



Developing Students' Islamic Personality Character through Group Counseling Based on ASWAJA An Nahdliyah Values

Sugiarto

Universitas Ma'arif Lampung, Indonesia

sugiartopsikologi@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Religious-based local wisdom counseling has emerged as a strategic alternative for addressing the moral and identity crisis among adolescents in the era of globalization. One of the most contextual approaches in Indonesia is the values of ASWAJA An-Nahdliyah, which emphasize moderation (*tawassuth*), balance (*tawazun*), and tolerance (*tasamuh*). This study aims to examine the effectiveness of a group counseling model based on ASWAJA values in developing students' Islamic character. Using a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental method and a pretest-posttest control-group design, this study involved 25 students from Islamic Senior High Schools (MA) who were categorized as having very low Islamic character scores. Participants were divided into control and experimental groups. The instrument used was the Religious Moderation Scale (RM-S), which measures four core indicators: national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation of local culture. The results of the normality and homogeneity tests confirmed that the data met the assumptions for parametric analysis. The paired-sample t-test revealed that the control group showed an increase of 12.57 points with a significance level of 0.000, while the experimental group showed a significantly greater increase of 36.57 points, also with a significance value of 0.000. These findings indicate that the ASWAJA-based counseling model is highly effective in improving students' Islamic character compared with conventional counseling approaches. Therefore, this model is worthy of adoption in formal educational counseling services as a means of grounding students' character formation in local religious values.

Keywords: ASWAJA Values, Character Education, Group Counseling, Islamic Character, Religious Guidance, Religious Moderation



INTRODUCTION

Islamic personality is an important foundation for shaping the character of Muslim individuals who are not only faithful and pious but also capable of displaying noble morals in everyday life. However, in the context of Indonesia's multicultural society and the challenges of globalization, the development of an Islamic personality often faces various obstacles, both internal and external. One of the main challenges is the growing influence of radicalism and liberalism, which can shift moderate values in religious practice (Mahmudi, 2021).

The development of globalization and the penetration of foreign cultures have triggered the moral degradation of the younger generation, including in the context of religious life in Indonesia (Hamni et al., 2025). Data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Kementerian PPPA, 2024) indicate a 22% increase in cases of juvenile delinquency involving violations of religious values over the past five years, such as bullying in the name of differences in belief and the misuse of social media for provocative content (Beno et al., 2022). This phenomenon indicates the failure of conventional counseling systems to address the complex crisis of religious identity.

The dominance of secular Western counseling theories is increasingly considered less relevant to the characteristics of Indonesian society, which is religious. One study revealed that 68% of counselors in Islamic schools had difficulty adapting Rogers' client-centered therapy techniques because they conflicted with the principle of *tawhid* (Annajih, 2018). Meanwhile, the National Education System Law No. 20/2003 emphasizes the need for education based on local wisdom, including religious values (Adolph, 2016). The values of ASWAJA An-Nahdliyah, which promote *tawassuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), and *tasamuh* (tolerance), offer a philosophical solution to this problem.

A longitudinal study at Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School (2023) demonstrated that internalizing ASWAJA values through habitual collective worship was able to increase the students' discipline index by 41% (Rofi'i, 2023). However, its implementation in counseling practice remains limited to the Islamic boarding-school environment, without a structured model that can be adopted by formal institutions (Fahmi, 2021).

Literature analysis reveals three research gaps: (1) the limited systematic integration between ASWAJA principles and modern counseling techniques (Annajih, 2018); (2) the absence of standardized measurement instruments for evaluating Islamic personality (Beno et al., 2022); and (3) the dominance of curative rather than preventive approaches in guidance services (Adolph, 2016). Meanwhile, the concept of *al-muhafazhah* (preservation of values) in ASWAJA offers a theoretical framework for developing a counseling model based on local wisdom (Rofi'i, 2023).

The urgency of this research is strengthened by Aini's (2023) finding that 73% of cases of value disorientation among Muslim adolescents originate from internal conflicts between the demands of modernity and religious principles (Hamni et al., 2025). An ASWAJA-based integrative counseling model is expected to serve as a bridge between the Islamic traditions of the Indonesian archipelago and contemporary challenges, while also addressing the needs of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum, which emphasizes the Pancasila Student Profile (Rofi'i, 2023).

Based on these problems, this research was conducted with the aim of developing counseling values based on ASWAJA An-Nahdliyah in order to build an integrated Islamic personality while upholding the principles of *tawassuth*, *tawazun*, and *tasamuh* (Iskandar & Juandi, 2022). Specifically, this study aims to determine the effectiveness of a counseling approach that adapts local religious values in revitalizing the morals of the younger generation (Safitri, 2018).

The need for this research arises from two main factors: (1) the increasing number of cases of adolescent behavioral deviations due to the influence of globalization that contradicts religious



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values (Setyaningsih, 2019), and (2) the dominance of Western counseling theories that are less adaptive to the socio-cultural context of Indonesian society (Hidayat, 2023). The integration of ASWAJA values into counseling is expected to provide an alternative solution based on local religious wisdom (Sari & Relawaty, 2025).

Relevant research indicates that counseling approaches based on Islamic values have a positive influence on developing students' character and personality. Wahyuni et al. (2024) found that Islamic guidance and counseling services were effective in reducing deviant adolescent behavior in Timbang Lawan Village through religious values consistently conveyed during counseling sessions.

This finding is reinforced by Maulana & Ulinnuha (2023), who demonstrated that the implementation of Islamic counseling based on local culture could prevent negative behaviors among university students, such as nightclub activities and social media addiction, through the gradual cultivation of *tawazun* and *tazkiyatun nafs* values.

Meanwhile, Susanto (2022), in research on multicultural Islamic education, emphasized that strengthening local values based on Islamic boarding schools plays an important role in developing a moderate Islamic identity that is open to differences. Sembiring & Chairunnisa (2022) also demonstrated that guidance and counseling teachers play a strategic role in increasing students' awareness and management of study time by using a counseling approach emphasizing discipline and responsibility, two core characteristics of Islamic personality.

In addition, Aisyah (2024) showed that educational management integrating spiritual values and modern management provides substantial space for developing Islamic character that is resilient and adaptive amid globalization. The findings of the studies presented strengthen the argument that Islamic counseling, particularly counseling based on local values such as ASWAJA, has a strong scientific and empirical foundation for comprehensively developing students' Islamic personality.

Although various studies have discussed the integration of Islamic values into counseling and education, there is still a lack of counseling models that specifically combine ASWAJA An-Nahdliyah values with modern psychotherapy approaches. In addition, few studies have developed standardized instruments to quantitatively measure the effectiveness of internalizing ASWAJA values in developing Islamic personality.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by developing an integrative counseling model applicable in formal and non-formal educational environments. The hypothesis proposed in this study is that an integrative counseling model based on ASWAJA An-Nahdliyah values is effective in developing students' Islamic personality compared with conventional counseling approaches. The variables in this study consist of the independent variable, namely the counseling model based on ASWAJA An-Nahdliyah values, and the dependent variable, namely the development of students' Islamic personality.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental method and a pretest-posttest design involving control and experimental groups, as shown in Figure 1. The research participants or population consisted of male and female students from Islamic Senior High Schools (MA) throughout Metro City, totaling 176 students. The sample consisted of 25 participants selected through purposive sampling.



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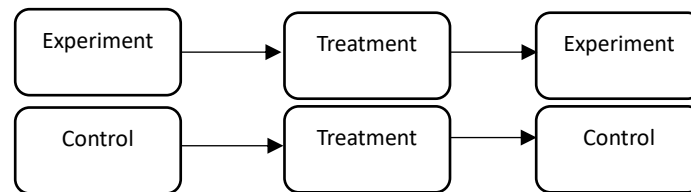


Figure 1.

Pretest-Posttest Design Involving Control and Experimental Groups

This study adapted the Religious Moderation Scale (RM-S) questionnaire (Monalisa et al., 2023), which measures four important indicators for ASWAJA Muslims: 1. National Commitment, 2. Tolerance, 3. Non-violence, and 4. Accommodation of Local Culture. This scale was used to measure the development of adolescents' character before and after participating in ASWAJA-based counseling. The scale consisted of 21 questions with a validity significance score of 0.000 and a reliability score of 0.841.

In developing the research model, the researcher used several stages: First, the researcher conducted preliminary research (an evaluation study), namely identifying students' responsibility character through questionnaires distributed to all male and female MA students throughout Metro City. Second, designing a group guidance model based on ASWAJA teachings. Third, conducting the pretest by completing the research questionnaire, namely the Religious Moderation Scale (RM-S). Fourth, implementing group counseling based on ASWAJA values. Fifth, conducting the posttest and evaluating the results of the ASWAJA-based counseling implementation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Tabel 1.

Descriptive Test Results of Islamic Personality

		Score	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Very Low	46 – 57	25	27.3%
	Low	58 – 69	31	56.4%
	High	70 – 81	7	12.7%
	Very high	82 – 94	2	3.6%

Based on Table 1, it is known that the intensity of students possessing Islamic character was divided into four categories. In the very low category, there were 25 students with a percentage of 27.3%; there were 31 students in the low category with a percentage of 56.4%; there were 7 students in the high category with a percentage of 12.7%; and there were 2 students whose Islamic character was categorized as very high, with a percentage of 3.6%.

From these data, the researcher selected 25 samples in the very low category as the control and experimental groups for the implementation of ASWAJA-based group counseling in an effort to develop students' character or Islamic personality. Before conducting the counseling, the counselees were asked to complete a similar questionnaire as a pretest. The next stage was the implementation of ASWAJA-based counseling.

The counseling was conducted in six sessions, and on the final day all members of both the control and experimental groups completed the questionnaire again as a posttest. This was conducted as a measurement tool for testing the success of ASWAJA-based counseling. The tests conducted included validity and homogeneity tests for both the control and experimental groups. The results of the pretest and posttest for the control and experimental groups were as follows.



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Normality and Homogeneity Tests for the Control Group

Table 2.

Normality and Homogeneity Tests for the Control Group

Test Type	Test Type	Statistics	df1	df2	Sig. (p)
Normality	Pretest	0.235	–	–	0.200
	Posttest	0.275	–	–	0.118
Homogeneity	Levene's Test (mean)	2.074	1	12	0.175
	Levene's Test (median)	1.633	1	12	0.225

Table 2 presents the results of the normality and variance homogeneity tests for the control group, for both pretest and posttest data. The normality test using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov method showed that the significance values for both data sets were above 0.05 (pretest = 0.200; posttest = 0.118), indicating that the data were normally distributed.

The homogeneity test using Levene's Test also showed significance values above 0.05 under all approaches (based on the mean, median, and trimmed mean), meaning that there were no significant differences in variance between the pretest and posttest. Thus, it can be concluded that the control-group data met the assumptions of normality and homogeneity and were therefore suitable for analysis using tests such as the t-test.

Normality and Homogeneity Tests for the Experimental Group

Tabel 3. Normality and Homogeneity Tests for the Experimental Group

Test Type	Test Type	Statistics	df1	df2	Sig. (p)
Normality	Pretest	0.258	–	–	0.174
	Posttest	0.118	–	–	0.200
Homogeneity	Levene's Test (mean)	6.707	1	12	0.124
	Levene's Test (median)	6.149	1	12	0.129

Table 3 shows the results of the normality and homogeneity tests for the experimental group. Similar to the control group, the normality test on the pretest and posttest data also showed significance values above 0.05 (pretest = 0.174; posttest = 0.200), so it can be concluded that the data were normally distributed.

In addition, the homogeneity test using Levene's Test also produced significance values above the 0.05 threshold under various approaches. This indicates that the variances between the pretest and posttest data in the experimental group were homogeneous or uniform. Thus, the experimental-group data met the two main requirements for parametric analysis.

Tabel 4.

Paired-Sample T-Test Results for the Control Group

Data Pairs	Mean Difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t count	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest – Posttest Control Group	-12.571	2.760	1.043	-12.050	6	0.000

Table 4 presents the results of the paired-sample t-test conducted to determine the difference between pretest and posttest scores in the control group. The analysis showed a difference with a mean difference of -12.571 and a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This finding indicates that although the control group did not receive special treatment, there was an increase in scores from pretest to posttest.



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Tabel 5.
Paired-Sample T-Test Results for the Experimental Group

Data Pairs	Mean Difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t count	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest – Posttest Experimental Group	-36.571	3.780	1.429	-25.600	6	0.000

Table 5 describes the results of the paired-sample t-test in the experimental group, which aimed to determine the effect of the treatment on students' learning outcomes. The test results showed a highly significant difference between the pretest and posttest, with a mean difference of -36.571 and a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This difference reflects a substantial improvement in learning outcomes after a particular treatment was implemented in the learning process.

Because the data had previously been declared normal and homogeneous, these results could be interpreted as valid. The findings support the assumption that the ASWAJA-based counseling provided to the experimental group was effective in improving students' Islamic personality.

The statistical test results in the experimental group showed a highly significant increase between pretest and posttest scores, amounting to 36.57 points with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Meanwhile, the control group, which did not receive special treatment, also experienced an increase, but only by 12.57 points. This indicates that the counseling model based on ASWAJA values made a major contribution to strengthening students' Islamic character.

This finding is reinforced by Wahyuni et al. (2024), who explained that Islamic counseling integrated with religious values consistently reduced deviant adolescent behavior through an approach contextualized to their environment.

The ASWAJA values approach, which emphasizes the principles of *tawassuth*, *tawazun*, and *tasamuh*, is capable of providing a strong psychological and spiritual framework for students in facing the pressures of the modern environment. Maulana & Ulinuha (2023) also showed that the implementation of Islamic counseling based on local culture was effective in reducing negative behaviors among university students, such as social media addiction and other deviant activities, by systematically integrating *tazkiyatun nafs* values.

From the perspective of Islamic psychotherapy, the strength of this approach lies in its ability to revive inner awareness through structured counseling activities. Susanto (2022) emphasized that Islamic education based on local values, such as that found in Islamic boarding schools, can strengthen students' religious identity and protect them from extremist ideas through the internalization of moderate Islamic multicultural values. This is consistent with the approach promoted in this study, namely building a resilient and open Islamic personality through the internalization of ASWAJA values.

In addition to its numerical effectiveness, this counseling model also provides space for deeper spiritual dialogue compared with conventional counseling, which tends to focus on solving technical problems. Sembiring & Chairunnisa (2022), in their study, highlighted the importance of the role of guidance and counseling teachers in developing students' time-management skills and learning awareness through Islamic discipline values, which also constitute core ASWAJA values.

Furthermore, Aisyah (2024) demonstrated that integrating spiritual education and modern learning management significantly develops students' personalities so that they are adaptive to global dynamics. She emphasized that Islamic education should not merely encompass normative



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knowledge but should encourage the transformation of attitudes and behaviors through approaches rooted in local values and transcendent spirituality.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that group counseling based on ASWAJA An-Nahdliyah values is effective in developing students' Islamic personality. Both groups experienced improvement, but the experimental group showed a much more significant change.

The values of moderation, balance, and tolerance internalized through counseling were proven capable of strengthening students' Islamic character. Therefore, this counseling approach based on local religious wisdom is worthy of further development in guidance services within formal educational institutions.

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