



STRENGTHENING RELIGIOUS MODERATION THROUGH ISLAMIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM: EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING MODERATE MUSLIM STUDENTS

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Abstract: Religious moderation has become a central discourse in contemporary Islamic education, particularly in multicultural societies where educational institutions play a strategic role in fostering tolerance and social harmony. In the Indonesian context, Islamic education is expected to contribute to the development of moderate religious attitudes through curriculum design and learning practices that emphasize balance, dialogue, and respect for diversity. This study aims to analyze the integration of religious moderation values within the Islamic education curriculum and explore educational strategies for strengthening moderation among students. The research employed a qualitative library research approach by examining academic literature related to curriculum development, Islamic education, and religious moderation. Data were collected from scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and policy documents discussing the implementation of moderation values in educational systems. The findings indicate that the integration of religious moderation within the Islamic education curriculum can be achieved through curriculum design, dialogical learning approaches, and character education programs that emphasize tolerance, empathy, and social responsibility. Islamic educational institutions, including schools and pesantren, play an important role in implementing moderation-based curriculum models that encourage inclusive religious understanding. This study highlights that curriculum-based religious moderation provides an effective educational framework for developing moderate Muslim students capable of engaging constructively within plural societies.

Keywords: religious moderation; Islamic education curriculum; character education; religious tolerance; Islamic learning strategies

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INTRODUCTION

Religious diversity has become one of the defining characteristics of contemporary societies. In multicultural countries such as Indonesia, individuals from various religious traditions, cultural backgrounds, and social groups interact within shared social spaces. These interactions require the development of social attitudes that emphasize tolerance, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence. Within this context, the concept of religious moderation has emerged as an important framework for maintaining social harmony and preventing the development of extreme religious attitudes. Religious moderation encourages balanced religious understanding and constructive engagement with diversity, making it an essential element in contemporary educational discourse.

Educational institutions play a crucial role in shaping students' perspectives on religion and diversity. Schools and Islamic educational institutions are not only responsible for transmitting religious knowledge but also for developing students' moral awareness and social responsibility. Islamic education, therefore, is expected to contribute to the cultivation of moderate religious attitudes by integrating values of tolerance, dialogue, and social harmony into learning processes (Pajarianto et al., 2022). Through educational practices that emphasize inclusive religious understanding, students can develop the ability to interact constructively with individuals from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds.

Recent discussions on Islamic education also emphasize the importance of examining religious moderation through curriculum development and educational strategies. Studies presented in the inaugural issue of *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Azzahro* explore how moderation values can be integrated into Islamic education through institutional culture, curriculum frameworks, and educational practices (Partahian, 2025).

In Indonesia, Islamic education occupies a significant position in the national education system. Islamic educational institutions, including schools, madrasas, and pesantren, function as important environments for shaping religious perspectives among Muslim youth. These institutions play a strategic role in developing religious understanding that supports social harmony and peaceful coexistence. The integration of moderation values within Islamic education has therefore become an important educational priority in responding to contemporary social challenges such as radicalism, intolerance, and religious polarization (Wildan & Muttaqin, 2022).

One of the most important aspects of strengthening religious moderation in education is curriculum development. The curriculum functions as a central component of the educational process because it determines learning objectives, content, and teaching strategies used in classrooms. Educational scholars argue that curriculum design significantly influences the development of students' attitudes, values, and social perspectives. Therefore, integrating moderation values within the Islamic education curriculum becomes a crucial step for fostering balanced religious understanding among students (Banks, 2016).

Previous studies have emphasized the importance of integrating religious moderation within Islamic educational systems. Research indicates that

moderation-based educational approaches can strengthen students' tolerance, empathy, and social awareness. Educational programs that incorporate moderation values into teaching practices encourage students to understand religious teachings in ways that promote peace and social responsibility (Muhaemin et al., 2023). Similarly, curriculum-based approaches to moderation education enable teachers to integrate ethical reflection and multicultural awareness into learning activities.

Furthermore, character education plays an important role in supporting the integration of moderation values within educational environments. Character education emphasizes the development of moral virtues such as respect, responsibility, and empathy, which are essential for maintaining harmonious social relations. Educational theorists highlight that character-based learning environments can strengthen students' ethical awareness and encourage responsible participation in society (Lickona, 2018). In Islamic education, character education is closely related to the cultivation of ethical values derived from Islamic teachings.

Recent studies have also highlighted the importance of developing innovative learning strategies that support moderation-based education. Educational approaches that encourage discussion, reflection, and collaborative learning can help students develop critical thinking skills and broader perspectives on religious issues. Dialogical learning environments allow students to explore diverse viewpoints and develop respectful attitudes toward differences (Prasetyo, 2024). Such educational strategies contribute to the development of balanced religious perspectives among students.

In addition, the integration of moderation values within the Islamic education curriculum requires institutional commitment and supportive educational policies. Curriculum frameworks that incorporate discussions on tolerance, pluralism, and social responsibility enable teachers to introduce moderation values systematically within classroom learning. Such curriculum models can strengthen students' understanding of religion as a source of ethical guidance for living in diverse societies (Suparta, 2024).

Recent research also indicates that Islamic educational institutions increasingly adopt moderation-based curriculum models to address contemporary challenges. Educational programs designed to strengthen moderation values contribute to the development of inclusive religious perspectives and promote peaceful social interaction among students. These initiatives demonstrate that curriculum-based moderation education can function as an effective strategy for preventing intolerance and strengthening social cohesion (Mukhibat, 2024).

Despite the growing body of research on religious moderation in Islamic education, many studies primarily focus on institutional practices or theoretical discussions of moderation. Research that specifically examines how moderation values are integrated into Islamic education curricula remains relatively limited. Understanding the role of curriculum in promoting moderation values is therefore important for developing more effective educational strategies that support balanced religious understanding.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the integration of religious moderation values within the Islamic education curriculum and explore educational strategies that support the development of moderate religious attitudes among students. By examining theoretical perspectives and educational practices related to moderation-based curriculum development, this research seeks to provide insights into how Islamic education can contribute to strengthening social harmony and promoting inclusive religious understanding in plural societies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative conceptual research design focusing on curriculum analysis within Islamic education. The research aimed to examine how religious moderation values can be integrated into the Islamic education curriculum and to identify educational strategies that support the development of moderate religious attitudes among students. Conceptual research is commonly used in educational studies to explore theoretical frameworks, analyze educational models, and interpret scholarly discussions related to specific educational issues (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The data for this research were obtained from a variety of academic sources, including scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and policy documents related to Islamic education, curriculum development, and religious moderation. These sources were selected based on their relevance to the themes of moderation education, curriculum integration, and character formation within Islamic educational institutions.

Data collection was conducted through an analytical review of academic literature by identifying key publications that discuss the relationship between religious moderation and Islamic education curriculum. The selected literature was then examined to identify major themes related to curriculum design, teaching strategies, and educational objectives that promote moderation values.

The data analysis process used qualitative thematic analysis. This approach involved categorizing the literature, interpreting conceptual patterns, and synthesizing the main arguments found in the selected sources. Through this process, the study identifies curriculum-based approaches that support the development of moderation values in Islamic education.

RESULTS

This section presents the conceptual findings of the study concerning the integration of religious moderation within the Islamic education curriculum. Based on the analysis of relevant literature, the results identify several key dimensions that explain how moderation values can be incorporated into curriculum design and educational practices. The findings are organized into four main themes: the concept of curriculum-based religious moderation, the integration of moderation values within Islamic education curriculum, teaching strategies that support moderation-based learning, and the educational outcomes of moderation-oriented curriculum implementation.

Concept of Curriculum-Based Religious Moderation

Curriculum-based religious moderation refers to the systematic integration of moderation values within the structure and objectives of Islamic education curriculum. In educational contexts, the curriculum functions as a central framework that determines learning objectives, teaching materials, and pedagogical strategies used in the classroom. Therefore, incorporating moderation values into the curriculum enables educational institutions to promote balanced religious understanding among students.

Educational scholars emphasize that curriculum design significantly influences the development of students' perspectives and social attitudes. A curriculum that integrates moderation values encourages students to understand religious teachings in ways that emphasize tolerance, dialogue, and peaceful coexistence within plural societies (Banks, 2016). Such an approach enables Islamic education to function not only as a means of transmitting religious knowledge but also as an educational process that fosters ethical awareness and social responsibility.

In Islamic educational contexts, curriculum-based moderation also reflects the broader objective of developing students who possess balanced religious perspectives. Moderation-oriented curriculum frameworks encourage learners to approach religious teachings through contextual interpretation and critical reflection. These perspectives help students develop inclusive attitudes and avoid rigid interpretations of religious teachings that may lead to intolerance (Muhaemin et al., 2023).

Integration of Moderation Values in Islamic Education Curriculum

The integration of moderation values into Islamic education curriculum involves several educational components, including curriculum objectives, learning materials, and educational activities. Curriculum objectives that emphasize tolerance and social harmony encourage students to develop balanced perspectives toward religious diversity and cultural differences.

One important dimension of moderation-based curriculum integration is the inclusion of ethical and multicultural values within Islamic education subjects. Educational content that discusses themes such as tolerance, social justice, and interreligious dialogue helps students understand the relevance of Islamic teachings in plural societies (Pajarianto et al., 2022). By integrating these themes into curriculum materials, educators can promote inclusive religious understanding among students.

Another important component is the incorporation of moderation values within character education programs. Character education plays a significant role in developing students' moral awareness and ethical behavior. Learning activities that emphasize empathy, respect, and cooperation contribute to the development of moderation values within educational environments (Lickona, 2018).

Table 1. Integration of Religious Moderation Values in Islamic Education Curriculum

Curriculum Component	Moderation Value	Educational Implementation
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Curriculum objectives	Tolerance and inclusivity	Learning goals emphasize respect for diversity
Learning materials	Balanced religious understanding	Teaching materials discuss pluralism and social harmony
Character education	Ethical awareness and empathy	Activities that strengthen moral responsibility
School culture	Social cooperation	Collaborative learning and dialogue among students

The integration of moderation values across these curriculum components allows educational institutions to promote moderation-based education systematically. Through curriculum design that emphasizes ethical awareness and social harmony, Islamic education can contribute to strengthening students' ability to engage constructively with diverse communities.

Teaching Strategies for Moderation-Based Learning

The implementation of moderation-based curriculum requires appropriate teaching strategies that support inclusive learning environments. Educational approaches that encourage dialogue, reflection, and critical thinking can help students develop broader perspectives on religious issues.

Dialogical learning approaches are widely considered effective strategies for promoting moderation values. Classroom discussions that encourage students to explore diverse viewpoints allow them to develop critical thinking skills and respectful attitudes toward differences. Such learning environments help students understand that religious diversity can be approached through dialogue and mutual understanding rather than conflict (Prasetyo, 2024).

Collaborative learning is another important strategy in moderation-based education. Group discussions, cooperative projects, and community engagement activities encourage students to interact with peers and learn from diverse perspectives. These learning practices contribute to the development of empathy and social awareness among students (Wildan & Muttaqin, 2022).

In addition, reflective learning strategies can help students develop deeper understanding of ethical values within Islamic teachings. Reflection-based activities encourage students to analyze social issues, evaluate different perspectives, and consider the moral implications of their actions. Through reflective learning, students can internalize moderation values and apply them in everyday social interactions.

These teaching strategies demonstrate that moderation-based learning requires participatory educational approaches that encourage active student engagement. Educational practices that emphasize dialogue, collaboration, and reflection create learning environments that support the development of balanced religious perspectives.

Educational Outcomes of Moderation Curriculum

The implementation of moderation-oriented curriculum contributes to several important educational outcomes within Islamic education. One of the primary outcomes is the development of tolerant attitudes among students. Curriculum

models that emphasize moderation values help students understand religious diversity as a social reality that requires respect and constructive interaction.

Another important outcome is the development of critical and contextual religious understanding. Moderation-based curriculum encourages students to approach religious teachings through analytical thinking and contextual interpretation. Such educational approaches help students avoid rigid or exclusive perspectives and instead develop balanced religious attitudes (Mukhibat, 2024).

Moderation-oriented curriculum also contributes to the strengthening of social responsibility among students. Educational activities that promote cooperation, empathy, and community engagement encourage students to view religion as a source of ethical guidance for social life. These values support the development of responsible citizens who are able to contribute positively to diverse communities.

Furthermore, moderation-based education can strengthen social cohesion within multicultural societies. Educational institutions that integrate moderation values within their curriculum contribute to the development of inclusive social attitudes and peaceful coexistence among different communities. Such educational outcomes demonstrate that Islamic education can play an important role in promoting tolerance and social harmony within contemporary societies (Shah, 2024).

Overall, the findings highlight that curriculum-based religious moderation provides an effective framework for strengthening inclusive religious understanding within Islamic education. Through curriculum design, teaching strategies, and character education programs, moderation values can be systematically integrated into educational environments to support the development of moderate Muslim students.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the integration of religious moderation within the Islamic education curriculum plays an important role in shaping students' balanced religious perspectives and social attitudes. Curriculum-based moderation provides an educational framework that enables Islamic educational institutions to promote tolerance, dialogue, and ethical responsibility through structured learning processes. These findings support the theoretical perspective that curriculum design significantly influences the development of students' knowledge, values, and social behavior.

From the perspective of educational theory, the curriculum functions as a central instrument in guiding the objectives, content, and pedagogical strategies of the educational process. Curriculum theorists emphasize that the curriculum not only determines what students learn but also shapes how they interpret knowledge and develop social values (Banks, 2016). In the context of Islamic education, integrating moderation values into the curriculum allows educators to connect religious teachings with broader ethical and social considerations. Such integration helps students understand religion as a source of moral guidance that supports peaceful coexistence within diverse societies.

The findings of this study also highlight the importance of incorporating ethical and multicultural perspectives within Islamic education curriculum. Previous research indicates that curriculum models that emphasize tolerance and intercultural understanding can strengthen students' awareness of diversity and promote constructive social interaction. Educational initiatives that integrate moderation values into learning activities encourage students to develop inclusive religious perspectives and avoid rigid interpretations of religious teachings (Muhaemin et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the role of character education in supporting moderation-based curriculum implementation is particularly significant. Character education emphasizes the development of moral virtues such as empathy, respect, and responsibility, which are essential for maintaining harmonious social relations. Educational scholars argue that character-based educational environments contribute to the development of ethical awareness and responsible citizenship among students (Lickona, 2018). In Islamic educational settings, character education reinforces the integration of moderation values by linking religious teachings with moral behavior in everyday life.

The findings also emphasize the importance of teaching strategies that support moderation-based learning environments. Educational approaches that encourage dialogue, collaborative learning, and reflective thinking can strengthen students' ability to engage with diverse perspectives. Dialogical learning environments allow students to explore different viewpoints and develop critical thinking skills that support balanced religious understanding (Prasetyo, 2024). These strategies align with contemporary educational theories that emphasize participatory learning and active student engagement.

In addition, the integration of moderation values within the curriculum requires institutional commitment and supportive educational policies. Educational institutions must ensure that moderation principles are embedded not only within learning materials but also within school culture and educational practices. Curriculum frameworks that incorporate discussions on tolerance, social justice, and civic responsibility provide opportunities for teachers to introduce moderation values systematically within classroom learning (Suparta, 2024).

These findings are consistent with previous studies highlighting the importance of curriculum development in strengthening religious moderation within Islamic education. Research shows that educational programs that integrate moderation values into curriculum design contribute to the development of tolerant attitudes and inclusive religious understanding among students (Wildan & Muttaqin, 2022). Such curriculum models enable Islamic education to function as a platform for promoting social harmony and preventing intolerance.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the growing discourse on religious moderation in Islamic education by emphasizing the role of curriculum design in promoting moderation values. While many previous studies focus on institutional practices or conceptual discussions of moderation, this

research highlights the importance of curriculum-based educational strategies in shaping students' religious perspectives. By analyzing the relationship between curriculum design, teaching strategies, and moderation values, this study provides a framework for understanding how Islamic education can contribute to the development of moderate Muslim identities.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that moderation-based curriculum models can strengthen the role of Islamic education in promoting social cohesion within plural societies. Educational environments that encourage dialogue, ethical reflection, and collaborative learning contribute to the development of inclusive social attitudes among students. These educational outcomes demonstrate that curriculum-based religious moderation can function as an effective strategy for strengthening peaceful coexistence in diverse communities (Shah, 2024).

The development of moderation-oriented curriculum frameworks also reflects broader theoretical discussions on the concept of religious moderation in Islamic education. Conceptual studies emphasize that moderation values such as tolerance, balance, and social responsibility form the ethical foundation of moderation-based educational models (Ritonga et al., 2025).

Overall, the discussion indicates that the integration of moderation values within the Islamic education curriculum requires a comprehensive educational approach that combines curriculum design, teaching strategies, and character education. Through such integration, Islamic educational institutions can cultivate students who possess balanced religious perspectives, ethical awareness, and social responsibility in contemporary multicultural societies.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the importance of integrating religious moderation within the Islamic education curriculum as a strategic approach for fostering balanced religious understanding among students. The findings demonstrate that curriculum-based moderation enables educational institutions to systematically incorporate values such as tolerance, dialogue, empathy, and social responsibility into learning processes. Through curriculum design that emphasizes ethical awareness and inclusive perspectives, Islamic education can promote religious understanding that supports peaceful coexistence within diverse societies.

The study also shows that the successful implementation of moderation-based curriculum requires the integration of several educational components, including curriculum objectives, learning materials, teaching strategies, and character education programs. Educational approaches that encourage dialogical learning, collaborative activities, and reflective thinking contribute significantly to the development of moderate religious attitudes among students.

Furthermore, Islamic educational institutions have an important role in implementing moderation-oriented curriculum models that strengthen students' ethical awareness and social engagement. By integrating moderation values within curriculum frameworks and learning practices, Islamic education can contribute to the development of moderate Muslim students who are capable of interacting constructively within multicultural societies.

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