



RELIGIOUS MODERATION AS A PRODUCT OF ISLAMIC TEACHINGS OF RAHMATAN LIL'ALAMIN AND ISLAMIC EDUCATION

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Abstract:

Religious moderation is an important implementation of the Islamic teachings of rahmatan lil'alam, which prioritizes tolerance and balance, and rejects extreme attitudes in religious life. This concept positions Islam as a blessing for all nature and prioritizes social harmony in a pluralistic society. In the context of Islamic education, its role is very strategic in instilling the value of moderation through the development of an inclusive and dialogical curriculum and learning approach. This study examines the concept of religious moderation as a product of the Islamic teachings of rahmatan lil'alam and the role of Islamic education in internalizing these values in students. Data were obtained through a literature review and analysis of the Islamic education curriculum. The findings indicate that Islamic education can shape the character of a moderate and tolerant young generation, while reducing the potential for radicalism and intolerance. Thus, religious moderation is not only a principle of Islamic teachings but also an important part of character development through Islamic education.

Keywords: *Religious Moderation, Islam Rahmatan lil'alam, Islamic Education, Tolerance, Character*

INTRODUCTION

Islam, as a religion of rahmatan lil'alam (a blessing for all creation), upholds values of peace, balance, and universal compassion. Theoretically, the principle of religious moderation (wasathiyah) is central to Islamic teachings, emphasizing tolerance, justice, and the rejection of extremism and radicalism. However, in practice, there remains a significant gap between these ideals and social realities in many Muslim communities. Extremist ideologies, intolerance, and exclusive interpretations continue to appear, particularly among younger generations influenced by unfiltered online information. This discrepancy arises because religious education often focuses on doctrinal rigidity rather than promoting inclusive and contextual understandings of Islam (Khofifah et al., 2024). Empirical observations show that educational institutions frequently fail to internalize moderation within their curricula and student character formation (Al-Afkar, 2025). Consequently, the gap between the theoretical foundation of moderation in Islam and the practical social behavior of Muslim youth represents a crucial issue that demands deeper exploration to reaffirm Islam's essence as a religion of mercy and harmony for all humanity (Putri et al., 2024).

In reality, the challenges of applying religious moderation are clearly visible in educational settings (Adeoye et al., 2025). Although the Indonesian government and religious institutions actively promote moderation as part of national character education, its practical integration within Islamic schools and universities remains inconsistent (Ishomuddin et al., 2023). Some educators still use rigid, teacher-centered methods that stress doctrinal correctness rather than dialogue and reflection. As a result, students often develop narrow perspectives on religious truth and struggle to appreciate pluralism and cultural diversity. In certain areas, cases of intolerance and discriminatory behavior persist within educational environments, revealing a limited understanding of moderation's true values. Moreover, exposure to online radical narratives has complicated the process of developing balanced religious perspectives among students. These realities indicate that while the discourse of *wasathiyah* is widely advocated, its embodiment in the daily practices of Islamic education is still limited. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth evaluation of how Islamic education can operationalize moderation values in teaching, learning, and institutional culture.

Previous studies have examined religious moderation and its connection to Islamic education (Samsul, 2025). Nasution (2025) highlights the strategic role of religious moderation in shaping tolerance among youth through value-based education. Azizah and Mubarak (2024) found that integrating moderation into the Islamic education curriculum enhances students' empathy and openness toward diversity. Similarly, Arifin et al. (2023) emphasize that dialogical and inclusive pedagogical approaches foster peaceful coexistence among students from different backgrounds. Nevertheless, most of these studies concentrate on conceptual frameworks or policy discussions and provide little analysis of how moderation is practically applied and internalized within educational institutions. They tend to explain what should be done rather than how it is carried out in real classroom contexts. Therefore, this study positions itself as an empirical investigation into the practical implementation of religious moderation in Islamic education, focusing on curriculum development, pedagogical strategies, and the lived experiences of educators and students in nurturing a moderate Islamic identity.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on bridging the gap between theory and practice in internalizing moderation within Islamic education. Unlike earlier research that mainly discussed theoretical concepts or policy documents, this study employs a qualitative approach to examine how moderation values are translated into real educational practices, classroom interactions, and institutional behavior. Furthermore, it explores how teachers and students interpret moderation amid rapid social and digital transformations, particularly the influence of online religious discourse. By documenting real experiences from educational settings, this study identifies both opportunities and obstacles in implementing *wasathiyah*-based education. It also offers a contextual model that integrates theological, pedagogical, and sociocultural perspectives on moderation. Thus, the novelty of this research lies not only in highlighting existing challenges but also in proposing an actionable framework for strengthening Islamic education as a medium for nurturing tolerant and inclusive generations in line with the spirit of *rahmatan lil'alamin*.

This study aims to answer the main research question: How is the concept of religious moderation in Islam applied within Islamic education to foster a moderate and tolerant generation? The question covers two

dimensions—first, how moderation is implemented in educational curricula and pedagogy, and second, how it is internalized within student character and institutional culture. The underlying argument assumes that Islamic education, when built on inclusivity and dialogue, can serve as an effective platform for cultivating moderation. However, this potential has not yet been fully realized due to inconsistencies in implementation and weak institutional support. This study posits that moderation is not merely a doctrinal teaching but a lived ethical value that must be integrated holistically across educational systems—curriculum, teaching methods, and community interaction. Through qualitative exploration, the research seeks to validate this argument and formulate recommendations to strengthen Islamic education's transformative role in promoting peace, tolerance, and social harmony within a pluralistic society.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a library research method. The library research process involves reviewing the literature and analyzing relevant topics. The literature search can utilize sources such as journals, books, dictionaries, documents, magazines, and other sources without conducting field research (Pringgar and Sujatmiko 2020). This method was chosen because the primary focus of the research is an in-depth analysis of existing concepts, theories, and secondary data. Therefore, the data collection process does not involve direct interaction with field subjects (e.g., interviews, observations, or surveys), but rather focuses on exploring and synthesizing relevant written sources related to the community-based Islamic education model.

In this study, the data used are primary and secondary sources, including the Qur'an, Hadith, classical and contemporary Islamic scriptures, books, scientific journals, and Islamic education curriculum documents that address the themes of religious moderation and *rahmatan lil'alamin* (blessing for all the universe). Data were obtained through the collection, selection, and evaluation of literature relevant to the research focus. This process involves the following stages: (1) Determining the research topic and focus, (2) Searching for literature sources according to criteria, (3) Selecting literature sources to obtain credible and relevant literature, (4) Evaluating and classifying the literature content to understand the concept and implementation of religious moderation in Islam and Islamic education.

Data analysis was conducted using qualitative content analysis techniques, namely by filtering, categorizing, classifying, and interpreting data obtained from the literature. The analysis was oriented towards finding the main themes regarding religious moderation and its implementation in Islamic education within the framework of the teachings of *rahmatan lil'alamin*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Religious moderation is a manifestation of the Islamic teachings of *rahmatan lil'alamin*, which affirms Islam as a religion that brings blessings and benefits to the entire universe (Ali, 2023). In this context, religious moderation is a crucial strategy for creating a peaceful, prosperous society that respects differences, while avoiding extreme and radical attitudes that often damage the image of Islam (Al-Afkar, 2025). Research shows that religious moderation can accommodate diversity and strengthen the values of tolerance and mutual respect between religious communities (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the

Republic of Indonesia, 2020; Nur et al., 2024).

In the realm of Islamic education, religious moderation plays a central role as a teaching product that must be implemented through a balanced and equitable curriculum and learning methods. The curriculum model with a rahmatan lil'alam approach has been proven to have a positive impact on shaping students' character to be moderate, tolerant, and wise in practicing religious teachings in various life contexts (Gunada et al., 2024; IAIM Metro Lampung, 2023). Learning that promotes religious moderation instills mutual respect and appreciation for differences in beliefs and cultures, while strengthening an inclusive and humanistic understanding of religion (Syahputra, 2024).

Religious Moderation as the Core Teaching of Islam, Rahmatan Lil 'alamin.

Religious moderation is a balanced attitude (wasathiyah) that is the essence of the teachings of Islam, rahmatan lil'alam, that is, Islam as a blessing for the entire universe. Moderation is characterized by the values of tolerance, justice, balance, and respect for diversity, which serve as the foundation for creating social peace (Al-Afkar, 2025; Ali, 2023). Islam, rahmatan lil'alam, teaches that Islam not only brings benefits to its followers, but also to all humans and other creatures (Ali, 2023). This moderate attitude serves as an antidote to the mischievousness of extremism and radicalism, which have the potential to damage the image of Islam (Al-Afkar, 2025).

This is in line with the words of Allah SWT in Surah Al-Baqarah:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۚ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَن يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ إِيْمَانَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

Meaning: Likewise, We have made you (Muslims) a medieval people so that you may be witnesses of human (deeds) and so that the Messenger (Prophet Muhammad) may be witnesses of your (deeds). We do not determine the Qibla (Baitulmaqdis) to which you (formerly) turned, except so that We know (in reality) who follows the Messenger and who turns back. Indeed, (transferring the Qibla) is very difficult, except for those who have been guided by Allah. Allah will not waste your faith. Indeed, Allah is truly Most Gracious and Most Merciful to humans.

This verse states that Muslims are made to be an "ummatan wasathan" (middle or moderate community), which means that Muslims are in a balanced, just and not extreme position. This moderate attitude is the basis for Muslims to be witnesses to human actions and achieve balance in religion and social life. Religious moderation helps prevent extremism and radicalism so that Islam can be a blessing for all of nature.

Furthermore, Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 107, explains that the Prophet Muhammad was sent as a mercy for the universe (rahmatan lil 'alamin), indicating that Islamic teachings bring compassion and benefits to all of God's creation, not just Muslims. This concept underlies the importance of tolerance and moderation in religion so that Islam can provide universal peace and prosperity.

Indicators and Manifestations of Religious Moderation in Society

Relevant indicators of religious moderation in Indonesia include:

commitment to nationalism, tolerance, non-violence, and respect for local traditions and culture as long as they do not conflict with the core teachings of the religion (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019; Muhammadiyah, 2022). The realization of religious moderation is evident in harmonious social life, where religious groups respect differences and reject all forms of violence in the name of religion (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024). Moderation strengthens harmony by fostering mutual respect among religious communities (Zahdi, 2021).

Manifestations of religious moderation in society are evident in behaviors and attitudes that reflect these four indicators. For example, moderate communities demonstrate inclusive attitudes, respect diversity, reject radicalism and terrorism, and are able to harmonize religious values with local cultural traditions. Furthermore, religious moderation also encourages interfaith harmony within society, grounded in a strong commitment to nationalism (Fatkhayatul Amanah, & Sarjuni, 2023).

Furthermore, other research confirms that manifestations of a culture of moderate thinking include a commitment to nationalism, tolerance, anti-violence/anti-radicalism, and openness to local culture, all demonstrated in daily religious practices (Fauzian, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Religious moderation is the core of Islamic teachings, emphasizing a balanced attitude (*wasathiyah*) between firm belief and respect for diversity, so that Islam can function as *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing for all nature). This concept rejects all forms of extremism and radicalism, and fosters the values of tolerance, peace, and harmony among religious communities. Religious moderation is reflected through four main indicators: a national commitment based on Pancasila and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia; a tolerant attitude in respecting differences in belief; a rejection of all forms of violence and radicalism; and an accommodating attitude towards local culture that aligns with Islamic teachings. Its manifestation is seen in inclusive social behavior, acceptance of plurality, rejection of violence in the name of religion, and the preservation of positive cultural values. Thus, religious moderation plays a vital role in maintaining harmony, unity, and peace in a pluralistic society.

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