there were also observations on the Religious Schools in Central Sumatra including Tawalib school, Normal Islam, Madrasah Diniahentjik Rahmah, etc. The departure of Mr. Baharuddin Ali was also followed by Mr. Udin Sjamsuddin and M. Arsjad Th. Lubis. Upon his return from West Sumatra, many of the Institutions were brought to compare with *Al Washlijah* which would proceed into the conference).

The results of the visit were discussed in the second teacher's conference of Madrasah Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah on December 25-28, 1934 at Madrasah Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Jalan Padang bulan, Medan. In 1934, the officers of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah and the division of several assemblies in the Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Organization were formed in order to make the structural of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah on the process of dissemination of the organization and the spread of schools and also make changes to the preparation of Statute and by Law, Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah organization disclosed the invitation: ... *on it, and those who on Sunday (29-7-34), or that same day starts from 11 o'clock to 1 pm we will hold a member meeting again in order to change the Articles of Association and talk about Statute and ByLaw....* (Sulaiman, 1956).

On the Law, it is mentioned that Tarbiyah Conciliation was formed from several *majlis*, and it handled educations and schools. Thus all systems related to education are organized by a large board of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah. Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah's stewardship was carried out through its Tarbiyah Council program for organizing the teaching system in every Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Madrasah. The teaching materials compiled by the Tarbiyah assemblies are solely to systematize the teachings set on each level. Centralization in the management of education systems can show the plus and minus of the material settings. This is because they must always wait for a solution from the management center, while policies are needed quickly and the benefits of everything are well

organized with overall supervision of progress in school.

In the same year enactment of *All Universities Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah* was authorized on March 17, 1353 *Zulhidjdjah H 1934-1* (Sulaiman, 1956). In 1935, the *Tsanawilevel* was established for students who have completed elementary school in the form of *Ibtidai*, with a period of a four-year study. The provision was contained in the first congress of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah in 1936 which discussed the results of the visit and the plan of teaching and the structuring of existing schools in Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah.

The results of the First Congress in 1936, amounting to 250 people in the book *Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah ¼ Abad* mentioned a few points to be discussed. One of the points related to the lesson is as follows; that the results of the conference closely associated with the decisions of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah are as follows: establishing the public school founded by religious namely *Volkschool* (elementary school), and a foreign language (Dutch) included in the learning material; starting the school year at the beginning of the year, and making the admission of new students once a year. The results of this Congress make a lot of decisions about teachers and religious and general subjects in Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah. According to Chalijah Hasan, there is the same subject between Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah and Muhammadiyah in elementary school, but there is a difference in the quantity of time in a week. They have similarities including in giving the names of the School. In 1935, Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah opened a Madrasah for teachers with modern school namely *Kweek school* and *Normal School* under the auspices of DEWI (Djamiyatul Washlijah Institute). The study period is two years and three years respectively.

The entry process at DEWI School is regulated; if the students want to enter the school, they must complete their lesson in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah or elementary school level, *vervolg school* (advance primary school of 3 years is a continuation of primary school *volkschool*, 3 years), and HIS (*Hollands Inlandse School*) is an elementary school Netherland language or *Schakel school*, the same level with HIS. Since the change in the names of the schools based on the decision, the change of educational content in Madrasah which was established in Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah despite pros and contras in the management of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah (Asari, 2008).

The development process which brought an agreement on the preparation of educational

materials made consistency in Madrasah Al . The arrangement of educational content in Al Jam'iyatulWashliyah was built centrally till all Madrasahs should be included in the Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah management center and also books were used as teaching materials in Madrasah Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah.

The development of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah School historically has similarities to Muhammadiyah, but the similarities are not in all sectors. One of the similarities is in the changes of the school names. In the development of learning materials, such materials as in *Pesantrenare* developed in Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah School, therefore, the school is a Dutch-style Islamic School, while Muhammadiyah is a Netherland Islamic patterned school. Moreover, the term *Madrasah* in Muhammadiyah is not well known as that in Madrasah in Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah. One of the similarities between Muhammadiyah and Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah is "HIS met de Qur'an school". Besides, some similarities are also found in their subjects, and this is based on the comparison of learning materials in Normaal School Muhammadiyah and Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah.

HIS met de Qur'an became a school in an institute form consisting of Normaal Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah School and Kweekschool, which later became DEWI Al Jami'iyatul Washliyah. In the Second Congress of 1938, Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah organization mentioned that the DEWI School was changed into Madrasatul Muallimat and Madrasatul Muallimin. This change also has similarities with Muhammadiyah. The learning materials did not change permanently in the general and religious subjects with each portion of a balanced percentage because it is equipped with afternoon learning, as mentioned: "*Dengan suatu uptjara jang sederhana dan perhatian jang penuh dari organisasi2 Islam dan ahli2 pendidik disekita rkota Medan maka pada tanggal 7 Dec.1938 - 14 Sjawal 1357 H, dirasmikanlah pembukaan Madrasah al Muallimin bertempat di Calcuttastraat 38 dan Madrasah al Mu'allimat bertempat di Dj. Padangbulan 190. Kedua Madrasah (Sekolah) Guru ini, langsung dibawah asuhan Madjelis Tarbijah Umumi jang diketuai H. Abd. Rahman Sjihab* Hasanuddin, 1998). (With a simple program and full attention from Islamic organizations and educators around the city of Medan, on December 7, 1938 [14 Sjawal 1357 H], the opening of Madrasah Al Muallimin at Calcuttastraat 38 and Madrasah Al Mu'allimat located at Jalan Padangbulan 190 was inaugurated. The Madrasah teachers were directly under the

supervision of Madjelis TarbijahUmumi, headed by H. Abd. Rahman Sjihab).

The way of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah in applying formulation of the educational content in its school by incorporating Islamic teachings in their learning, and then arranging the religious teachings is possible to stand alone in science, but after the comparative study of the officers it appears that science starts to be developed in science generally, afterward it is proposed to go to the Sultanate in East Sumatra to get his approval. After obtaining approval, the learning materials are presented in all Madrasah Al Jam'iyatulWashliyah. Implementation of Al Jam'iyatulWashliyah School is supervised by overseers for each region, then for the whole area is supervised by the inspector. Then the names of schools of Al Jam'iyatulWashliyah slowly changes not to replace the existing one but to build more schools with the Netherlands School names like *Volkschool* of 3 years, *Vervolgschool* 3 years, the normal school 2 years, 3 years later there is *Kweek-school*, *HIS* and *Schakelschool*. These school s spreading process took place in various regions and this can be seen in the table below about the number of types of Al Jam'iyatulWashliyah schools that had already existed in the regions. The type of Al Jam'iyatulWashliyah school is distinguished from Madrasah School but having the same teaching contents of the religious sciences and general sciences, with different percentages.

This madrasah school alongside with *Gouvernement* (State schools) in Al Jam'iyatulWashliyah organization, makes Al Jam'iyatulWashliyahSchool different in shades of science among schools witha dominant religious knowledge. The Madrasah with science generally dominated the Dutch School. School with the Dutch in Al Jam'iyatulWashliyah was not executed because the name of the school gradually faded away. The sources of Al Jam'iyatulWashliyah also do not talk much about this Dutch school name, because the Madrasah School is equated with the Dutch School as expressed by Mahmud Yunus in his book that in general the schools that stood in Indonesia before 1931-1945 had a type of many schools that can be aligned each other with the position level based on age of students enteringthe school, such as village school (*desascholen*) 3 years (as well as the first school 3 years) and the School of subsequent *schakelschool* 5 years aligned with Ibtidaiyahfor 4 years, as well as MULO 3 aligned with Tsanawiyahfor 3 years and AMS3 years is aligned with Islamic teachers school with a long study between 3 or 4 years.

The development of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah School occurs due to the impact of the development of content that should be taught to students: both religious and general materials. Each School is established with different types because of the material set in a Madrasah School. Netherland government policy on school makes al Jam'iyatul Washliyah continue to promote the school system like State schools. This is for the legalization permit from the government. The teaching materials are constantly adapted to the Dutch stipulation, although not all subjects should be adapted from the government and this comparison can be seen from other schools. The selectivity is to adjust the available learning time for using the various sciences. The materials are arranged so that the ideals of al Jam'iyatul Washliyah are achieved as in target of the organization. Schools and madrasah were already established by organizations were also not of different level when viewed in terms of age and on the development of the material as a percentage of science is the same either with a Dutch name or Madrasah, especially in Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah having both general and religious knowledge.

In 1940 Madrasah Qismul Ali level equivalent to *Kweekschool* or *Normaal school* (Asari, 2007) was established. In *Normal school*, Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah contains materials teaching in religious and general knowledge, and Chalifah Hasan mentioned this school is a school teacher of Washliyah and the material has similarities with the *Normal school* of Muhammadiyah. This school is located in Westenninkstraat (Dj. Tjandi Borobudur) which is the highest Madrasah with 3 years study period. The teachers involved in learning materials are M. Arsjad Th. Lubis on subjects of Jurisprudence, *Usul Fiqh*, *Qawa'id Fikih*, *Munazarah*, *Sufism* and *Tafsir*, H. Adnan Lubison subjects of *Hadith*, and Zainal Arifin Abbas, on subject of history. The learnings are generally composed of trade arithmetic, algebra, natural sciences, chemistry, geography, economics, educational sciences, foreign languages, and sports (Asari, 2008).

The above description provides the formulation of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah's educational content that has developed according to the needs of the Islamic community at that time. This situation is for Muslims to be advanced and the material is maintained, although there is an inevitable policy influence. The results of comparative studies of other schools are also due to the initial idea of the basic budget to teach Islamic material to Muslims

with intellectuality so that not left behind by Netherland colonialism and with wide education for Muslims themselves. On this basis, Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah makes changes to the educational content so that Muslims have decent educational opportunities.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The formulation of educational content makes Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah organization different from the previous organization of education systems, namely Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah is an organization that learns from both, and the educational content sets the two sciences to see which aspects are preferred and emphasized. Religious and general material gets the portion in the educational content of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah selectively adapted to the circumstances and needs.

Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah implements the educational content by spreading the subjects in schools appropriate to specified levels. The situation of educational content has been done as the previous organization makes no other choice but determines the right choice to formulate the educational content. Therefore, the nature of the organization's leaders is trying to pick and choose both religious and general materials at school placement. Selectivity is done for the purposes and needs on the progress of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah. Thus the process of dissemination of educational content of the organization is to put the contents of both general and religious knowledge in practice.

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