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**Living Aswaja as a Model Strengthening
Anti-Radicalism Education at INISMA Jambi**

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ABSTRACT

Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah (Aswaja) is a way of thinking and doing that is deeply rooted in the Islamic tradition of the Indonesian archipelago. At the Muaro Jambi Islamic Institute (INISMA), Aswaja values are one of the pillars of student character formation. This study aims to analyze (1) How the concept of Living Aswaja is understood and internalized within the Muaro Jambi Islamic Institute (INISMA) environment (2) What is the impact of the implementation of Living Aswaja on the attitude of religious tolerance of INISMA Jambi students. This type of research is qualitative with a focus on field research. (1) The concept of Living Aswaja within the Muaro Jambi Islamic Institute (INISMA) is understood as an effort to revive the values of Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah an-Nahdliyah in the academic, social, and spiritual life of the academic community. This understanding does not only stop at the theoretical level, but also extends to daily practice, both in the teaching and learning process, social interactions, and student activities. Living Aswaja at INISMA is present as an ideological identity as well as an institutional culture that shapes the mindset and behavior of its citizens. (2) This study found that the implementation of Living Aswaja at INISMA Jambi has a significant influence on the formation of religious tolerance attitudes among students. This phenomenon indicates that the principle of tawassuth (moderation) has been brought to life in their interactions.

ABSTRAK

Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah (Aswaja) merupakan sebuah manhaj berpikir dan beramal yang telah mengakar kuat dalam tradisi Islam Nusantara. Di Institut Islam Muaro Jambi (INISMA), nilai-nilai Aswaja menjadi salah satu pilar pembentukan karakter mahasiswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis (1) Bagaimana konsep Living Aswaja dipahami dan diinternalisasikan di lingkungan Institut Islam Muaro Jambi (INISMA) (2) Bagaimana dampak penerapan Living Aswaja terhadap sikap toleransi beragama mahasiswa INISMA Jambi. Jenis penelitian dengan kualitatif dengan fokus pada studi lapangan (field research). (1) Konsep Living Aswaja di lingkungan Institut Islam Muaro Jambi (INISMA) dipahami sebagai upaya menghidupkan nilai-nilai Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah an-Nahdliyah dalam kehidupan akademik, sosial, dan spiritual sivitas akademika. Pemahaman ini tidak hanya berhenti pada tataran teoritis, tetapi juga meluas pada praktik keseharian, baik dalam proses belajar mengajar, interaksi sosial, maupun kegiatan kemahasiswaan. Living Aswaja di INISMA hadir sebagai identitas ideologis sekaligus budaya institusional yang membentuk pola pikir dan perilaku warganya. (2) Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa penerapan Living Aswaja di INISMA Jambi memiliki pengaruh signifikan terhadap terbentuknya sikap toleransi beragama di kalangan mahasiswa. Fenomena ini mengindikasikan bahwa prinsip tawassuth (moderat) telah dihidupkan dalam interaksi mereka.

INTRODUCTION

Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah (Aswaja) is a way of thinking and practicing that is deeply rooted in the Islamic tradition of the Indonesian archipelago. In Indonesia, Aswaja is understood not only as a theological doctrine but also as a practical guide in daily life that encourages the creation of social harmony (Arifin & Syaiful, 2019). This understanding is crucial in a pluralistic society like Indonesia, particularly in Jambi Province, which has ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. Living Aswaja is an approach that emphasizes the practice of Aswaja values in real life, not just at the theoretical level. This concept attempts to ground the principles of Aswaja in social reality, thereby being able to make a real contribution to building religious tolerance. Amidst the rapid flow of globalization and modernization, Living Aswaja is relevant for maintaining social cohesion (Almu'tasim, 2019).

At the Muaro Jambi Islamic Institute (INISMA), the Aswaja values serve as a pillar in student character development. As a religious higher education institution, INISMA has a moral responsibility to internalize a tolerant, moderate, and inclusive attitude. Living Aswaja is seen as an effective model for strengthening these attitudes, as it embodies the principles of *tawassuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *i'tidal* (justice). Strengthening religious tolerance on campus is crucial, especially in addressing potential friction arising from differences in religious and cultural views. Students, as agents of change, need a solid foundation of values to serve as bridges of peace in a pluralistic society. In this context, Living Aswaja is not just lecture material but also a daily practice whose impact can be directly felt (Thohir et al., 2021).

The religious tolerance promoted by Living Aswaja is not passive, but rather active, where everyone strives to understand differences, respect the beliefs of others, and cooperate in goodness. This attitude aligns with the teachings of Islam, *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing for the universe), which prioritizes peace and benefit for all parties, regardless of religious or cultural background. The implementation of Living Aswaja in the INISMA Jambi environment requires a structured approach, starting from the curriculum, campus culture, and extracurricular activities (Rohman et al., 2023). Aswaja values can be integrated into Islamic courses, student organization activities, routine studies, and religious guidance. This ensures that tolerance is not merely jargon, but becomes part of the academic habitus (Amirudin, 2019).

In today's social developments, there are significant challenges to strengthening religious tolerance. The increasing phenomena of intolerance, radicalism, and political polarization pose a real threat to national unity. Campuses, as centers of knowledge and character development, have a strategic role to play in countering these negative currents. Living Aswaja can be the right solution because it is rooted in the values of moderation. The principle of *tawassuth* in Aswaja teaches a balance between tradition and modernity, so that students do not fall into extremism. The principle of *tawazun* encourages balance in interactions with others, both within Muslims and with followers of other religions. *Tasamuh* teaches patience and acceptance of differences, while *i'tidal* emphasizes the importance of fairness in behavior (Mochtar, 2015).

Furthermore, Living Aswaja at INISMA Jambi is not only directed at the internal but also external spheres. Students are encouraged to implement the values of tolerance in society, for example through community service programs, interfaith dialogue, and social activities involving various parties. Thus, Living Aswaja becomes a real force for social transformation. The multicultural nature of Jambi society presents both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, diversity is a rich social capital; on the other hand, the potential for friction is also great if not managed wisely. The presence of Living Aswaja as a model for strengthening religious tolerance is expected to be a preventive instrument in anticipating horizontal conflict.

Historically, Jambi has a track record of relatively harmonious religious life. However, social dynamics and the rapid development of information technology have the potential to change this landscape. Misinformation or hate speech can easily spread on social media,

triggering misunderstandings and conflict. This is where Living Aswaja plays a strategic role in strengthening digital tolerance literacy. At the academic level, studies on Living Aswaja also contribute to the development of theories of religious moderation in Indonesia (AS, 2013). Previous studies have largely discussed Aswaja from a doctrinal perspective but have been limited in exploring its practical application in the campus environment. The study at INISMA Jambi can serve as an empirical reference for strengthening Aswaja-based tolerance in higher education.

The involvement of the entire academic community is essential for Living Aswaja to be effective. Lecturers act as role models and facilitators of tolerance values, while students act as direct actors. Campus institutions provide policies and programs that support the creation of an inclusive academic environment. This synergy is key to the success of strengthening religious tolerance. Furthermore, the implementation of Living Aswaja on campus also needs to be adaptive to current developments. Generation Z students have different characteristics than previous generations, particularly in terms of technology use, learning styles, and communication patterns (Arifin & Syaiful, 2019). Therefore, strategies to strengthen religious tolerance based on Living Aswaja must utilize digital media creatively.

Beyond spirituality, intellectual aspects are also important. Students need to be taught the history, thoughts, and contributions of Aswaja figures in building a moderate Islamic civilization. This historical understanding will foster pride and a commitment to continuing this tradition of tolerance in the modern era. Living Aswaja also emphasizes the importance of dialogue, not debate that undermines each other (Sarumpaet, 2019). At INISMA Jambi, students are facilitated to engage in dialogue with other religious communities, discuss social issues, and seek joint solutions. These activities can erode prejudice and build empathy between religious communities.

Furthermore, the implementation of Living Aswaja on campus will create *role models* of tolerance for the surrounding community. Students with moderate attitudes will become agents of peace in their families, communities, and workplaces. This effect will spread, creating a sustainable culture of tolerance. Strengthening religious tolerance based on Living Aswaja is also relevant to the vision of religious moderation proclaimed by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs. Campuses can become strategic partners with the government in spreading this message of moderation, thus creating synergy between national policy and local practice.

Specifically in Jambi, strengthening religious tolerance is particularly urgent, given that this region serves as a meeting point for various cultures from Sumatra, Java, and other regions. This potential for intercultural interaction requires a strong foundation of tolerance so that diversity becomes a source of strength, not conflict. In the era of globalization, Aswaja values can also serve as *soft power* in cultural diplomacy. Students who understand and practice religious tolerance can become ambassadors of peace at the national and international levels. They can showcase the friendly, moderate, and civilized face of Islam.

However, the implementation of Living Aswaja as a model for strengthening religious tolerance also faces challenges, such as resistance from those who still hold exclusive or fundamentalist views. Therefore, the implementation strategy needs to consider persuasive, educational, and inclusive approaches. Regular evaluation is also necessary to measure the effectiveness of the Living Aswaja program at INISMA Jambi. Indicators can include the level of student engagement, changes in attitudes, and the impact on interfaith relations on campus. It is also important to integrate values of tolerance into campus regulations, for example, the student code of conduct, organizational regulations, and academic guidelines. This way, religious tolerance becomes part of the system, not just a personal initiative.

Cross-institutional collaboration can also strengthen the implementation of Living Aswaja. INISMA Jambi can partner with community organizations, interfaith institutions, and the mass media to expand the reach of the message of tolerance. Alumni involvement in the Living Aswaja program also has great potential. Alumni who have achieved success in society can serve

as inspiration and mentors for students, demonstrating that the values of religious tolerance bring real benefits in life. In the long term, Living Aswaja is expected to foster a peaceful, inclusive, and productive campus ecosystem. Such an environment will foster creativity, collaboration, and improved academic achievement.

Furthermore, strengthening religious tolerance through Living Aswaja aligns with the national education goals of developing individuals who are faithful, pious, and have noble morals, as well as possessing the knowledge and skills to live harmoniously in a pluralistic society (Habibah et al., 2022). Thus, Living Aswaja is not only relevant to strengthening religious tolerance at INISMA Jambi but also contributes to the development of national character. Its moderate, balanced, tolerant, and just values form the foundation for a peaceful national and state life. Ultimately, research on Living Aswaja as a model for strengthening religious tolerance at INISMA Jambi is important, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research will enrich the study of religious moderation in Islamic higher education environments.

Practically, the results of this study can be used as a guide for other campuses to implement similar models, adapting them to their respective local contexts. This way, strengthening religious tolerance can be implemented systematically and sustainably across Indonesia. In conclusion, Living Aswaja is a concept with great potential to become a model for strengthening religious tolerance on campus. At INISMA Jambi, its implementation can strengthen the character of students as a generation that is moderate, open, and able to live harmoniously amidst diversity.

In the context of national life, successfully strengthening religious tolerance on campus will positively contribute to social stability and national unity. Therefore, this research is not only academically relevant but also strategically important for the nation's future. Against this backdrop, the study of Living Aswaja as a model for strengthening religious tolerance at INISMA Jambi is urgent and cannot be ignored. This research is expected to make a tangible contribution to building a peaceful, harmonious, and civilized Indonesian society.

METHOD

Types and Approaches of Research

The type of research used in the study "Living Aswaja as a Model for Strengthening Anti-Radicalism Education at INISMA Jambi" is qualitative research with a focus on field studies. The selection of this type of research is based on the aim of understanding in depth the process of implementing Aswaja values (Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah) that are lived in the daily lives of INISMA Jambi academics as a preventive strategy against radicalism. This research not only examines concepts and theories, but also traces real practices, habits, and religious traditions that are carried out continuously in campus life. This qualitative approach provides an opportunity for researchers to explore the meanings, perceptions, and experiences of informants, so as to obtain an authentic and comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of Living Aswaja in strengthening anti-radicalism education.

Research Background

Radicalism is a serious threat to national unity and social harmony in Indonesia. This phenomenon not only targets the general public, but also penetrates the educational environment, including universities. Radical ideology that prioritizes violence, intolerance, and rejection of diversity can damage national values and disrupt national security stability. Therefore, strategic efforts are needed to build awareness and strengthen students' understanding of the values of religious moderation. This study aims to analyze (1) How the concept of Living Aswaja is understood and internalized in the Muaro Jambi Islamic Institute (INISMA) environment (2) What is the impact of the implementation of Living Aswaja on the attitude of religious tolerance of INISMA Jambi students.

Research Informants

The following is a profile of research informants selected purposively to study "Living Aswaja as a Model for Strengthening Anti-Radicalism Education at INISMA Jambi." Key informants include lecturers teaching Aswajaan courses and INISMA Jambi students directly involved in implementing the curriculum in Aswajaan courses.

Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique in the descriptive qualitative research on *Living Aswaja* as a model for strengthening anti-radicalism education at INISMA Jambi was carried out through *in-depth* interviews with parties directly involved in the implementation of the course program.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes three main stages (Rahmadhani & Dahlan, 2023), namely (1) data reduction: the process of selecting, rejecting, and transforming field data into a more organized and meaningful form. (2) Data presentation: data is presented in the form of descriptive narratives, matrices, or thematic diagrams to facilitate conclusions. (3) Conclusions and verification of conclusions: interpretations are carried out systematically based on emerging patterns of findings.

Data Validity Test

Data validity is maintained through four main criteria according to Lincoln and Guba in Assingkily (2021), namely: (1) Credibility: carried out through triangulation of sources and techniques, member checking (validation of findings to informants), and continuous observation throughout the research process. (2) Transferability: maintained by providing a detailed description of the context (3) Dependability: carried out by regularly recording the entire research process, including methodological decisions taken, to allow for an audit trail by other researchers. (4) Confirmability: guaranteed by maintaining objectivity and transparency in reporting results, and involving peer debriefing to reduce interpretation bias.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

How is the concept of Living Aswaja understood and internalized in the Muaro Jambi Islamic Institute (INISMA) environment

The concept of *Living Aswaja* within the Muaro Jambi Islamic Institute (INISMA) is understood as an effort to revive the values of Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah an-Nahdliyah in the academic, social, and spiritual lives of the academic community. This understanding does not stop at the theoretical level, but also extends to daily practice, both in the teaching and learning process, social interactions, and student activities. *Living Aswaja* at INISMA exists as an ideological identity as well as an institutional culture that shapes the mindset and behavior of its members. In general, the INISMA academic community understands *Living Aswaja* as a moderate Islamic teaching, balancing text, and context, and accommodating local traditions that do not conflict with sharia. This understanding is internalized through Aswaja courses and routine religious activities. Students are encouraged to understand Aswaja not merely as a doctrine, but as a lifestyle that respects diversity and rejects extreme attitudes (Asriyanto et al., 2023).

Strengthening the understanding of *Living Aswaja* at INISMA begins when new students participate in an orientation program that includes specific material on the history, principles, and methods of thinking of Aswaja. At this stage, students are introduced to the values of tawasuth (moderation), tawazun (balance), tasamuh (tolerance), and i'tidal (justice). This material is delivered by lecturers with Islamic boarding school backgrounds, ensuring the purity of the narrative conveyed. Internalization of *Living Aswaja* within INISMA occurs through various instruments, one of which is the weekly *halaqah (religious gathering) activity* that discusses classic books by Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah scholars. In this *halaqah*, lecturers and

students engage in open dialogue regarding the relevance of the thoughts of previous scholars to contemporary problems. This dialogical approach helps students understand Aswaja as a dynamic and contextual teaching (Fahri, Mohammad, 2022).

Living Aswaja activities are also integrated into Islamic religious celebrations. For example, on the Prophet's Birthday, Nuzulul Qur'an, and Haul ulama (Islamic gatherings), students and lecturers jointly organize religious activities framed by Aswaja values. These activities not only foster a sense of togetherness but also serve as a medium for social learning about the importance of preserving religious traditions passed down by scholars. Academically, courses related to Aswaja are not only theory-oriented but also encourage students to engage in socio-religious practices in the community. For example, students are asked to conduct observations in villages around campus to observe community religious practices based on Aswaja. These findings are then discussed in class to broaden students' perspectives.

The campus environment, steeped in Islamic boarding school culture, is also a crucial factor in the internalization of *Living Aswaja*. Many INISMA lecturers and educational staff are graduates of Islamic boarding schools, accustomed to Aswaja traditions. This influences the way they interact, deliver material, and serve as role models for students. This culture creates a conducive atmosphere for the natural instilling of Aswaja values. INISMA students tend to view *Living Aswaja* not just as a course, but as a guide for life. This is evident in their habit of attending regular religious study groups, reciting *prayers* together, and holding tahlilan (religious recitation) to pray for the deceased. These practices demonstrate that Aswaja values are embedded in students' daily lives.

In this internalization process, a persuasive approach is key. Lecturers do not impose a rigid understanding of Aswaja, but rather provide space for discussion and disagreement. This way, students feel involved and develop an emotional attachment to the values taught. This approach aligns with the Aswaja principles, which prioritize deliberation and respect for differences. *Living Aswaja activities* at INISMA are also strengthened by student organizations, particularly PMII (Indonesian Islamic Student Movement), which serves as a forum for Aswaja cadre development. PMII regularly holds discussions, studies, and social actions with an Aswaja perspective. The presence of this organization serves as a bridge between academic values and student social movements. Not only students but also lecturers have the space to deepen and actualize *Living Aswaja* through the Aswaja lecturer forum. This forum serves as a place to share experiences and strategies in integrating Aswaja values into teaching and student mentoring. Collaboration between lecturers and students makes the internalization process more comprehensive (Asriyanto et al., 2023).



Figure 1. PMII regularly holds discussions, studies, and social actions with an Aswaja perspective.

One prominent manifestation of *Living Aswaja* at INISMA is the implementation of the *Aswaja da'wah practicum*. In this activity, students practice da'wah in mosques, prayer rooms,

and educational institutions around campus. The da'wah material presented is based on the principles of Aswaja, so that the community gains an understanding of peaceful and tolerant Islam. The academic approach used in *Living Aswaja* at INISMA is integrative. This means that discussions of Aswaja appear not only in religious courses but also in general courses such as education, law, economics, and social studies. In this way, students understand that Aswaja values can be applied in various aspects of life.

Interviews with students indicate that they feel more confident engaging in dialogue with other Islamic groups because they have a strong foundation of argumentation from Aswaja. They also admitted to being better able to avoid radicalism because they understand the importance of religious moderation. This indicates that the internalization of Aswaja influences students' religious attitudes. Students' understanding of Aswaja is also reflected in how they respond to social issues. INISMA students tend to take a middle ground, avoid provocation, and prioritize peaceful solutions. This attitude is a manifestation of the values of *tawasuth* and *tasamuh* that are characteristic of Aswaja (Interview with INISMA Jambi students, June 23, 2025, 9:00 a.m. WIB).

The internalization of *Living Aswaja* also impacts relationships between students. They are more open to accepting differences in background, whether ethnicity, language, or school of thought. This inclusive attitude is fostered by the Aswaja understanding that views differences as a blessing, not a threat. Activities such as *bahtsul masail* provide a means for students to practice critical thinking skills within the Aswaja framework. They are invited to discuss contemporary issues using the legal *istinbat* method taught by Aswaja scholars. This activity trains students to combine classical and modern insights within a single framework (Purwanto et al., 2019).

Beyond cognitive aspects, the internalization of Aswaja at INISMA also touches the affective and psychomotor domains. Students not only understand the Aswaja teachings but also practice them. For example, they prioritize politeness, respect for teachers, and maintain Islamic brotherhood on campus. The campus leadership's adherence to Aswaja also strengthens the internalization process. The rector and faculty leaders actively set an example by practicing Aswaja traditions, such as visiting graves, reciting prayers, and holding group prayers before meetings. These examples have a positive influence on students.

Digital media is also used to expand the reach of *Living Aswaja*. INISMA has social media channels that publish Islamic preaching materials, articles, and videos about Aswaja. This content is consumed not only by students but also by the wider community, thereby strengthening the campus's image as a center for Aswaja studies. From field observations, the *Living Aswaja concept* at INISMA is not just a slogan but has become a campus culture. This is evident in the routine of congregational worship, the habit of reciting prayers before and after activities, and respect for ulama and religious figures (Ghofur, 2015).

A challenge facing the internalization of Aswaja is the influx of information from social media that is inconsistent with Aswaja principles. Some students are exposed to more extreme or liberal religious views. To address this, lecturers and student organizations continue to hold clarification forums and digital literacy sessions. Students' experiences participating in Community Service Programs (KKN) also serve as a means of implementing Aswaja. They hold religious studies, *tahlilan* (religious recitation), and social activities based on the value of moderation. The community generally welcomes this approach because it is polite and accommodates local traditions.

At the curriculum level, the Aswaja course is positioned as a compulsory course for all students. This policy ensures that every INISMA graduate has a strong ideological foundation in dealing with religious dynamics in society. Research results show that the more frequently students are involved in *Living Aswaja activities*, the higher their level of internalization. Active participation in religious activities, discussions, and social actions is a key factor in strengthening the understanding and attitude of Aswaja. From the lecturer's perspective, they

see that *Living Aswaja* helps create a peaceful and productive academic atmosphere. Lecturers find it easier to manage classes whose students understand the values of tolerance, deliberation, and justice. Consequently, the learning process becomes more conducive.

The integration of Aswaja into research activities has also begun. Several student theses address local religious traditions, religious moderation, and the contributions of Aswaja scholars in the Jambi region. This research enriches the academic repertoire and strengthens the campus's identity. *Living Aswaja activities* also attract prospective students. Many parents choose INISMA because they see the campus upholding Aswaja values while still providing quality higher education. This trust is crucial for the campus's development.

In terms of collaboration, INISMA has established relationships with Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) and other religious institutions to expand the Aswaja (Aswaja) missionary network. This collaboration has resulted in resource exchange programs, training, and Aswaja-based community service. *The istighosah (religious gathering) and joint prayer* activities at the beginning of each semester serve as a spiritual strengthening event. Students experience inner peace and unity after participating in these activities. The resulting values of togetherness are an important part of internalizing Aswaja.

The academic traditions developed by INISMA are also aligned with Aswaja, such as respect for lecturers, the use of the sanad method of scientific transmission, and the maintenance of the tradition of reading scriptures during lectures. This tradition maintains continuity between classical and modern knowledge. Students' understanding of Aswaja matures through their involvement in scientific forums. They are invited to write articles and papers that examine religious issues from an Aswaja perspective. As a result, students can present arguments with a strong scientific foundation. In terms of community service, *Living Aswaja* encourages students and lecturers to prioritize da'wah bil hikmah, that is, inviting with wisdom. This approach makes the community feel valued and open to the message conveyed.

Alumni involvement is also crucial in strengthening *Living Aswaja*. Many alumni who become teachers, religious teachers, and community leaders bring the Aswaja values they learned at INISMA to their workplaces. This creates a ripple effect in spreading the values of moderation. The practice of etiquette before knowledge is a hallmark of the internalization of Aswaja at INISMA. Students are taught to prioritize respect for teachers before seeking knowledge. This value forms the foundation for healthy academic relationships. The physical campus environment also supports *Living Aswaja*. The availability of a campus mosque, halaqah rooms, and da'wah bulletin boards create a religious atmosphere on campus. This fosters habits of worship and study that align with Aswaja values.

Finally, it can be concluded that *Living Aswaja* at INISMA is an integrated process of formal learning, non-formal activities, and campus culture. Aswaja values are not only understood cognitively, but also brought to life in behavior, traditions, and social interactions. This internalization process does face challenges, but the support of leaders, lecturers, student organizations, and external networks keeps it growing. INISMA has succeeded in making *Living Aswaja* both an identity and a moral force for the entire academic community. Thus, *Living Aswaja* at INISMA is not only knowledge, but has become a collective consciousness that guides the way the academic community thinks, behaves, and acts in everyday life, both on campus and in the wider community.

How Does the Implementation of Living Aswaja Impact the Religious Tolerance of INISMA Jambi Students

This study found that the implementation of *Living Aswaja* at INISMA Jambi has a significant influence on the formation of religious tolerance among students. Data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation indicate that the *Living Aswaja concept* is not merely taught theoretically but is also internalized through academic and non-academic activities. This internalization process gives rise to an understanding that the teachings of Ahlus

Sunnah wal Jama'ah are inclusive, respect differences, and prioritize the principle of *tasamuh* (tolerance). From the results of observations, students involved in *Living Aswaja activities* exhibit more open behavior towards diverse religious views. For example, in class discussions discussing differences in schools of thought, students not only defend their own opinions but also seek to understand the views of others. This phenomenon indicates that the principle of *tawassuth* (moderation) has been brought to life in their interactions.

An interview with the lecturer in charge of the Aswaja course revealed that the *Living Aswaja -based teaching strategy* involves a contextual approach. The material does not stop at memorizing definitions but is connected to students' social realities. This aims to make students realize that Aswaja values are relevant in everyday life, including in building relationships between religious communities. *Living Aswaja activities* on campus also involve discussion forums across student organizations. The forum serves as a dialogue space for members who come from Islamic boarding schools, public schools, and even non-Muslim students who are part of the INISMA academic community. Through this forum, the concept of *tasamuh* is not only understood theoretically but also put into practice (Interview with the Lecturer in Charge of the Aswaja Course at INISMA Jambi, June 23, 2025, at 1:00 PM WIB).

In addition to classroom learning, the values of *Living Aswaja* are internalized through social activities such as community service, fundraising for disaster victims regardless of religious background, and joint sahur programs across communities. These activities foster empathy and a broader sense of humanity among students. In terms of communication, students who understand *Living Aswaja* tend to use more polite language during discussions, even on sensitive topics. This attitude demonstrates the link between understanding the concept of moderation and interpersonal communication practices.

Field findings also indicate that some students were initially less accepting of religious differences, but after participating in the *Living Aswaja learning program*, they became more open. This process wasn't instantaneous, but rather involved stages of discussion, reflection, and active involvement in campus activities. Interestingly, students who regularly participated in Aswaja learning at the campus mosque showed significant improvements in their inclusive attitudes. They reported being able to distinguish between differences in *furu'iyah* (branch) and *ushul* (principle), thus making them less judgmental about others' religious practices.

The discussion of these findings refers to the theory of values education, which emphasizes that the internalization of values requires a combination of cognition, affection, and action. In the context of INISMA Jambi, *Living Aswaja* serves as a bridge connecting these three aspects. The *Living Aswaja approach* implemented on campus embodies the principle of *al-muhafadzah 'ala al-qadim al-shalih wa al-akhdu bi al-jadid al-ashlah* (maintaining the good from the past and adopting the better from the new). This principle encourages students to maintain the tolerant Aswaja tradition while embracing beneficial innovations.

One indicator of the success of the *Living Aswaja implementation* is seen in students' attitudes toward non-Muslim religious events. Interviews revealed that many students began to understand that attending non-Muslim events in a social capacity (not religious service) is a form of respect and does not conflict with the principles of Aswaja. Aswaja supervisors also revealed that interfaith discussions on campus address not only similarities but also differences scientifically. This approach helps students understand that tolerance does not mean standardizing beliefs, but rather respecting differences while maintaining personal identity (Amirudin, 2019; Kanafi et al., 2015).

The influence of *Living Aswaja* on religious tolerance is also evident in student organization activities. The Student Executive Board (BEM) frequently invites speakers from various religious backgrounds to discuss humanitarian issues. This creates an inclusive space on campus. Field observations found that students who embrace Aswaja values collaborate more easily in heterogeneous groups. They do not refuse to work together simply because of differences in belief, but rather view diversity as a wealth. In theory, these findings align with

the concept of *tasamuh* (*balance*) in Aswaja, which emphasizes respect and non-imposition of will. This value is considered relevant in a multicultural context like Jambi, which has ethnic and religious diversity.

The research also revealed challenges in implementing *Living Aswaja*. Some students still hold exclusive views that are difficult to change. Previous educational backgrounds are a contributing factor. However, lecturers address this through a personalized approach and ongoing mentoring. Interestingly, even though some students come from non-Aswaja backgrounds, they are still able to accept the principle of moderation after understanding the essence of its teachings. This demonstrates that *Living Aswaja* is inclusive and acceptable across groups.

Living Aswaja strengthening program at INISMA Jambi is not only implemented at the beginning of the study period but continues throughout the lecture process. This gives students a longer opportunity to internalize its values. Psychologically, students exposed to *Living Aswaja* tend to have higher levels of empathy. They can put themselves in the perspective of others before drawing conclusions or acting. This phenomenon strengthens the argument that values-based education, such as *Living Aswaja*, can shape students' character to be not only intellectually intelligent but also socially wise. This kind of character education is an important foundation for social life.



Figure 2. *Living Aswaja* at INISMA Jambi with direct participation in religious agendas.

In practice, *Living Aswaja* at INISMA Jambi combines classical and participatory learning methods. Group discussions, simulations, and case studies are used to hone students' critical thinking skills in the context of diversity. From a social constructivism perspective, students develop an understanding of tolerance through direct interaction with their environment. *Living Aswaja provides a concrete context for developing this understanding. It is important to note that the success of Living Aswaja's implementation is also influenced by institutional support. Campus policies that promote inclusivity provide space for students to practice the value of moderation without fear.*

Field findings also indicate a positive relationship between student involvement in Aswaja activities and their ability to resolve interpersonal conflicts. Students who understand the principle of moderation are more likely to seek peaceful solutions rather than confrontation. Furthermore, students active in the Aswaja community are more aware of social issues, such as poverty, injustice, and discrimination. They view these issues as a shared responsibility, not just the concern of a particular group. Discussion of these findings indicates that *Living Aswaja* is not only a theological concept but also a relevant social practice in the modern era. By instilling values of tolerance, the campus helps shape agents of change ready to contribute to social peace (Husna & Thohir, 2020).

On a micro scale, changes in student attitudes can be seen in how they address differences within campus organizations. On a macro scale, these values have the potential to

spread to the wider community when INISMA graduates enter the workforce. The impact of *Living Aswaja* on religious tolerance also serves as proof that Islamic religious education can align with democratic and human rights values, provided it is managed with a moderate and inclusive approach. Methodologically, this success is further reinforced by a regular evaluation process. Each Aswaja activity is always followed by a collective reflection, allowing students to connect their experiences with the values they have learned (Golshani, 2007).

Conceptually, *Living Aswaja* at INISMA Jambi demonstrates that values education requires emotional involvement and real-life experiences, not simply memorizing texts. Therefore, the results of this study confirm that the implementation of *Living Aswaja* can be an effective strategy for fostering religious tolerance in higher education. Students' experiences interacting, discussing, and collaborating in diverse settings are clear evidence of the program's success. Furthermore, this discussion demonstrates that the successful internalization of Aswaja values depends heavily on consistency, exemplary behavior, and institutional support. Without these, the value of moderation will be difficult to achieve. Finally, the implementation of *Living Aswaja* at INISMA Jambi can serve as a model for other universities in developing values-based education relevant to the context of Indonesia's multicultural society.

CONCLUSION

The concept of *Living Aswaja* within the Muaro Jambi Islamic Institute (INISMA) is understood as an effort to revive the values of Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah an-Nahdliyah in the academic, social, and spiritual lives of the academic community. This understanding does not stop at the theoretical level, but also extends to daily practice, both in the teaching and learning process, social interactions, and student activities. *Living Aswaja* at INISMA exists as an ideological identity as well as an institutional culture that shapes the mindset and behavior of its members. This study found that the implementation of *Living Aswaja* at INISMA Jambi has a significant influence on the formation of religious tolerance among students. This phenomenon indicates that the principle of *tawassuth* (moderation) has been brought to life in their interactions.

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