

RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstrak

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Religious moderation is an important issue in contemporary Islamic education, especially in responding to the dynamics of diversity and the challenge of intolerance in Indonesian society. This article aims to conceptually examine religious moderation in Islamic education and analyze its implementation and relevance in the context of educational institutions. This research uses a qualitative approach with the library research method, with data sources in the form of scientific journal articles and relevant books published in the last decade. The data were analyzed descriptive-analytically to identify patterns, concepts, and trends in the implementation of religious moderation in Islamic education. The results of the study show that religious moderation in Islamic literature is rooted in the principle of wasatiyyah which emphasizes balance, inclusivity, and respect for diversity. The implementation of moderation values in Islamic educational institutions is realized through integration in curriculum, learning practices, and institutional culture that is adaptive to the social context. The findings also show that Islamic education has a strategic role as a medium for internalizing religious moderation, especially in shaping the religious attitudes of students that are tolerant and contextual. This article emphasizes that religious moderation can be positioned as a foundation of values in the development of Islamic education, as well as contributing to enriching the theoretical study of Islamic education in a pluralistic society.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic education plays a central role in the formation of a balanced, tolerant, and responsible religious attitude of students. In the midst of increasing challenges of social plurality and the potential for religion-based conflicts, the values of *religious moderation* are essential to be internalized in the formal and non-formal education systems in Indonesia. Religious moderation refers to a religious attitude that puts oneself in the middle position (*wasathiyyah*), avoids extreme and intolerant attitudes, and encourages respect for differences as part of living together. (Hamdan, 2023; Hidayati, 2023)

Conceptually, *religious moderation* stems from the idea of a balance between strong beliefs and inclusive behavior toward others outside one's own group. In the context of education, this definition is extended to the integration of the values of tolerance, justice, interreligious harmony, and commitment to the state constitution in daily learning practices. (Khasanah, Hamzani, & Aravik, 2023) The basic theory of religious moderation is often associated with the concept of *wasathiyyah* in Islam which emphasizes the middle way as a principle of life. (Hamdan, 2023)

Islamic educational literature views that the main goal of education is not only the mastery of religious content, but also the formation of moderate and tolerant character. This approach is in line with progressive education theory that views schools as places to develop critical thinking skills, empathy, and social skills, all of which are important components of religious moderation. (Nisa, Rahmawati, & Komalasari, 2025) Within the framework of Islamic education, religious moderation is also seen as a cornerstone in designing a curriculum that is responsive to cultural and religious diversity, as well as learning strategies that encourage interfaith dialogue. (Haryono, 2025)

Previous studies have also confirmed that religious moderation has four main indicators, namely *national commitment*, *tolerance*, *non-violence*, and *respect for local culture* that must be developed through formal education. (Hidayati, 2023) These indicators not only show theoretical aspects, but also provide an implementable basis for Islamic educational institutions to internalize the value of moderation in curriculum, learning management, and social interaction in schools. (Khasanah et al., 2023)

Although the concept of religious moderation is widely discussed in the literature, there is a gap in *the systematic conceptual analysis* of how these theories of the value of moderation are comprehensively mapped into Islamic educational practice. Some literature is still descriptive and has not explicitly linked the concept of *wasathiyyah* and the contemporary educational theory that underlies its implementation in Islamic educational institutions. Therefore, this article seeks to fill this gap by conducting a conceptual analysis of religious moderation and its implications in Islamic education, so as to provide a stronger theoretical framework for the development of moderate educational practices in formal educational institutions and Islamic boarding schools.

Through this literature review, this study aims to (1) understand the main definitions and theories underlying religious moderation in the context of Islamic education, and (2) analyze how the values of religious moderation can be integrated in Islamic educational institutions as a response to the challenges of plurality and intolerance in society.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with the type of library research. The literature review was chosen because this study aims to analyze and synthesize the main concepts and theories of religious moderation in the context of Islamic education that have been developed by previous experts and researchers. Through this approach, the author seeks to build a comprehensive conceptual understanding without directly collecting field data.

The data sources in this study consist of primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources include articles from scientific journals relevant to the theme of religious moderation and Islamic education, especially articles published in the last ten years to ensure the novelty and relevance of the study. Meanwhile, secondary sources include reference books, religious education policy documents, and official publications related to strengthening religious moderation in Islamic education.

The data collection technique was carried out through systematic literature search using scientific journal databases and academic repositories. The literature obtained was then selected based on the suitability of the topic, the credibility of the source, and its contribution to the discussion of religious moderation in Islamic education.

Data analysis was carried out using content analysis. This technique is used to identify concepts, themes, and patterns of thought that appear in the literature related to religious moderation and Islamic education. The classified data are then analyzed descriptively-analytically by comparing the views of experts, grouping key concepts, and synthesizing them into a complete conceptual framework. The results of this analysis are then used as a basis to discuss the implications of religious moderation in the practice of Islamic education in educational institutions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of Moderation Values in Educational Institutions

Literature review shows that the implementation of the value of religious moderation in educational institutions takes place in various forms and levels of institutionalization. At the school and madrasah level, religious moderation is implemented through the integration of the values of tolerance, balance, and inclusive attitudes into the subject of Islamic Religious Education, both explicitly in learning outcomes and implicitly through a dialogical pedagogical approach (Siregar, N. A., & Daulay, 2025). These findings show that religious moderation is not always present as a separate subject, but as a cross-material value inherent in the learning process.

In addition to formal learning, the literature also reveals that the value of religious moderation is implemented through educational institutional culture, such as habituating mutual respect, managing the diversity of student backgrounds, and internal school regulations that encourage harmonious social interaction (Nuhaliza, S., Asari, H., & Dahlan, 2025). Several studies have noted that the practice of religious moderation is strengthened through extracurricular activities, commemoration of national and religious holidays, and social activities involving cross-groups (Musyahid, 2025).

In Islamic educational institutions based on Islamic boarding schools, the implementation of religious moderation shows more contextual characteristics. Pesantren integrate the value of moderation through a combination of classical scientific

traditions, kiai examples, and adaptation to national education policies (Bakhrudin, M., Rusydiyah, E. F., Taufiq, M. A., Tualeka, M. W. N., & Syaikhon, 2025). These findings show that the implementation of religious moderation is adaptive to the character and culture of educational institutions, not uniform, and influenced by institutional vision and educational leadership.

2. Implications for Islamic Education Practices

The literature analyzed shows that the implementation of religious moderation has direct implications for Islamic educational practices, particularly in the formulation of educational objectives, curriculum development, and learning strategies. Islamic education in various studies is positioned not only as a means of transmitting normative teachings, but also as a process of forming a balanced and contextual religious perspective (Rahayu, S., & Abubakar, 2025). Religious moderation is a value framework that influences the orientation of Islamic education so that it does not develop towards exclusivism or narrow religious understanding.

In terms of curriculum, several articles note that the value of religious moderation is integrated through the adjustment of teaching materials that emphasize the relationship between Islamic teachings and plural social realities (Jamaluddin, 2025). The Islamic Religious Education Curriculum is directed to contain themes such as tolerance, social justice, and peaceful coexistence, so that learning does not stop at the cognitive aspect, but also touches on the affective and social dimensions of students.

In learning practice, literature findings show that religious moderation is realized through a dialogical, participatory, and reflective pedagogical approach. Teachers play the role of facilitators who open up discussion spaces, respect differences of views, and encourage students to understand religion rationally and contextually (Musyahid, 2025). These findings indicate that religious moderation has implications for changes in teaching styles and teacher-student relationships in Islamic education.

3. The Relevance of the Implementation of Religious Moderation in the Indonesian Context

In the Indonesian context, the literature consistently shows that the implementation of religious moderation in Islamic education has a high relevance to multicultural and pluralistic social conditions. Islamic education is seen as one of the strategic instruments in maintaining social cohesion and preventing the development of intolerance among the younger generation (Jamaluddin, 2025). These findings show that religious moderation in education is not only related to religious issues, but also to social and national stability.

Several studies highlight that national policies on religious moderation have an influence on educational practices at the institutional level, both through curriculum regulations and character strengthening programs (Rahayu, S., & Abubakar, 2025). In this context, Islamic education serves as a meeting space between Islamic values and national values, where religious moderation becomes a conceptual and practical bridge. The literature also shows that the implementation of religious moderation in Indonesia is inseparable from locality and cultural context factors. Islamic educational institutions in various regions interpret and operationalize religious moderation in accordance with

local social conditions, resulting in a variety of practices that reflect the richness of Indonesian Islamic traditions (Bakhrudin, M., Rusydiyah, E. F., Taufiq, M. A., Tualeka, M. W. N., & Syaikhon, 2025). These findings show that religious moderation in Islamic education in Indonesia is dynamic and contextual, not a single concept that is applied uniformly.

The results of this literature review show that religious moderation in Islamic literature is a principle of balance (*wasatiyyah*) that not only rejects extremism but also encourages the formation of tolerant and inclusive attitudes in social and educational life. The moderation approach in contemporary literature places the values of tolerance, interreligious dialogue, and respect for diversity as important aspects of religious practice as well as responses to the dynamics of pluralistic societies (Bakhrudin, Rusydiyah, & Taufiq, 2025). These findings confirm that religious moderation is not just a normative rhetoric, but a value framework rooted in productive Islamic traditions in the context of education.

In the study of Islamic education, research shows that Islamic education has a strategic role as a vehicle to instill these moderation values. Islamic education is understood as a process that not only transfers religious knowledge, but also forms social attitudes and characters that are tolerant, empathetic, and adaptive to differences (Alsi, 2025). Islamic education, through a responsive curriculum and a dialogical learning approach, opens up space for students to understand the value of moderation holistically so as to support the formation of responsible citizens in the life of the nation and state.

The study found that the meeting point between religious moderation and Islamic education is realized through the integration of moderation values in the learning structure and institutional policies of Islamic education. Religious moderation is the foundation of values that help Islamic education face the challenges of plurality and intolerance, especially by emphasizing the development of a contextual curriculum, respect for differences, and intercultural dialogue (Arifin, 2024). This meeting point shows that religious moderation does not stand alone, but enriches and strengthens the role of Islamic education in forming students with moderate character.

The theoretical contribution of this article lies in the formulation of a conceptual framework of religious moderation that is compatible with the philosophy and practice of contemporary Islamic education. By placing religious moderation as an integral part of the goals of Islamic education, this study expands the discourse of Islamic education that was previously more focused on ritual and cognitive aspects alone. The conceptual framework offered helps researchers and educators understand the relationship between the value of moderation and educational practice more systematically and contextually.

Practically, these findings imply that Islamic educational institutions need to strengthen religious moderation through the development of a curriculum that contains inclusive values, dialogical learning, and a school environment that supports mutual respect and cooperation between religious communities. For further research, it is recommended to conduct an empirical study that explores the implementation of religious moderation in various types of Islamic educational institutions (formal and informal), with methodological approaches such as classroom action research, educational ethnography, or *mixed methods* to capture the dynamics of internalizing the value of moderation more comprehensively.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the literature review, it can be concluded that religious moderation is a value principle that is firmly rooted in Islamic teachings and has conceptual and operational relevance in the context of Islamic education. The literature shows that religious moderation is not only understood as an individual attitude, but as a value framework that includes theological, social, and pedagogical dimensions. The principle of *wasatiyyah* is the main foundation that enables Islamic education to develop a balanced, inclusive, and contextual understanding of religion, especially in responding to the reality of the diversity of Indonesian society.

The findings of this study also confirm that Islamic education has a strategic position as the main medium for internalizing the values of religious moderation through integration in curriculum, learning practices, and educational institutional culture. The implementation of religious moderation in Islamic education is adaptive and contextual, influenced by the character of the institution, national policies, and local socio-cultural background. By placing religious moderation as the foundation of Islamic educational values, this article contributes to enriching the theoretical discourse of contemporary Islamic education and provides a conceptual foothold for the development of Islamic educational practices that are responsive to the challenges of plurality and social cohesion.

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