



Religious Moderation in Educational Practice and the Construction of Tolerant Attitudes

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Abstract

Religious moderation is a middle way in the sense of being balanced in addressing both issues of religious teachings and responding to phenomena, or acknowledging the reality that occurs. MTsN 2 Blitar Regency is one of the leading madrasahs in Blitar Regency that is proactive in carrying out the ideas of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The implementation of religious moderation in MTsN 2 Blitar Regency began in the 2023/2024 school year, making it a hot topic among residents in MTsN 2 Blitar Regency. This research is qualitative and was conducted at MTsN 2 Blitar, which is known for its warm implementation of religious moderation. The data in this study were collected using three techniques: in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. To analyze the data, the researcher employed data condensation techniques, data collection, data display, and verification to conclude. At the same time, the validity of the data was detected by triangulation and peer discussions. The results of the study (1) Planning religious moderation in SKI learning at MTsN 2 Blitar in planning the value of religious moderation are inserted in the teaching module as the first step of religious moderation-based learning. (2) The implementation is the application of the teaching module. Meanwhile, the evaluation includes two types of assessments: formative and summative assessments. (3) The positive impact of the implementation of religious moderation-based learning on SKI subjects in MTsN 2 Blitar increases the competence of educators and education staff, increases knowledge and insight, and fosters a moderate attitude when respecting differences. At the same time, the negative impact felt is the increase in learning materials and methods used by teachers who are perceived as boring.

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Introduction

The Indonesian government has introduced the concept of "Religious Moderation" as a means to address the intolerant attitudes exhibited by some members of the community who adhere to a particular religion (Athoillah et al., 2024; Burga & Damopolii, 2022), to create a country that upholds tolerance between religious communities, and minimizing the practices of religious groups who claim to be the most correct. Religious moderation is expected to foster an attitude of mutual awareness and respect for others, not only those of the same faith but also towards those of different faiths (Eko Harianto, 2022). Indonesia really needs moderation because Indonesia does not consist of only one religion, but consists of many religions that become one nation and country. Therefore, an attitude of mutual respect, honor, and cooperation is greatly needed to build the Indonesian nation.

Religious moderation emerged and was intensified by the Ministry of Religion which has been stated in Presidential Regulation No. 18 of 2020 concerning the 2020-2024 RPJMN and followed up with the issuance of the Minister of Religion Regulation No. 18 of 2020 which plans the implementation of religious moderation which is carried out continuously (Kamaludin et al., 2021; Latif et al., 2023). MTS N 2 Blitar is one of the leading madrasahs in the Blitar district, which is proactive in carrying out the ideas of the Ministry of Religion. The implementation of religious moderation at MTsN 2 Blitar began in the 2023/2024 academic year, making it a hot topic among residents at MTsN 2 Blitar. This is proven by the achievements of MTsN 2 Blitar, including independent Adiwiyata schools, National School Health Units, and Literacy Madrasahs. Not long ago, MTsN 2 Blitar implemented a religious moderation-based learning approach, aiming to foster a tolerant environment where students do not feel that their school or chosen religion is the most correct.

The Indonesian government has initiated the discourse of "Religious Moderation" as a step to address intolerant attitudes exhibited by the community as adherents of a particular religion (Musyahid & Kolis, 2023; Rifki et al., 2024). To create a country that upholds tolerance between religious communities and minimizes the practice of religious groups who claim to be the most correct (Hamdun, 2022).

From this, researchers are interested in conducting research at MTsN 2 Blitar with the title "Implementation of Religious Moderation Learning to Form Religious Tolerance Attitudes at MTsN 2 Blitar." Researchers hope that this article will be

helpful and serve as a reference for other Madrasahs/Schools in promoting students' religious tolerance attitudes by strengthening religious moderation materials.

Theoretical review

Religious Moderation

In Arabic, moderation is called *wasath* or *wasathiyah*, which is equivalent to *tawassuth* (middle), *l'tidal* (justice), and *Tawazun*. "*Wasathiyah*" in Arabic means "optimal choice" (Syukur et al., 2024). However, when choosing a middle point, different words often convey the same meaning, namely, justice. Even the word *wasith* is combined with the word "judge" in Indonesian, which has three meanings, namely: 1) mediator (for example, in business); 2) intermediary (distributor) between disputing parties; and 3) leader in a match. At the same time, the meaning of religious moderation is an honest and balanced attitude in responding to, carrying out, and practicing religious teachings (N. Burhanuddin & Ilmi, 2022; Damopolii et al., 2024). In general, religious moderation can be interpreted as a spiritual expression of a person or group that prioritizes balance in their beliefs, morals, plans, and actions.

Religious behavior is characterized by adhering to the teachings of one's own religion and respecting the beliefs of others. Religious moderation is a moderate view of religion, namely, understanding or practicing religious teachings without being extreme, neither to the right nor to the left. Religious moderation does not mean mixing truth with falsehood or erasing identity. A rational attitude does not violate the truth. We continue to maintain a clear stance on issues related to problems, diversity, and the legitimacy of these concerns. Still, with religious moderation, we are more open to accepting that there are brothers outside of us who also have the same rights. Because we are a sovereign society within a national framework. Everyone has beliefs that we should respect and acknowledge; therefore, we must continue to be moderate and tolerant of religious differences.

Religious moderation in each religion teaches different things about love, a peaceful attitude, and cooperation. Cooperation, caring for one another, and respecting each other, including differences in beliefs and religions. It is a moral teaching and method that can be applied and implemented in the lives of nations, states, and societies. Religious moderation does not mean curtailing religion, but rather understanding, respecting, and appreciating each other's beliefs and perspectives. Religious moderation in individuals, families, and society can be

promoted, as Indonesia is a multicultural and diverse country. Therefore, the integration of differences in national and state life requires tolerance. However, the lack of understanding of Islam in many cases causes tension and conflict between religions. Therefore, there is a critical need to find ways to increase inter-religious tolerance among Muslims.

The purpose of religious moderation is to internalize and practice religious teachings fairly and in a balanced manner. Generally, religious moderation can be understood as an individual or group religious expression that emphasizes the balance between beliefs, morals, speech, and behavior. Religious attitudes and behaviors are characterized by a sincere belief in one's own religion's teachings and an open-mindedness towards the beliefs of others.

Tolerance

Tasamuh is a form (*mubalaghah*) of "samaha," which in Indonesian is usually interpreted as "tolerance" or, in terms, is referred to as tolerance. Tolerance, according to Islam, is known as the concept of *tasamuh* (Alazeez et al., 2024). More deeply, *tasamuh* is interpreted as one of the commendable morals that prioritizes the principle of tolerance and mutual respect for differences, without exceeding the limits set in Islam. Tolerance is interpreted as a positive behavior that refers to the nature of tolerance towards differences and is one of the attitudes of social interaction (Anwar et al., 2024). The attitude of *tasamuh* shows tolerance and acceptance of diversity. This is part of God's will and decree. The basic foundation of this thought is the word of Allah in QS. Al-Hujurat verse 13: which means: O humanity, indeed We created you from a male and a female and made you nations and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious among you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing and All-Aware

The attitude of tolerance is crucial in fostering religious moderation, as it promotes balance and harmony in a diverse society. With tolerance, individuals and groups can live side by side peacefully despite having different religious beliefs and practices (Alvian & Ardhani, 2023). This attitude fosters respect for differences and helps prevent conflicts based on religion from emerging. Tolerance also plays a crucial role in promoting a better understanding between various religious groups. Through dialogue and interaction based on mutual respect, negative stereotypes and prejudices can be reduced. This increases mutual trust and strengthens social ties within society (Muadin & Ilyasin, 2024). Furthermore, tolerance helps maintain social

and political stability. When society adopts a tolerant attitude, the possibility of religion-based violence and discrimination can be minimized. This creates an environment conducive to social and economic development. In the context of religious moderation, tolerance prevents individuals from embracing extremism and radicalism (Ma'arif et al., 2023). By respecting the views of other religions and focusing on universal values such as humanity and justice, religious moderation can develop and encourage inclusive and peaceful religious practices.

Here are some examples of tolerance in everyday life: Respecting religious differences; not forcing one's own spiritual beliefs on others, respecting differences of opinion; when discussing, listening to and considering the opinions of others even though they differ from one's personal views, and not imposing one's own opinions, respecting cultural diversity; appreciating and respecting the traditions, customs, and habits of other cultures, for example by participating or not disturbing when there are traditional events from different cultures, maintaining harmony in the environment.

Methods

This research was conducted at one of the State Junior High Schools in Blitar Regency, specifically MTsN 2 Blitar, located on Jl. Singajaya No. 33, Jeblog Kec. Talun, Blitar Regency, East Java 66138. The research subjects included the Principal of the Madrasah, the Islamic Religious Education teacher, and two students from MTsN 2 Blitar Jeblog, Talun, Blitar Regency. The researcher chose the research location at this madrasah because it is one of the states in Blitar that has recently implemented religious moderation-based learning, making it representative for the research. The researcher employed a qualitative approach (Mat Said et al., 2021). A qualitative approach to describe, know, and understand the Implementation of Religious Moderation-Based Learning on changes in the tolerance attitudes of students at the junior high school level. With this qualitative approach, researchers can directly identify the object of research (Marvasti, 2004). While the type of research used is a case study, specifically detailed research on a person (individual) or a social unit over a specific period of time, the data obtained by the researcher are in the form of words, not numbers. These words can be spoken or written. In qualitative research using the case study method, researchers focus on a single phenomenon that is carefully selected and thoroughly understood, while setting aside other phenomena for in-depth analysis. In this research at MTsN 2 Blitar, researchers used primary data

to obtain direct information related to the implementation of Religious Moderation Learning in the Islamic Religious Education learning process, particularly in Islamic Cultural History. Researchers used this secondary data to supplement the information and strengthen the findings collected through direct interviews. The primary data were obtained by researchers through interviews with Mr. Drs. Mahmudi, M.Sc., as the Head of Madrasah MTsN 2 Blitar Regency, and Mr. M. Ismanan, S.Ag. As the Lecturer of Islamic Cultural History Subjects and two students at MTsN 2 Blitar. At the same time, secondary data were collected from supporting documents (Prota, Promes, and Teaching Modules) and observation data related to the research focus. These data are expected to provide a description of the implementation of Religious Moderation-based Learning in Islamic Cultural History learning at MTsN 2 Blitar. These two data sources were selected using purposive sampling, which is a type of sampling based on specific considerations (Fitrah, 2017).

To obtain appropriate and valid data, in this study, the researcher used several techniques, including a) Interviews, which are activities where researchers ask several questions to the relevant sources to obtain information or statements related to the research being conducted (Creswell, 2014). Researchers obtain information directly through interviews with Mr. Drs. Mahmudi, M.Sc., as the Head of Madrasah MTsN 2 Blitar Regency, and Mr. M. Ismanan, S.Ag. As the Lecturer of Islamic Cultural History Subjects and two students at MTsN 2 Blitar. b) Observation, Researchers conduct direct observations at MTsN 2 Blitar, including the madrasah environment, physical conditions of the madrasah, teachers, classrooms, and during learning based on religious moderation in the subject of Islamic Cultural History. c) Researchers need secondary data and written data in research that can be obtained by recording information and taking several Teaching Modules and learning processes, when research activities take place at MTsN 2 Blitar.

Data analysis techniques used by researchers include a) Condensation, carried out by researchers after interviews with all informants, namely the Head of Madrasah, Islamic Cultural History teachers, and students of MTsN 2 Blitar. This process involves obtaining written data from the field, after which the interview transcripts are sorted to determine the research focus needed by the researchers. b) Data Display (Data Presentation) is carried out by researchers using words and not numbers. This is designed to combine information in a coherent and easy-to-understand format. c) Verification (Drawing Conclusions) Conclusions are also verified during the research. The conclusion does not only occur during the data

collection process, but also needs to be verified so that it can be accounted for by all parties (Miles et al., 2014).

Result

Based on data that has been condensed, a temporary conclusion can be drawn that:

- 1) Moderation-based learning planning focuses on the teaching module created by Mr. M. Ismanan S. Ag as a teacher of Islamic Cultural History at MTsN 2 Blitar. Students are encouraged and guided to examine the values of religious moderation in the material they study. This aims to enable students to develop a moderate attitude, characterized by tolerance, between religious communities.
- 2) In the preliminary activity, the Islamic Cultural History teacher introduces the value of religious moderation through apperception activities. In the core activity, the teacher naturally inserts learning materials that relate to religious moderation. During the closing activity, students and teachers conclude the learning activities and emphasize the value of religious moderation presented in the material being studied.
- 3) In the learning evaluation activities based on moderation, teachers are also given freedom in them. However, the madrasah will continue to provide full support to achieve the complete learning objectives. Learning evaluation based on religious moderation is carried out by incorporating it into the questions, as not all Islamic Cultural History materials incorporate religious moderation values.

Discussion

Religious Moderation-Based Learning Planning in the Subject of Islamic Cultural History

MTsN 2 Blitar is an educational institution affiliated with the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. Referring to the objectives of national education, it includes the formation of religious behavior and attitudes in students, so that they can develop a democratic attitude and maintain harmony in society, which aligns with the stated values. From these results, it is evident that religious

moderation can be achieved through education, particularly in the teaching of Islamic cultural history.

According to Zakiyah Darajat in (M. L. Abdullah & Syahri, 2019), Islamic Religious Education is an effort to educate and understand students so that they can understand Islamic religious education comprehensively and comprehensively consisting of the Al-Qur'an, Hadith Science, Tawhid, Morals, Fiqh, and Islamic Cultural History, the goal of which is for students to have a balance in their relationship with Allah SWT, to themselves and fellow humans, and other living things (M. R. Abdullah et al., 2021).

Learning planning is an activity carried out by educators to design activities so that they run effectively and efficiently in achieving learning objectives. Planning is conducted to ensure that teachers make effective and high-quality preparations before implementing learning activities (Leasa et al., 2023). The quality of learning planning is characterized by the presence of innovative ideas that produce effective learning, which will be implemented (Al-Shehri, 2020). Learning planning should be arranged and implemented as easily as possible. One form of learning planning is a teaching module.

A teaching module typically contains objectives, steps, learning media, assessments, and other learning materials and resources that can help educators carry out effective learning. One teaching module typically includes a learning design for a single learning objective, based on the learning objective flow that has been prepared. The teaching module in the Independent Curriculum is designed to help educators teach more flexibly and contextually, rather than relying solely on textbooks (Nisa et al., 2023). Teaching modules can be an alternative learning strategy. Therefore, before designing a teaching module, educators need to consider the following:

- 1) To achieve a particular learning objective, refer to a textbook or use a teaching module.
- 2) Copy, modify, or create a new teaching module.

The design of the teaching module is the first step in using the principle of religious moderation to achieve a mindset of religious moderation in learning the History of Islamic Culture at MTsN 2 Blitar. The concept of religious moderation is partially discussed in the creation of the teaching module, which is inserted into the

learning steps, specifically in the main introductory and closing activities. The planning of Islamic Religious Education learning at SMA utilizes an RPP, which includes learning objectives based on religious moderation (Anzaikhan et al., 2023; Basri et al., 2022).

Implementation of Religious Moderation-Based Learning in the Subject of Islamic Cultural History

Islamic Religious Education can be described as a system, as it is an activity with a clear purpose: to teach students. As a system, teaching and learning activities, of course, contain components (Alfarisi et al., 2023). The Islamic Religious Education learning process is a series of activities involving various components that interact with each other, where teachers must utilize these components in the process of activities to achieve the planned goals (Dianto et al., 2024; Suryati et al., 2023).

Learning is the actualization of the planning process used to achieve predetermined goals. An educator is required to be professional in creating a conducive, cooperative, and enjoyable learning atmosphere so that students do not feel dissatisfied or bored during the implementation of ongoing learning (H. Burhanuddin & Imron, 2023).

1) Preliminary Activities

The learning process is characterized by educational interactions that occur, specifically those that are informed by the goals. This interaction is rooted in the educator (teacher) and pedagogical learning activities that are systematically processed through the design, implementation, and evaluation stages by the students themselves. Learning does not happen instantly, but instead progresses through certain stages. In education, educators facilitate learning for students, enabling them to learn effectively. Through this interaction, an effective learning process is expected to occur.

Without learning materials, the teaching and learning process cannot proceed. Therefore, teachers who will teach must have and master the subject matter of Islamic Cultural History that will be delivered to students. Subject matter is a source of learning for students. The material referred to as a learning resource is something that carries a message for learning purposes.

The preliminary activities of the Islamic Cultural History teacher at MTsN 2 Blitar include greeting students, ensuring the classroom is neat and the surrounding

environment is clean, praying together, checking student attendance, conveying learning objectives, and conducting apperception. The subject of Islamic Cultural History at MTsN 2 Blitar is based on the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)(Amin et al., 2024; Fadillah et al., 2023) and the profile of rahmatan lil alamin students (PPRA), as well as the value of religious moderation(H. Burhanuddin & Imron, 2023) in accordance with Permendikbud No. 37 of 2018, namely: commitment, nationality, tolerance, anti-violence, and acceptance of tradition.

2) Core Activities

Learning is essentially a process, specifically the process of regulating and organizing the environment around students to foster and encourage them to engage in the learning process (Adi Warma et al., 2023). Learning is also described as the process of providing guidance or assistance to students in completing the learning process.

The role of the teacher as a guide is based on the many students who have problems. In learning, of course, there are many differences, such as students who can easily digest the lesson material, and there are also students who struggle to do so. These two differences enable teachers to devise learning strategies that are tailored to the individual circumstances of each student. Therefore, if the essence of learning is "change", then the nature of learning is "regulation".

Learning is a process of interaction between students, educators, and learning resources in a learning environment. The principles of learning are as follows:

- a) Strengthening religious learning patterns by making moderate moral values and understanding as inspiration for ways of thinking, attitudes, and actions in the learning process in madrasas.
- b) Implementing learning that uses Islamic values as a binding pattern of relationships between educators and students. The relationship between educators and students is characterized by a bond of mahabbah fillah, or affection, togetherness, and mutual assistance, rooted in the intention of worship aimed at pleasing Allah SWT.
- c) Implementing active learning and direct experience for students.
- d) Implementing challenging learning that is realized through the form of activities, materials, and selected learning media.
- e) Based on individual differences, by paying attention to 4 (four) types of learning, namely auditory, visual, kinesthetic, and mixed.

- f) Referring to the results of identification and assessment to determine potential, problems, obstacles, and assess learning programs.
- g) Designed by considering the current developmental stage and level of achievement of students, in accordance with learning needs, and reflecting the diverse character and development of students, so that learning becomes meaningful and enjoyable.
- h) Designed and implemented to build students' learning capacity and their capacity to become lifelong learners.
- i) The learning process supports the cognitive and character development of students sustainably and holistically.
- j) Relevant learning, namely learning that is designed according to the context of the lives and culture of students, and involves parents and the community as partners.
- k) learning is oriented towards a sustainable future.
- l) learning for students with special needs in madrasas is designed and implemented in an accommodating manner.
- m) Madrasas can implement learning services with a package system and/or semester credit system (SKS).
- n) Provisions regarding SKS learning services are regulated and determined by the Director General of Islamic Education.

In core activities, it is the most critical activity for Islamic Cultural History teachers at MTsN 2 Blitar Regency, where the delivery of moderate values is embedded. In the core activities of Islamic Cultural History teachers at MTsN 2 Blitar, they are required to think critically so that the values of moderation contained in the learning are conveyed fully.

3) Closing Activities

In the Development and Assessment Guidelines book, closing activities are those that provide a comprehensive overview of what students have learned, taking into account the level of student achievement and the level of teacher success in delivering learning materials.

Things that Islamic Cultural History teachers at MTsN 2 Blitar must do during closing activities include;

- a) Drawing conclusions related to the material that has been learned, this conclusion can be done by students, teachers, or by students appointed by

the teacher, and/or by students together with teachers who touch on the material on religious moderation in the Islamic Cultural History material. This activity aims to strengthen the knowledge/skills that children have developed during the learning process (Achmad et al., 2022).

- b) Asking questions to measure the level of achievement and effectiveness of the learning that has been carried out. Delivering in-depth materials that must be studied and tasks that must be done (Leasa et al., 2023).
- c) Providing post-tests either orally, in writing, or in action. This is done to discuss learning ideas at the next meeting.

Evaluation of Religious Moderation-Based Learning in the Subject of Islamic Cultural History

The Independent Curriculum recognizes assessment as a form of learning and evaluation. Assessment is used as evidence or consideration regarding the achievement of predetermined learning objectives (Prihantini, 2024; Sholeh et al., 2024). Teachers are advised to use the following assessments:

- 1) Formative assessment, an assessment that aims to provide information or feedback for educators and students to improve the learning process. Formative assessment is divided into two:
 - a) Assessment at the beginning of learning, which is carried out to determine the readiness of students to receive teaching materials. This is also carried out by the Islamic Cultural History teacher at MTsN 2 Blitar before compiling the teaching module, which will later include religious moderation values.
 - b) Assessment in the learning process, which is used to determine the development of students. The Islamic Cultural History teacher at MTsN 2 Blitar conducts assessments as part of the learning process by inserting moderation values in several questions. However, not all Islamic cultural history materials contain moderate values.
- 2) Summative assessment is an assessment conducted to assess the achievement of learning objectives or basic CP for determining class promotion or graduation from an educational unit (Hatija et al., 2025; Khairi et al., 2023). Assessment of student learning outcomes with learning objective achievement criteria. The following are some functions of summative assessment:

- a) A measuring tool to determine student learning outcomes in one or more learning objectives over a specific period.
- b) Obtaining learning outcome achievement scores to be compared with predetermined achievement criteria
- c) Determining the continuation of student learning processes in the next class or level.

Summative assessment is conducted after learning has ended, for example, at the end of a scope of material, the end of the semester, and also at the end of a phase (Cahyono et al., 2023; Jumini et al., 2024). MTsN 2 Blitar uses summative assessment in the form of midterm or final semester exams using written exams in which several questions are inserted with religious moderation values.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion above, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The implementation of religious moderation-based learning in the subject of Islamic Cultural History at MTsN 2 Blitar has been progressing well, as evidenced by the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning that meet the criteria of the independent madrasah curriculum. The planning of religious moderation-based learning at MTsN 2 Blitar uses a teaching module as the first step in the principle of religious moderation. The concept of religious moderation is partly discussed in the creation of a teaching module that is inserted into the learning steps. The implementation of religious moderation-based learning in the subject of Islamic Cultural History at MTsN 2 Blitar, utilizing the teaching module itself. In the learning steps, there are preliminary activities, core activities, and closings. Islamic Cultural History teachers conduct evaluations of religious moderation-based learning through two assessments: formative and summative assessments. Both of these assessments include several questions about religious moderation in the material, allowing for the insertion of moderation values.

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