

From Village to Knowledge: Ethical Development of Al Wasliyah

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Abstract-Islamic mass organization Al Wasliyah is known as an organization that play an important role in the development in Indonesia. As a native Islamic mass organizations in North Sumatra, the role of Al Wasliyah is supported by the ethics of development that became its identity. This paper will explore how the ethic of development of Al Wasliyah remains consistent in its identity development to continue to play a role in the development of Indonesia as a pluralistic society; what areas they are doing in that development; what are the problems of the Al Wasliyah in developing ethics of development based on Islamic values. Methodology used for research activities included data collection, theoretical studies and field surveys, which were supported by interviews with resource persons and Forum Group Discussion (FGD). The results of the research show that the ethical development in Al Wasliyah is no longer held entirely by its members. This study is expected to give a description on how ethics of development run.

Keywords: *Al Wasliyah, Ethics of Development, Islamic Mass Organization, North Sumatra*

I. INTRODUCTION

Al Jam'iyatul Wasliyah is the oldest Islamic mass organization in North Sumatra. It is an organization that unites the potential of Muslims in building the nation and state of Indonesia. Al Jam'iyatul Wasliyah is an Islamic organization that was born on November 30, 1930 and coincides with 9 Rajab 1349 H in the city of Medan, North Sumatra. Al Jam'iyatul Wasliyah, better known as Al Wasliyah, was born when the Indonesian people were still in the Dutch East Indies colonization. The founders of Al Wasliyah also participated in the war against the Dutch colonialists. Not a few of Al Wasliyah figures were arrested by the Dutch and sent to prison.

The main purpose of establishing the Al Wasliyah organization at that time was to unite the divisive people. The division of Indonesian was one of the Dutch strategies to continue to rule on the Indonesian land. Al Wasliyah Organization can be said to have a contribution in Indonesian independence by fostering unity in Indonesia [1][2].

The Dutch colonizers who controlled the Indonesian country always attempted to hinder the Indonesian from

unite, so that they would continue to compete with their fellow people. All methods were carried out by the invaders so that the people are divided, because if the Indonesian people are united, it is feared that they can fight the Dutch colonialists.

Efforts to divide the people also penetrated into the joints of Islam. Muslims at that time could be divided because of the differences in views in terms of worship and branches of religion (*furū'iyah*). This condition continued to increase, until the Muslims are divided into two groups called the elderly and young people. The differences of understanding in the field of religion was getting sharper and getting to the level of disquiet.

With the occurrence of disputes among Muslims in North Sumatra, especially in the city of Medan, students who study at the *Maktab Islamiyah* Tapanuli Medan try to reunite the divided people. Efforts to unite Muslims continue to be done until the organization of Al Jam'iyatul Wasliyah was formed. Al Jam'iyatul Wasliyah is derived from Arabic which means associations that connect. The point of this organization is to connect humans with Allah. and human with human (fellow Muslims).

Disputes between old and young people about issues of worship mado students who study at the *Maktab Islamiyah* Tapanuli (MIT) madrasa Medan feel uneasy. The students have a student association called the Debating Club. In regular discussions they often discussed about the problems that are happening to Muslims and one of them is about differences of opinion in the body of Muslims [2].

The discussion reached its peak in October 1930. At the beginning of the month, a meeting was held at the residence of Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, on Jl. Glugur Medan city. At a meeting led by Abdurrahman Syihab attended by Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, Adnan Nur, M. Isa and several other students. In the meeting it was agreed to enlarge the student association they have, the Debating Club. To follow up on the meeting at Yusuf Ahmad Lubis's place, a second meeting was also held at the home of Abdurrahman Syihab in Petisah, Medan, attended by Ismail Banda, Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, Adnan Nur, Abdul Wahab, and M. Isa. It was agreed at the meeting to invite

the scholars, teachers and other students of Medan to a larger meeting planned for October 26, 1930 at the Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli (MIT) Medan.

As planned, a larger meeting took place at MIT Medan. The meeting was attended by *ulama*, teachers, students and Islamic leaders in the city of Medan and its surroundings. After having a long and deep discussion, all the participants at that time agreed to form an association aimed at promoting, prioritizing and increasing the spread of Islam. The association was then given the name Al Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah [1][2].

Since it was founded, of course with the heterogeneous background of North Sumatra people and the availability of human resources, Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah faced two problems at once. First, how to develop Islamic teachings through service to the community. Second, how to raise the attitude of professionalism in developing the mission in development. These two issues are the important issues for Al Wasliyah, especially in developing ethics in the development that is carried out. This article will then analyze the problems.

II. FROM VILLAGE TO KNOWLEDGEMENT: SPIRIT OF AL WASLIYAH DEVELOPMENT ETHIC

As it is known, development ethics is a response to rights, and identity responses to their environment by an institution or organization [3][4]. Every institution or business entity with its identity develops development ethics. The goal for young people to be accepted is applied to members or supporters, likewise with mass Islamic organizations. The results of the study by Hassan shows that Islamic ethical approaches to development are able to respond and implement their identity in response to community needs [5]. Regarding this development ethic, Al Wasliyah develops its ethics of development based on Islamic values by looking at the importance of synergy that needs to be established between the government and Islamic mass organizations. The synergy is not just a slogan. The involvement of Islamic organizations is not enough to overcome the problems. Community organizations should be encouraged and assisted to play an active role in the development. The efforts to build synergy are already there. Synergy does not become a momentary sight when the government is being afflicted by mere problems. For Al Wasliyah, Synergy is no longer just a slogan; the government is obliged to include organizations that have participated in building this Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). Al Wasliyah also never tried to conflict with the government. Al Wasliyah teachings strengthen community faith and uphold tolerance. Tolerance must be built in order to build the nation, and to have a positive impact of maintaining human relations.

This view of development for Al Wasliyah unites the perception that Islam is the religion of *rahmatul lil alamin*. One of them is by giving benefit to Muslims, protecting the people and the country. This is the basis of Al Wasliyah's development ethics.

This synergy needs to be realized in response to the development and demands of the environment by not forgetting history. Since it was first established, Al Wasliyah has an important role in building the Indonesian civilization. From the start, Al Wasliyah in addition to fighting to free the Indonesian people from the shackles of the invaders also built the people. Al Wasliyah always maintained the independence of the Indonesian people. This was conveyed in every Al Wasliyah *da'wah* (religious sermon) at that time. Every Wasliyah supporter is obliged to always maintain the independence that has been achieved by the Indonesian people, especially by carrying out development programs. The working programs in development were carried out so that the existence of the 87-year-old organization will continue to be felt by the people. In accordance with its charitable deeds and the demands of people's problems, Al Wasliyah continues to strive to educate the nation, conduct guidance and clarify thinking through discussion and *tabligh (dakwah)*, and call for a spirit of solidarity and concern for the poor and orphans (Social). The religious leaders of the Al Wasliyah organization, from the beginning, were aware of the importance of the unity of the people in resisting the Dutch East Indies colonization by forming an organization called Al Jami'iyatul Wasliyah, - which means Associating Associations. The meaning is vertically connecting people with Allah SWT (*hablun Minallah*) and horizontally connecting people with fellow human beings (Muslims) or *hablun minannas*.

For Al Wasliyah, the basis of several development programs that are based on the issue of publicity is related to education, preaching or social, organizational and economic activities of the people. This is the basis of development issues which later became the basis of the Al Wasliyah development program. For Al Wasliyah, the progress of the Al Wasliyah organization in particular can be improved if the management or cadre is able to carry out the four pillars, namely, regeneration, *da'wah*, economics and education. For Al Wasliyah these four pillars determine the organization in the present and in the future,

In the field of education Al Wasliyah was built with noble values by its founders in 1930, and one of its efforts was to educate the nation. In the world of education, Al Wasliyah continues to develop educational facilities and infrastructure ranging from *Raudhotul Athfal* (Kindergarten), *Madrasah* (Primary School) to *Aliyah* (High School) levels. Until now Al Wasliyah has 1,036 educational institutions, and 9 universities/colleges throughout Indonesia. To carry out the charitable mandate in the social field, Al Wasliyah continues to foster the poor and orphans. Al Wasliyah has 14 orphanages spread across several parts of Indonesia. In addition to the education sector, Al Wasliyah is also committed to broadcast Islam throughout Indonesia, especially to areas that are still needed guidance, such as in the Karo, Dairi, Nias and Tapanuli districts. Nonetheless, the teachings of Al Wasliyah aim to strengthen the community's faith.

Al Wasliyah's 20th Congress in 2010 at Pondokgede Haji Dormitory, East Jakarta, agreed and established 8 points of the main working program of the Al Wasliyah Assembly of Da'wah. They are:

1. Carry out an inventory of the power of Al Wasliyah's *da'i* (preacher), scholar and intellectual.
2. Preparing a representative *da'wah* map.
3. Organize and carry out Islamic *da'wah* to the target areas of *da'wah* in the form of information, counseling and broadcasting Islamic teachings, as well as evaluating the *da'wah* activities.
4. Conducting various activities to enlarge the spread of Islam, through print media, electronic media and other communication media.
5. Compile and improve the *da'wah* training curriculum.
6. Conduct *da'wah* trainings.
7. Compile and publish Friday sermon books, Friday bulletins and distribute them to regions.
8. Synergize with various television and radio stations for the broadcast of Al Wasliyah's *da'wah*.

These eight points for Al Wasliyah are the basis for development in the field of Islamic religion. These eight points clearly illustrate Al Wasliyah as an Islamic mass organization that focuses on strengthening *da'wah* on the basis of education by emphasizing cooperation between institutions.

In terms of regeneration, Al-Wasliyah reacted by preparing a generation with moral character, love and exemplary noble human life, namely the Prophet Muhammad SAW. In addition, it prepares the *Qur'ani* human resources who have expertise in their respective fields that in turn will be able to contribute to the advancement of religion, nation and state. This is the development ethic of Al Wasliyah in regeneration.

In addition to the fields of education, *da'wah* and regeneration, Al Wasliyah also paid attention to the economic conditions of the people. This is the role of Al Wasliyah in improving the economy of the people. This can be done by urging Muslims to pay tithes, donations and alms (ZIS). The donation through ZIS later will be contributed for the welfare of the teachers who serve at

the Al Wasliyah educational institution. In this regard Al Wasliyah built communication and cooperation with the National Zakat Agency (*Baznas*) and other relevant institutions.

III. CONCLUSION

As an Islamic mass organization, Al Wasliyah has developed its development ethics based on Islam. The Al Wasliyah Development Ethics is realized through development programs such as education, *da'wah*, economics, and regeneration. With this development ethics, Al Wasliyah presents and develops itself and plays a role in the development of Indonesia by synergizing with government and private institutions.

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