



The Political Ideology of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah

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Abstract

The political stance of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah remains a compelling discourse, primarily because the organization explicitly defines itself as a non-political entity while historically and socially engaging in national political dynamics. This independent stance is often perceived as ambiguous, balancing a distance from practical politics with providing space for its cadres to participate in the political sphere. This study aims to critically analyze the perspectives of North Sumatra Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah cadres. Utilizing a qualitative methodology, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving key cultural and structural cadres. The findings demonstrate that Al-Washliyah's political framework is built upon institutional independence, moral politics, and socio-religious charitable activities. The organization's independence and political orientation are conceptualized as cultural-political values rooted in its *shibghah*, *wijhah*, *khittah*, and organizational cadre regeneration system. Furthermore, Al-Washliyah's politics is operationalized through the enhancement of cadre development, education, proselytization, and social service—representing a performance-based political approach oriented toward public welfare. This research offers a critical insight: Al-Washliyah's political-ideological values serve as a fundamental factor in refraining from practical politics.

Keywords: *Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah; Politics; Khittah and Wijhah.*

Abstrak: Posisi politik Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah masih menjadi diskursus yang menarik, terutama karena organisasi ini menegaskan dirinya sebagai organisasi non-politik, tetapi pada saat yang sama memiliki keterlibatan historis dan sosial dalam dinamika politik nasional. Sikap independen tersebut sering dipahami sebagai posisi yang ambigu antara menjaga jarak dari politik praktis dan tetap memberikan ruang bagi kader untuk berpartisipasi dalam politik. Penelitian ini bertujuan menguraikan pandangan kader Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah Sumatera Utara secara kritis. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi terhadap kader kunci secara kultural dan struktural. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa politik Al-Washliyah dibangun di atas prinsip independensi kelembagaan, politik moral, dan amal usaha keagamaan untuk masyarakat. Independensi dan sikap politik Al-Washliyah dimaknai sebagai nilai politik kultural yang berlandaskan dari *shibghah*, *wijhah*, *khittah*, serta kaderisasi organisasi al-Washliyah. Politik Al-Washliyah dibentuk melalui penguatan kaderisasi, pendidikan, dakwah, dan pelayanan sosial sebagai bentuk politik kinerja yang berorientasi pada kemaslahatan masyarakat. Implikasi penelitian ini menawarkan pandangan kritis bahwa al-Washliyah memiliki nilai-nilai ideologi politik sebagai faktor kunci untuk tidak bermain politik praktis.

Kata Kunci: *Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah; Politik; Khittah dan Wijhah*

INTRODUCTION

Since its establishment on November 30, 1930, the position of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah within Indonesia's political landscape has remained a subject of ongoing debate among its cadres and organizational observers. As an Islamic organization with a substantial mass base, particularly in North Sumatra, Al-Washliyah demonstrates unique political dynamics that are frequently interpreted as ambiguous. In its Constitution and By-Laws (AD-ART), Al-Washliyah institutionally asserts that it is not a political organization and maintains no affiliation with any political party. Concurrently, however, Al-Washliyah does not completely disengage from the political sphere, as it grants its cadres the freedom to participate in political activities as an individual civic right (Ja'far, 2019). This dichotomy raises a fundamental question regarding how Al-Washliyah's political stance actually navigates the nexus between organizational independence and the political involvement of its cadres. The practical complexity of this political stance becomes increasingly apparent within electoral dynamics, particularly during general election campaigns. During specific political moments, Al-Washliyah has demonstrated support for certain candidates through organizational statements directed at its cadres (Riza, 2013; Riza, 2014). This posture is frequently articulated through the adage 'Al-Washliyah is nowhere, yet everywhere' (Al-Washliyah tidak ke mana-mana, tetapi ada di mana-mana), aiming to illustrate an organizational position that is formally unattached to specific political forces while continuing to exert political influence. Nevertheless, this idiom fails to fully clarify the boundary separating organizational independence from political engagement. On the one hand, the organization seeks to preserve its Khittah (foundational guidelines) as a socio-religious entity; on the other hand, numerous Al-Washliyah cadres actively serve as politicians, party members, and strategic public officials within the government. The evolution of Al-Washliyah's political thought reflects a long-standing historical process in defining the relationship among the organization, Islam, and politics. At its inception, Al-Washliyah positioned itself as a non-political organization focusing on education, proselytization (dakwah), and socio-religious services. Over time, however, it could not remain entirely detached from national political dynamics. During the Old Order era, Al-Washliyah attempted to become a special collective member of the Masyumi Party, subsequently shifted its political orientation by supporting Parmusi, and aligned ideologically with the United Development Party (PPP). This historical trajectory demonstrates that Al-Washliyah's political demeanor has evolved in response to prevailing socio-political contexts while persistently maintaining its identity as an Islamic organization (Ja'far et al., 2025). Previous studies have categorized Al-Washliyah's political character as a form of moderate Islamism—a

commitment to advocating Islamic values in public life without reducing the organization to an instrument of practical politics. Extensive scholarly literature has examined Al-Washliyah's political dynamics and thought across various contexts, including its organizational history, relationships with political parties, and contributions to national life (Ja'far, 2019; Prayogo et al., 2022; Riza, 2014). While these studies offer critical insights into the organization's historical political trajectory, they predominantly adopt a top-down historical framework focusing on external political relations. Consequently, empirical research exploring how internal actors perceive and construct Al-Washliyah's political stance remains comparatively scarce. To address this research gap, this study offers an insider perspective on the political direction and stance of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah. Rather than evaluating individual cadres' involvement in practical politics, this study critically analyzes how prominent figures, cadres, and affiliated academics conceptualize the boundary between organizational politics and individual cadre politics. Accordingly, this research addresses a central question: What are the perspectives of figures, cadres, and academics affiliated with Al-Washliyah regarding organizational politics, and what constitutes the organization's political orientation? Addressing this question is particularly salient given the organization's 95-year history and its profound socio-religious influence in North Sumatra. This article is delimited to examining key informants' perspectives on the political position of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah, specifically focusing on organizational independence, cadre political involvement, and the developed socio-political orientation (*orientasi politik keumatan*). Employing a qualitative approach, this study unpacks the construction of Al-Washliyah's political thought grounded in the lived experiences and perspectives of actors directly connected to the organization. Ultimately, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how a long-standing local Islamic organization negotiates religious values, public interests, and democratic political dynamics without compromising its institutional identity.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design, gathering primary data through field observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, which were subsequently synthesized through qualitative descriptive narrative. Key informants were strategically selected from both structural and cultural dimensions of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah—a major Islamic organization founded in North Sumatra. These informants included political figures, organizational cadres, former executive members, the Chairperson of the Regional Executive Board, and affiliated academics. To complement these primary empirical data, secondary sources were incorporated, including journal articles, books, and theses relevant to Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah's

political dynamics, thought, and Islamic proselytization. The collected data were analyzed systematically following the interactive model of qualitative analysis: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Finally, the analytical findings are presented through a critical-descriptive narrative framework, providing a nuanced and evaluative account of the organization's political orientation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Political Stance of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah

Since its inception on November 30, 1930, on Jalan Hindu, Medan, Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah was established as an Islamic organization with the primary mission of unifying the Muslim community through education, proselytization (dakwah), and social services. The literal meaning of Al-Washliyah—denoting 'connecting' or 'unifying'—indicates that from its founding, the organization was not constructed as an instrument for practical politics, but rather as a socio-religious movement prioritizing communal unity as its core struggle. Throughout its historical trajectory, Al-Washliyah has continuously interacted with national political dynamics across the colonial era, the struggle for independence, the Old Order, the New Order, and the post-1998 Reformasi era (Ja'far, 2019). Crucially, these shifts in national political configurations have not altered its foundational identity as an educational and proselytizing entity dedicated to balancing Islamic commitments, national allegiance, and public service.

In this context, *wijhah* (ideological orientation) and *Khittah* (foundational guidelines) constitute an integrated normative framework guiding Al-Washliyah's relationship with politics (Ja'far, 2022). For the organization, politics is conceptualized not merely as a contestation for state power via political parties, but as a commitment to public welfare (*maslahat*) through enhancing education, dakwah, cadre regeneration, and moral guidance for the nation. Consequently, Al-Washliyah's political *wijhah* positions the organization independently of political party affiliations while maintaining its responsibility to provide constructive insights, critiques, and solutions to national issues. This perspective illustrates that institutional independence is not a form of political apathy; rather, it is a deliberate strategy to preserve organizational autonomy so that its socio-religious functions can be performed consistently (I. Batubara et al., 2023, p. 109).

This institutional orientation is explicitly reflected in an interview with Firmansyah (2026), who emphasized:

"We must restore the commitment of Al-Washliyah's leadership and members to the original 1930 *Khittah* established at Jalan Hindu. Politically, this entails reaffirming the organization's independent stance—refraining from joining any political party while possessing the political intelligence needed to shape state policies for the welfare of the Muslim community."

The concepts of Khittah and wijhah within the Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah tradition serve as vital mechanisms for preserving historical continuity as an Islamic movement while navigating contemporary political realities. Since its founding, Al-Washliyah has been inextricably bound to the socio-political context of Indonesian Muslims, particularly in safeguarding Islamic values, education, and national integrity (A. K. Batubara et al., 2021). However, this involvement is manifested not through electoral power struggles, but through broader socio-religious engagement. The political Khittah functions as a normative boundary distinguishing between value-oriented politics (*politik nilai*) and power politics (*politik kekuasaan*). Hence, organizational independence does not signify detachment from political affairs; rather, it frames politics as a domain of public service aimed at fostering societal welfare without succumbing to partisan interests.

Al-Washliyah's political character is best understood as a form of national politics (*politik kebangsaan*) anchored in moral authority, intellectual capacity, and cadre development. Given its extensive history of community building through education and social services, Al-Washliyah's political influence cannot be measured solely by formal representation in political institutions, but by its capacity to shape public policy and discourse. Institutional independence acts as a crucial safeguard preventing Al-Washliyah from eroding its moral authority when engaging with practical political forces (Haftel & Thompson, 2006). Excessive alignment with electoral interests carries the risk of diluting the organization's core mission: serving as an inclusive vehicle for Islamic struggle focused on public welfare. Therefore, the political Khittah ensures that Al-Washliyah's political engagement remains firmly rooted within the domain of dakwah, education, and nation-building.

Furthermore, Al-Washliyah's independent posture should not be misconstrued as passive or apolitical. Instead, this independence serves as a cultural-political strategy that empowers the organization to retain its critical voice, propose ideas, and influence public policy. Within this framework, Al-Washliyah operates through non-electoral channels, such as improving cadre quality, producing Islamic discourse, offering civic education, and participating in national debates. This position demonstrates that organizational politics does not necessitate direct participation in power contestations; rather, it can be realized by cultivating social consciousness and civic values. In other words, Al-Washliyah has cultivated a political model that leverages moral and intellectual authority as its primary capital to exert societal influence (Riza, 2013).

Ultimately, the Khittah and wijhah function as an ethical mechanism balancing the need for public relevance with the imperative of preserving institutional identity. Al-Washliyah's political experience demonstrates an ongoing negotiation between a historically rooted Islamic tradition and the

demands of modern democratic systems that offer broad participation (Ja'far et al., 2023). Through its political *Khittah*, Al-Washliyah does not restrict its cadres from entering the political arena; rather, it strictly demarcates the personal political choices of individual cadres from the official institutional stance of the organization. This strategy enables Al-Washliyah to remain an independent socio-religious force while simultaneously contributing to Indonesian democratic consolidation through civic *dakwah*, civil society empowerment, and the promotion of moderate Islamic values.

A similar perspective was articulated by Harahap (2026), who noted:

"We are not under the umbrella of any political party, but we must remain politically literate so that we are not exploited politically. We must never lose our identity, nor should we allow ourselves to become a political vehicle."

This statement highlights that Al-Washliyah's engagement with politics is grounded in a fine balance between political awareness and institutional independence. Political literacy is essential for cadres to critically interpret national dynamics, whereas independence acts as an ethical barrier preventing the organization from being used as a vehicle for specific political factions. Consequently, while the political rights of cadres as citizens are fully recognized, their individual political alignments cannot be conflated with the organization's official stance. This clear demarcation between individual political choices and institutional policy stands as a defining hallmark of Al-Washliyah's political *Khittah*.

Political Character of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah

The distinctiveness of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah compared to other Islamic civil society organizations in Indonesia lies in its formulation of an ideological framework. While most Islamic organizations utilize the *Khittah* (foundational guidelines) as the primary baseline for directing their movements, Al-Washliyah positions *Wijhah* (ideological orientation) as its fundamental compass for establishing strategic directions. Within this construct, the *Khittah* serves as the practical manifestation of *Wijhah*, while the organization's identity and core character are reflected through *Shibghah Al-Washliyah* (Dahlan et al., 2024, pp. 56–73).

Al-Washliyah conceptualizes politics as an extension of Islamic proselytization and social service, rather than an instrument for acquiring or retaining state power. On this basis, Al-Washliyah refrains from developing party-affiliated politics, focusing instead on strengthening education, cadre regeneration, *dakwah*, and public service as expressions of Islamic and civic responsibility. This adherence to foundational principles enables Al-Washliyah to maintain a strategic position in public life while preserving institutional independence, thereby safeguarding its role as a moral force and civil society actor amid national political shifts.

The findings indicate that the defining characteristic of Al-Washliyah's politics is its *Wasathiyah* (moderation) character integrated with the three organizational pillars: *Shibghah*, *Wijhah*, and *Khittah*. Rather than functioning merely as normative guidelines, these three concepts shape the organization's political orientation when addressing socio-religious and national issues. This is corroborated by Firmansyah (2026), who stated:

"The primary characteristic lies in its *Wasathiyah* character combined with three core concepts or main pillars: *shibghah*, *wijhah*, and *khittah* as the identity of Al-Washliyah's struggle."

This statement demonstrates that Al-Washliyah's politics is intrinsically tied to its ideological identity. *Shibghah* reflects the cultivation of cadre character grounded in morality, integrity, and commitment to Islamic values (Dahlan et al., 2024, p. 72). *Wijhah* serves as an orientation directing organizational activities toward public welfare (*maslahat*) and divine devotion (Dahlan et al., 2024, p. 57). Meanwhile, the *Khittah* functions as a strategic guideline ensuring the organization remains focused on *dakwah*, education, and social services without being entangled in practical political interests (Dahlan et al., 2024, p. 55). Together, these three pillars form a complementary value system that serves as an ethical foundation for the organization's political stance.

In addition to its *Wasathiyah* orientation, this study reveals that independence is the most prominent feature of Al-Washliyah's political posture. Independence is understood as the organizational capacity to maintain distance from political party affiliations while remaining actively engaged in national affairs. From the informants' perspectives, independence does not imply political apathy; rather, it ensures that organizational stances originate from public interest rather than the agendas of specific political factions. This view was emphasized by Arifinsyah (2026), who noted:

"Al-Washliyah's politics must be restored to a grassroots-oriented politics (*politik keumatan*) that is independent, authoritative, and not easily co-opted by pragmatic interests."

Fundamentally, Al-Washliyah's politics is built upon the paradigm of *politik keumatan*—a political orientation directed not toward state power, but toward generating broader societal welfare. Within the historical trajectory of Indonesian Islamic movements, *politik keumatan* positions religious organizations as social forces bearing moral responsibility for nation-building (Bagasra, 2021). Al-Washliyah interprets politics beyond narrow electoral competition, viewing it as a domain of public service to advance universal Islamic values, such as justice, unity, welfare, and humanity. This orientation distinguishes Al-Washliyah from formal political parties, as its existence is rooted in a historical mission to build society through education, *dakwah*, and social welfare rather than ambitions for practical political power.

In the scholarly discourse on Islamic organizational politics—including the work of Ja'far regarding Al-Washliyah's political dynamics—the organization's stance reflects a distinct pattern of state-society-religion relations. Although Al-Washliyah does not function as a political party, it maintains acute political awareness when responding to national issues. Institutional autonomy grants Al-Washliyah the freedom to offer critical perspectives on governmental policies and social issues without being bound to partisan platforms. This independence serves as a vital source of moral legitimacy, ensuring that institutional decisions are guided by public interest rather than electoral calculations (Bagasra, 2021).

Al-Washliyah's political character is further evidenced by its ability to balance Islamic identity with national commitment. Since the colonial period, Al-Washliyah has positioned itself as an Islamic organization engaged in religious development while fostering civic consciousness through education and community empowerment. Following independence and through the post-1998 *Reformasi* era, this orientation has been sustained through educational institutions, *dakwah*, cadre development, and social welfare programs. Within this framework, formal political involvement is not an organizational agenda; instead, it is left to individual cadres as citizens exercising their political rights. The formal separation between the institution and individual cadre politics serves as a key strategy to preserve institutional integrity while respecting internal democratic participation.

The political model developed by Al-Washliyah represents substantive politics, which emphasizes influence through ideas, values, and civic character building. The political strength of the organization is measured not by legislative representation or proximity to state power, but by its capacity to develop human capital and cultivate social consciousness. Through its educational institutions, Al-Washliyah develops cadres who possess both Islamic knowledge and civic responsibility. Through *dakwah*, the organization promotes a moderate and constructive interpretation of Islam in public life. Meanwhile, through social services, Al-Washliyah demonstrates that political engagement can be realized through humanitarian work that directly benefits society (Nisa & Harahap, 2023).

Ultimately, Al-Washliyah's political hallmark resides in the synthesis of *wasathiyah* values, the reinforcement of *shibghah*, *wijhah*, and *khittah* principles, and a commitment to independence. *Shibghah* reinforces Islamic identity as a value foundation, *wijhah* outlines an orientation toward *dakwah* and public welfare, and *khittah* acts as a strategic guide keeping organizational activities within non-partisan bounds. Together, these principles enable Al-Washliyah to remain detached from power struggles while actively contributing to democratic life. Thus, Al-Washliyah demonstrates that an Islamic organization can exert meaningful political influence without transforming into a political party—leveraging moral

authority, education, cadre development, and social contribution (Syahnan & Ja'far, 2021).

Political Direction of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah

The political orientation and objectives of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah are not directed toward acquiring practical political power or competing in party politics. Instead, the organization functions as a moral force and an interest group dedicated to monitoring public policy and safeguarding civic ethics.

This strategic choice is grounded in a sociological and ideological awareness that direct institutional involvement in practical politics risks clouding the organization's primary mission, compromising its independence, and causing internal polarization among its membership. Consequently, Al-Washliyah's political objectives are defined beyond partisan interests to preserve communal and national unity.

In the national context, Al-Washliyah's political posture is operationalized through two primary avenues. First, as a moral force, the organization guides national and regional leadership ethics within Islamic and civic values. Second, as an interest group, it utilizes its social base and institutional infrastructure to offer policy input, articulate grassroots aspirations, and ensure public policies align with societal welfare. Meanwhile, the political participation of individual cadres is viewed as a civic right that must be guided by Islamic political ethics, without entangling Al-Washliyah's institutional symbols or name in partisan contestations.

This fundamental stance was articulated by Arifinsyah (2026), who noted:

"In a political perspective, Al-Washliyah must act as a moral force contributing to national life through cadre development, the strengthening of Islamic values, unity, and nationhood, without engaging in practical politics."

This perspective is further expanded by D. I. Batubara (2026), who detailed the operationalization of the organization's public role:

"In terms of politics, I emphasize that Al-Washliyah needs to strengthen its functions as an interest group and moral force in national life. The organization should not only focus on developing cadres, but also on conveying ideas, monitoring public policies that benefit the community, and building partnerships with the government and various societal elements."

This ethical approach to national politics is also shared by the younger generation within the organization, as expressed by Hamdi (2026):

"Finally, from a political perspective, Al-Washliyah needs to cultivate cadres who possess civic awareness, leadership skills, and political ethics grounded in Islamic values, without using the organization as a vehicle for practical politics."

These data indicate a consensus across various organizational levels—including advisory boards, regional leadership, and youth wings. Al-

Washliyah's political direction represents an expression of substantive politics. Its goal is to solidify Al-Washliyah's standing as a critical, independent, and constructive civil society actor. The organization positions itself neither as a destructive opposition nor as a pragmatic tool of state power, but as a strategic partner to the government in safeguarding socio-religious policies.

The political *Khittah* of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah exhibits a dynamic, conditional, and adaptive character, responding to contemporary developments without altering the fundamental values laid down by its founders. The rationale behind this strategic flexibility rests on the theological and sociological understanding that political realities, generational challenges, and social structures continuously evolve. If the political strategy and *Khittah* were interpreted rigidly, the organization would risk stagnation and lose its relevance in addressing complex societal problems.

This flexibility is realized through the revitalization of organizational strategies. While the core ideals and Islamic identity of Al-Washliyah remain constant (*thabit*), its methods, instruments, and tactical approaches are dynamic (*mutaghayyir*). This contextual adaptation has allowed Al-Washliyah to remain responsive across different eras—from the colonial period and early independence to the post-1998 *Reformasi* and modern eras. Such adaptability requires continuous intellectual renewal (*tajdid*), governance updates, and movement articulation.

The theological foundation for this strategic dynamism within the *Khittah* was explained by Firmansyah (2026), who referenced the concept of renewing faith:

"In my view, what is most important is continuous renewal of commitment. Even faith must be renewed—not overhauled, but constantly nurtured, as faith can increase and decrease (*Al Imanu Yazidu wa Yanqushu*) ... *Shibghah, Wijah, and Khittah* must operate similarly, remaining conditional and relevant to contemporary developments."

This notion of adapting strategies while preserving core ideals was echoed by Hatta (2026), who underscored:

"I argue that Al-Washliyah's objective is to reinforce the foundational values of the organization in line with the founders' vision, rather than changing the established goals. It is a process of adapting movement strategies to modern developments without abandoning organizational identity."

This analysis indicates that the political thought of Al-Washliyah leaders is guided by the principle of moderate flexibility (*al-muhafazhatu 'alal qadimis shalih wal akhdzu bil jadidil ashlah*—preserving good established traditions while adopting better modern innovations). The political *Khittah* is not a closed doctrine, but a dynamic framework. Al-

Washliyah's political success relies on its capacity to combine adherence to foundational Islamic principles with flexibility in responding to changing socio-political contexts.

Al-Washliyah's political actions and directions derive institutional legitimacy from its founding history in 1930 at Jalan Hindu, Medan, which is systematically transmitted through its internal cadre development system. The founding moment of 1930 represents the initial emergence of communal unity consciousness (*washlah*). History serves not merely as a memory, but as a moral compass and ideological anchor. Without a strong historical grounding, cadres' political orientation risks losing direction and succumbing to pragmatism (Lubis, 2026).

Internalizing the 1930 history serves to preserve Al-Washliyah's Islamic political identity. Historical knowledge is institutionalized within formal cadre training modules across student, youth, and senior leadership levels. Through this history-based cadre development, future generations learn why Al-Washliyah maintains its distance from practical politics and prioritizes human capital development through education, *dakwah*, and social services.

The role of historical understanding in shaping the political ethics of young cadres was emphasized by Ahmadi (2026), who stated:

"Furthermore, young cadres must understand the history, values, and ideals of Al-Washliyah's founders as a foundation for continuing the organization's struggle."

These findings indicate that the 1930 founding acts as an ideological anchor for Al-Washliyah. History preserves core values, while cadre development transmits these values across generations. Consequently, future political engagement by cadres remains rooted in the founders' initial vision.

Ultimately, Al-Washliyah's political goals are operationalized through concrete community service programs supported by professional governance. Theoretical or high-minded political discourse yields limited societal impact unless translated into action. The success of the organization's political articulation is evaluated not by the volume of political discourse it produces, but by its tangible contributions to addressing societal challenges.

This practical dimension encompasses the reinforcement of Al-Washliyah's three primary pillars: education, social service, and economic empowerment. The organization's political orientation is reflected in developing quality educational institutions, managing transparent social assistance programs, and fostering community-based economic initiatives. These efforts require modern organizational governance, visionary leadership, and intergenerational collaboration.

This practical imperative was detailed by Harahap (2026), who noted:

"In my view, Al-Washliyah's objectives must be realized through

organizational reform capable of answering current societal needs. Organizational goals remain meaningful only when translated into concrete programs, ranging from educational enhancement and social services to community empowerment at the regional level. This cannot remain mere discourse; it must be realized through visionary leadership, professional governance, and intergenerational collaboration."

This emphasis on tangible contribution and institutional transformation was further supported by D. I. Batubara (2026):

"I assess that Al-Washliyah's main challenge today is not merely maintaining its existence, but ensuring that its core values remain the foundation of every organizational policy and movement... an organization approaching its centennial must undergo institutional transformation without losing its character as an organization of dakwah, education, and public service."

This perspective aligns with the observations of Hatta (2026), who stated:

"...achieving our goals depends heavily on strengthening cadre development, education, dakwah, and community economic empowerment. Al-Washliyah members must understand, preserve, and actualize organizational goals to address modern societal challenges."

In summary, the political direction of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah is grounded in a paradigm of performance- and service-based politics (*politik kinerja dan pelayanan*). The organization's political standing is demonstrated through measurable social impact rather than legislative representation. Its strength lies in institutional independence and community empowerment across educational, social, and economic domains. Professional governance, visionary leadership, and collaborative action serve as the primary vehicles for Al-Washliyah to remain an influential, adaptive, and principled Islamic organization in contemporary society

Theoretically and empirically, this study demonstrates that the politics of Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah is grounded in principles of independence, moral politics, and interest group engagement originating from the 1930 *Khittah* established at Jalan Hindu, Medan. Al-Washliyah refrains from serving as a vehicle for practical or partisan politics in order to preserve communal unity and institutional autonomy. However, this independence is not interpreted as political apathy; rather, it represents a cultural-political strategy guided by its three core pillars—*Shibghah*, *Wijhah*, and *Khittah*—and a *Wasathiyah* (moderation) orientation. The organization strictly separates individual cadres' personal political choices from its official institutional stance, allowing Al-Washliyah to retain independent moral authority free from pragmatic political co-optation.

Furthermore, Al-Washliyah's political direction is manifested through a dynamic, adaptive, and service-oriented paradigm (*politik kinerja*). The

political *Khittah* serves as an ethical mechanism that offers tactical flexibility (*mutaghayyir*) while preserving the foundational principles (*thabit*) established by its founders. The organization's political legitimacy is measured not by parliamentary seat acquisition, but by its tangible contributions through history-grounded cadre development, educational expansion, civic *dakwah*, and professional governance reform. Through this model of substantive politics (*politik adiluhung*), Al-Washliyah reaffirms its role as a critical, constructive, and enduring civil society actor in Indonesia.

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