



Religious Moderation as Lived Pedagogy: An Interpretive Case Study in Indonesian Secondary Schools

Received: 15-02-2026; Revised: 16-03-2026; Accepted: 24-04-2026

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Abstract: Research on religious moderation in education has grown substantially in recent years. However, existing studies have largely focused on conceptual debates, curriculum content, or outcome-based evaluations, while giving less empirical attention to how religious moderation is practiced in everyday school life. This study investigates how religious moderation is implemented in secondary schools in Kendari, the factors that shape its implementation, and its educational impacts on students and school culture. Using a qualitative case study within an interpretivist framework, the study collected data through semi-structured interviews with teachers and school stakeholders, as well as classroom and school activity observations. The data were analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns of practice and meaning. The findings show that religious moderation is enacted through both intracurricular and extracurricular activities, such as integrating values of tolerance, mutual respect, and balanced religious understanding into classroom instruction, as well as through collective school programs, religious celebrations, and inter-student social activities. Its implementation is shaped by government policy support, shared school commitment, and teachers' active role as mediators of inclusive values. The study also finds that these practices foster stronger social cohesion among students, improve communication across differences, encourage a balanced spiritual and social orientation, and create a more inclusive school climate. This study contributes to the field by offering an empirically grounded and integrated account of religious moderation as a lived pedagogical practice in Indonesian secondary education, particularly in a context that remains underrepresented in international scholarship.

Abstrak: Penelitian tentang moderasi agama dalam pendidikan telah berkembang pesat dalam beberapa tahun terakhir. Namun, studi yang ada sebagian besar berfokus pada perdebatan konseptual, isi kurikulum, atau evaluasi berbasis hasil, sementara kurang memperhatikan secara empiris bagaimana moderasi agama dipraktikkan dalam kehidupan sekolah sehari-hari. Studi ini menyelidiki bagaimana moderasi agama diimplementasikan di sekolah menengah di Kendari, faktor-faktor yang membentuk implementasinya, dan dampak pendidikannya terhadap siswa dan budaya sekolah. Dengan menggunakan studi kasus kualitatif dalam kerangka interpretatif, studi ini mengumpulkan data melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan guru dan pemangku kepentingan sekolah,

serta observasi kelas dan aktivitas sekolah. Data dianalisis secara tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola praktik dan makna yang berulang. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa moderasi agama diwujudkan melalui kegiatan intrakurikuler dan ekstrakurikuler, seperti mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai toleransi, saling menghormati, dan pemahaman agama yang seimbang ke dalam pengajaran di kelas, serta melalui program sekolah kolektif, perayaan keagamaan, dan kegiatan sosial antar siswa. Implementasinya dibentuk oleh dukungan kebijakan pemerintah, komitmen sekolah bersama, dan peran aktif guru sebagai mediator nilai-nilai inklusif. Studi ini juga menemukan bahwa praktik-praktik ini mendorong kohesi sosial yang lebih kuat di antara siswa, meningkatkan komunikasi lintas perbedaan, mendorong orientasi spiritual dan sosial yang seimbang, dan menciptakan iklim sekolah yang lebih inklusif. Studi ini berkontribusi pada bidang ini dengan menawarkan uraian yang terintegrasi dan berlandaskan empiris tentang moderasi keagamaan sebagai praktik pedagogis yang dihayati dalam pendidikan menengah di Indonesia, khususnya dalam konteks yang masih kurang terwakili dalam kajian internasional.

Keywords: Interpretive Case Study, Lived Pedagogy, Moderation Values, School Culture

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, increasing religious diversity and the persistence of intolerance in educational settings have attracted growing scholarly attention, as schools are widely recognized not only as institutions of knowledge transmission but also as key spaces for shaping students' social and religious orientations (Beyer & Brese, 2024; Sakallı et al., 2021). Within plural societies, education plays a decisive role in cultivating attitudes that support peaceful coexistence, social cohesion, and mutual respect. In this context, religious moderation has emerged as an important framework for addressing the challenges of polarization and exclusivism, particularly within Islamic Religious Education (PAI), which directly influences students' ethical reasoning, worldview, and engagement with difference (Cooling, 2020; Putkonen et al., 2025). Religious moderation is generally understood as a balanced and contextual approach to religious understanding that promotes tolerance, justice, and respect for diversity (Muhaemin et al., 2023).

In this study, religious moderation is approached from the outset as a form of lived pedagogy, that is, as a pedagogical practice through which moderation values are enacted, mediated, and internalized in

everyday school life. This perspective is important because it shifts attention from formal prescriptions and curricular representations to the actual processes through which moderation is taught and experienced in classroom settings.

In educational research, the concept of religious moderation is increasingly associated with dialogic and reflective pedagogy, inclusive learning environments, and character education that fosters empathy and ethical awareness, as demonstrated in studies on interfaith learning, inclusive religious education, and reflective pedagogical approaches (Jailani et al., 2025; Moulin, 2023; Visser et al., 2023). Consequently, a growing body of scholarship has examined religious moderation in secondary education, exploring its conceptual foundations, policy implications, curriculum integration, and representation in instructional materials.

Despite these important contributions, critical examination of the literature reveals several significant limitations. Most previous studies have concentrated on conceptual debates, curriculum and textbook analysis, or the measurement of moderation outcomes, while giving less sustained attention to how moderation is pedagogically enacted in everyday classroom practice. Studies by

Husna and Thohir (2020) and Khasanah, Hamzani, and Aravik (2023) conceptualize religious moderation as a pedagogical paradigm or educational model, while Muhaemin et al. (2023) frame it primarily as a response to intolerance within educational institutions. Similarly, analyses by Alfulana (2023), Ritonga (2025), Rusydiyah et al. (2025), Muharom (2023), and Masturin (2022) focus predominantly on textbooks, modules, and instructional materials, and Imamah (2023), together with Muis (2025), examine curriculum integration and systematic trends. While these studies clarify conceptual and structural foundations, they provide limited insight into how moderation values are translated into pedagogical strategies and everyday teaching practices. Second, studies that explicitly address implementation often remain descriptive and insufficiently attentive to pedagogical processes. Research by Idris et al. (2021), Musliha, Hasbullah, and Alpizar (2025), Armedi, Kawakip, and Asrori (2025), Chalis, Suhaimi, and Sulaiman (2024), and Hak and Achdi (2025) demonstrates the presence of moderation values in educational programs, yet detailed analysis of instructional design, teacher mediation, and classroom interaction remains limited. Likewise, studies by Shah and Alam (2024) and Syahrin and Widodo (2025) discuss strategies and transformations in Islamic education but provide relatively limited empirical accounts of how moderation is enacted and negotiated in everyday classroom practice. Third, another strand of research prioritizes measuring levels or impacts of religious moderation rather than examining formative processes. Studies by Harmi (2022), Kustati et al. (2023), and Waskito and Rohman (2025) assess moderation levels and behavioral outcomes but offer limited explanations of how such values are cultivated through pedagogical interaction. Moreover, existing research often treats implementation, influencing factors, and impacts as separate analytical domains, resulting in a fragmented understanding of the phenomenon. Finally, context-sensitive studies remain limited,

particularly in eastern Indonesia, where local sociocultural dynamics significantly shape educational practices.

To address these gaps, this study investigates the implementation of religious moderation through Islamic Religious Education in secondary schools in Kendari. Unlike previous studies that mainly emphasize conceptual formulation, curricular representation, or outcome measurement, this study focuses on religious moderation as lived pedagogy by examining how moderation is enacted in teaching practices, mediated by teachers, and experienced within the everyday social life of schools. It also differs from earlier implementation studies by integrating three dimensions within a single analytical frame, namely pedagogical enactment, influencing factors, and educational impacts. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following research questions: (1) How is religious moderation enacted as a lived pedagogical practice through Islamic Religious Education in senior high schools in Kendari? (2) What factors shape the enactment of religious moderation in these schools? (3) What educational impacts emerge from the enactment of religious moderation on the school community? This study contributes to the literature in several significant ways. First, unlike most previous studies that focus on conceptual frameworks, curriculum analysis, or outcome measurement, this research examines religious moderation as a lived pedagogical practice by analyzing how moderation values are enacted, mediated, and internalized in everyday classroom interaction. Second, the study develops an integrated analytical perspective that simultaneously examines implementation processes, influencing factors, and educational impacts, thereby addressing a fragmentation that characterizes much of the existing literature. Most importantly, this research provides one of the first empirically grounded accounts of how religious moderation is practiced in senior high schools in Kendari, offering a contextually rich perspective from eastern Indonesia that

remains underrepresented in current scholarship. By foregrounding process, context, and integration within a single framework, this study advances a more comprehensive understanding of religious moderation in Islamic Religious Education.

Conceptually, this study understands religious moderation as a lived pedagogical practice shaped by dialogic teaching processes, supported by a tolerant school climate, and oriented toward character education in everyday school life. Religious moderation is measured through four principal indicators: national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation of local culture. These four indicators are used to assess the extent to which an individual's religious worldview, attitudes, and practices reflect a form of religiosity that is fair, balanced, and non-extreme (Mukhibat et al., 2024). Within this framework, lived pedagogy serves as the main lens for understanding how moderation is enacted in practice, dialogic pedagogy explains the pedagogical process through which moderation values are negotiated, school climate provides the contextual condition that enables such enactment, and character education reflects the formative educational orientation produced through these processes.

METHODS

This study adopts an interpretivist paradigm, which assumes that social reality is constructed through interaction and shared meanings. This perspective is appropriate for examining the implementation of religious moderation in Islamic Religious Education (PAI), as moderation is understood not merely as a policy or concept but as a lived pedagogical practice shaped by teachers, students, and the school environment (Creswell, 2007). The research employs an interpretive case study design to explore the implementation of religious moderation in its real-life context. This design enables an in-depth investigation of pedagogical practices, classroom interaction, and institutional culture, which are central to understanding

how moderation values are enacted and internalized in everyday learning (Yin, 2018). The study was conducted in five secondary schools in Kendari, such as SMAN 1, SMAN 2, SMAN 3, SMAN 4, and SMAN 5. These schools were selected because they represent public senior high schools in Kendari and provide a relevant context for examining how Islamic Religious Education is practiced within diverse school environments. The research context is important because Kendari reflects a sociocultural setting in which religious moderation is expected to be cultivated through formal education, particularly in schools attended by students from varied social and religious backgrounds. The participants included 11 Islamic Religious Education teachers, 1 school principal, 1 vice school principal and 1 student involved in PAI learning activities. Participants were recruited using purposive sampling, based on their direct involvement in teaching or participating in activities related to religious moderation. Teacher participants were recruited because they were directly responsible for planning and delivering PAI instruction, while the principal and vice principal were included because of their roles in shaping school policy, culture, and religious programmes. The student participant was recruited to provide a learner's perspective on how moderation values were experienced in classroom and school activities. The use of purposive sampling therefore allowed us to recruit information-rich participants who could provide detailed accounts of pedagogical practice, school support, and student engagement. Participants' demography can be seen in Table (1).

Participant Code	Role	School	Gender
T1	Teacher	SMAN 1	Man
T2	Teacher	SMAN 1	Women
T3	Teacher	SMAN 2	Man
T4	Teacher	SMAN 2	Women
T5	Teacher	SMAN 3	Man
T6	Teacher	SMAN 3	Women

T7	Teacher	SMAN 4	Man	were assured that their identities and responses would be kept confidential in accordance with research ethics principles.
T8	Teacher	SMAN 4	Women	
T9	Teacher	SMAN 5	Man	
T10	Teacher	SMAN 5	Women	
P1	Principal	SMAN 1	Man	
VP1	Vice Principal 1	SMAN 2	Women	
S1	Student	SMAN 3	Man	
S1	Student	SMAN 4	Women	

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and field notes. The semi-structured interviews followed an interview guide covering three broad areas: forms of enactment, factors shaping enactment, and perceived impacts on students and the school community. Each interview lasted approximately 45–60 minutes and was audio-recorded with participants' consent. Classroom observations were conducted during PAI learning sessions to document how moderation values were introduced, modelled, and negotiated through teaching materials, teacher explanations, student participation, and classroom interaction. Field notes were written during and immediately after each observation in order to record pedagogical events, interactional patterns, and contextual details relevant to the study.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which involves identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns or themes within qualitative data. The analysis involved transcribing and organizing the data, conducting initial coding, grouping codes into themes, and interpreting the themes in relation to the research questions. The themes focused on three main aspects: forms of implementation, influencing factors, and educational impacts. To ensure trustworthiness, the study employed data triangulation across interviews and observations, as well as member checking to confirm the accuracy of interpretations. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study, provided voluntary consent, and

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of observations and interviews indicate that enactment of religious moderation such as national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation of local culture in secondary schools in Kendari, Indonesia, is carried out through both intracurricular and extracurricular activities. Interview data show that moderation values discussed by participants include *tawasuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *i'tidal* (justice/fairness), and that these values are described in relation to classroom learning, group activities, and school programs. The presentation of findings is organized into several sub-themes.

Enactment of Religious Moderation through Intracurricular Activities

Interview data from teachers indicate that moderation values are introduced in classroom learning through various instructional activities. However, the data also suggest that the implementation of religious moderation is not limited to the delivery of moral values in a normative sense, but extends to the cultivation of dialogical attitudes and the formation of social strategies for managing difference within the school environment. In this regard, intracurricular learning functions not only as a space for value transmission, but also as a pedagogical arena for practicing moderation in everyday interaction. One teacher in SMAN 1 stated:

"The integration of religious moderation values is carried out through a contextual approach. Every lesson is linked to the social realities faced by students.

I emphasize the importance of tawasuth so that students do not adopt extreme attitudes. The value of tawazun is instilled through habitual practices in learning and group activities. I also encourage students to practice tasamuh through discussions involving differences of opinion. When small conflicts occur, teachers guide students to resolve them using the principle of i'tidal. All activities are directed so that students can apply moderation values in real life. In this way, religious moderation becomes part of the school culture.”

This excerpt describes several classroom activities, including linking lesson materials to social realities, emphasizing moderation values, habituating students through group activities, encouraging discussion involving different opinions, and guiding conflict resolution. Analytically, this finding shows that moderation is not merely taught as abstract religious advice, but is operationalized as a behavioral framework through which students learn how to respond to difference, tension, and social interaction in concrete classroom situations. Thus, moderation appears here as both a moral orientation and a practical social skill. Another teacher in SMAN 2 explained:

“The value of tawasuth is always instilled by explaining that religion should not be understood rigidly. In learning, students are guided not to behave excessively when practicing religious teachings. I emphasize tawazun by encouraging students to balance individual and social obligations. The value of tasamuh is strengthened through real examples of respecting differences among classmates. I

also remind students that i'tidal must be reflected in how they treat others fairly. Exemplary behavior is the main way teachers instill these values. Group discussions are used to train students to be open to different views. With these strategies, students learn that moderation is part of everyday religious practice.”

This statement refers to instructional explanations, guidance to students, examples provided in teaching, reminders about fairness, modeling behavior, and the use of group discussions. More importantly, it indicates that moderation is constructed through both explanation and exemplification. Teachers do not only define moderation verbally, but also embody it through their conduct and instructional choices. This suggests that religious moderation is framed not solely as religious morality, but as a dialogical competence that enables students to engage difference, negotiate perspectives, and coexist fairly with others in daily school life. Another teacher in SMAN 3 stated:

“Students are encouraged to view issues from different perspectives. The value of tawazun is introduced by habituating students to balance ritual worship and social concern. I also provide examples of tasamuh by respecting diversity in the classroom. The principle of i'tidal is always emphasized in collective decisions. I stress that moderation is not only material to be taught but also behavior in daily life. This makes students better prepared to face differences wisely.”

This statement describes activities such as encouraging multiple perspectives, balancing ritual and social practices, giving examples of respecting diversity, emphasizing fairness in group decisions, and presenting moderation as daily behavior. This pattern reflects that moderation is being internalized as a reflective disposition rather than as a mere curricular topic. Encouraging multiple perspectives, in particular, shows that classroom learning is directed toward shaping students' capacity for critical awareness, empathy, and fair judgment. In this sense, moderation functions as a school-based social strategy for preparing students to live constructively amid diversity. Other teachers in SMAN 5 also described similar practices:

“The attitude of *tawazun* is instilled through habitual practices in learning and group activities. Students are encouraged to practice *tasamuh* through discussions involving differences of opinion. When small conflicts occur, teachers guide students to resolve them using the principle of *i'tidal*. All activities are directed so that students can apply moderation values in real life.”

These statements describe habituation, discussions, teacher guidance, modeling behavior, and classroom practices related to respecting differences and fairness. Taken together, these findings reveal a recurring pattern across schools. Religious moderation is embedded in routine pedagogical practices rather than delivered as an isolated subject matter. This means that moderation is simultaneously positioned as a moral value, a dialogical competence, and a social strategy through which schools cultivate harmonious interaction and responsible religious behavior among students.

Enactment of Religious Moderation through Extracurricular Activities

Moderation values are also implemented through extracurricular programs. One teacher in SMAN 4 stated:

“I see extracurricular activities such as sports, visits to orphanages, and student leadership forums as very effective in implementing religious moderation. Sports strengthen teamwork and mutual respect among students. Social visits instill care and tolerance toward different social conditions. Leadership forums train students to be fair, balanced, and respectful of every opinion, making moderation values easier to apply in daily life.”

This statement describes extracurricular activities such as sports, social visits, and leadership forums, and refers to teamwork, mutual respect, social care, tolerance, fairness, and respect for opinions. Another interview stated:

“According to Islamic Religious Education teachers, scouting trains students to be disciplined, responsible, and able to cooperate. Islamic art performances allow students to express their talents while strengthening religious values in creative ways. Environmental activities encourage students to care about cleanliness and sustainability. Through these activities, students grow into balanced individuals who love religion and care about their surroundings.” (interview, teacher in SMAN 3).

The statement refers to scouting, art performances, and environmental activities, and describes discipline, responsibility, cooperation, creative expression, religious values, and environmental awareness. A student from SMAN 3 also stated:

“Extracurricular activities help internalize religious values. Poster competitions on tolerance and Islamic art performances involve all students regardless of differences. Scouting develops discipline and cooperation. In this way, moderation is not only taught in class but also experienced in daily life.”

This statement describes poster competitions, art performances, scouting activities, student participation, and daily experiences of moderation values.

Factors Influencing the Enactment of Religious Moderation

Interview results indicate several factors influencing implementation. A school principal from SMAN 2 stated:

“Government policy through the curriculum is the main foundation for implementing religious moderation in schools. The curriculum includes materials emphasizing tolerance, balance, and respect for differences. It provides clear direction for teachers and encourages students to understand religion comprehensively and avoid extremism. Government support also gives strong legitimacy for schools to implement moderation-oriented programs.”

This statement refers to curriculum policy, instructional materials, teacher guidance, student understanding, and government support. Another participant from SMAN 5 explained:

“Strong commitment from all members of the school community is a key factor in implementing religious moderation. Teachers, students, and staff work together to maintain a tolerant environment. This commitment is reflected in policies, exemplary behavior by teachers, and student participation in positive activities.”

This statement describes commitment, cooperation among school members, school policies, exemplary behavior, and student participation. Another statement noted:

“Teachers must consistently teach tolerance, students must respect differences, and staff must provide non-discriminatory services. This shared commitment creates a peaceful atmosphere in school.”

This statement refers to the roles of teachers, students, and staff in maintaining tolerance and non-discriminatory practices.

Impacts of the Enactment of Religious Moderation

The enactment of religious moderation has many impacts. Interviews also describe several reported impacts. A vice principal from SMAN 2 stated:

“The enactment of religious moderation strengthens the sense of brotherhood in the school environment. Conflicts can now be resolved through deliberation and empathy. Teachers become role models, and students learn to respect differences.”

This statement refers to strengthened relationships, conflict resolution, teacher role modeling, and respect for differences. Another teacher in SMAN 3 stated:

“The implementation of moderation has brought

significant changes to school culture. Teachers, students, and staff are more open to differences, and the school environment has become more peaceful and conducive to learning.”

This statement describes openness to differences and a peaceful learning environment. Another teacher from SMAN 1 explained:

“Moderation helps balance spiritual and social life. Teachers can teach more objectively, and character education develops in a balanced way.”

This statement refers to the balance between spiritual and social aspects and objective teaching. Another participant from SMAN 5 stated:

“Moderation improves communication and solidarity among school members. Dialogue forums, social activities, and collaborative work strengthen relationships and mutual support.”

This statement describes communication, solidarity, dialogue forums, social activities, collaborative work, and mutual support among school members.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of religious moderation in secondary schools in Kendari, Indonesia, is primarily realized through pedagogical practices embedded in both intracurricular instruction and extracurricular programs. Moderation values are enacted through classroom interaction, contextualized teaching, collaborative learning, and structured school activities, a pattern consistent with research emphasizing the performative and experiential nature of values education (Visser et al., 2023). Teachers reported linking lesson content to students’ social realities, facilitating

discussions that engage differences of opinion, encouraging a balance between ritual and social responsibilities, and guiding students in resolving conflicts through principles of fairness and mutual respect. Extracurricular activities such as scouting, social visits, leadership forums, and environmental initiatives were likewise described as practical contexts in which students encountered moderation values in everyday interaction. These patterns indicate that the effectiveness of moderation initiatives is closely tied to the lived pedagogical and social ecology of the school, rather than confined to formal curriculum documents or policy frameworks alone (Chotimah et al., 2025).

From a theoretical perspective, these findings suggest that religious moderation in educational settings operates most meaningfully as a form of lived pedagogy, a socially situated practice shaped by interactional patterns, classroom routines, and institutional culture. Within this framework, moderation values are not merely taught as declarative knowledge but are produced and reproduced through repeated learning experiences, structured social interaction, and the mediating role of teachers in managing difference (Sakallı et al., 2021). The reported practices contextualizing instruction, facilitating dialogic engagement, encouraging collaborative work, and guiding conflict resolution illustrate how moderation becomes embedded in everyday pedagogical routines that gradually shape students’ habits of thinking and acting. Research on deliberative discussion in classrooms supports this interpretation by showing that structured dialogue on potentially contentious issues requires deliberate pedagogical orchestration to cultivate listening, argumentation, and reflective

judgment without reinforcing polarization (Hess & McAvoy, 2015; Parker, 2023). In this sense, moderation may be understood not simply as an ethical stance but as a social competence developed through sustained interactional experience (Castro et al., 2025).

This interpretation can be further anchored in the framework of dialogic pedagogy, which conceptualizes learning as the co-construction of meaning through guided conversation, perspective exchange, and iterative reflection. Within such a pedagogical environment, dispositions such as tolerance, balance, and fairness emerge through participation rather than passive reception. Empirical studies in religious education indicate that dialogic activities, reflective narratives, and collaborative learning can strengthen perspective-taking and empathy capacities that are widely recognized as foundational to the development of moderate and inclusive attitudes in plural societies (Moulin, 2023). The teacher's role is therefore not limited to transmitting doctrinal or moral content but extends to orchestrating interactional processes, balancing diverse voices, and ensuring that disagreement is processed constructively. Moderation thus functions as a habit of interaction, stabilized through repeated practices of dialogue, cooperation, and negotiated decision-making within the classroom community. Moreover, the findings highlight the significance of the relationship between classroom learning and extracurricular participation in sustaining moderation as lived pedagogy. Activities such as scouting, community service, leadership training, and environmental programs provide experiential contexts in which students enact responsibility, social care, cooperation, and respect for diversity in tangible ways. Scholarship on tolerance education consistently shows that attitudes

conducive to peaceful coexistence are more effectively cultivated when learners engage in authentic social situations requiring collaboration and shared problem-solving, rather than through purely cognitive instruction (Banks, 2019; Zembylas, 2018). In this regard, school-based programs may be understood as functioning as a form of social laboratory, enabling students to experience moderation not merely as a normative ideal but as a practical orientation embedded in daily conduct and collective activity.

A further implication of these findings concerns the analytical distinction between moderation as representation and moderation as enactment. While numerous studies have documented the representation of moderation values in curricula, textbooks, and policy documents, the present findings reinforce the argument that the success of such initiatives depends fundamentally on how these values are translated into concrete pedagogical practice. Research in interfaith and religion education similarly demonstrates that peaceful coexistence and constructive engagement with difference do not arise automatically from diversity itself or from exposure to normative content; rather, they are cultivated through sustained interaction within institutional environments that support dialogue, reflexivity, and mutual recognition (Jackson, 2014). Moderation, therefore, should be understood as an ongoing socio-pedagogical process negotiated through the dynamic interplay of teachers, students, and the cultural norms of the school environment.

Taken together, these findings carry important implications for both policy and practice. If religious moderation is conceptualized as lived pedagogy, then strengthening moderation in educational settings cannot rely solely on curriculum

revision or the inclusion of additional instructional materials. Instead, it requires systematic efforts to enhance teachers' pedagogical competencies in facilitating dialogue, designing collaborative learning environments, and fostering classroom climates in which differences can be expressed and negotiated safely. Equally important is the integration of intracurricular and extracurricular domains, since moderation values require diverse and repeated opportunities for enactment across multiple social contexts. In this sense, moderation should be understood not as a concept taught once, but as a disposition cultivated continuously through interaction, routine practice, and the formation of a school culture oriented toward peaceful coexistence, fairness, and social responsibility.

Another findings of this study indicate that the implementation of religious moderation in secondary schools is shaped through the interaction of institutional policy, pedagogical practice, and school culture rather than through curricular representation alone. Interview data show that government policy embedded in the curriculum functions as a structural foundation that legitimizes and guides the integration of moderation values in Islamic Religious Education. This finding resonates with previous studies that conceptualize religious moderation as a pedagogical and policy-oriented framework designed to cultivate tolerance and inclusivity in educational settings (Husna & Thohir, 2020; Muhaemin et al., 2023). However, a critical examination of the international and national literature reveals that much of the existing research remains concentrated on normative discourse, curricular representation, or conceptual advocacy, often without sufficient empirical attention to how

moderation is enacted in everyday pedagogical practice. By demonstrating how curricular policy shapes teachers' instructional choices, classroom interaction, and student engagement, this study addresses a persistent gap in the global literature concerning the translation of normative educational ideals into lived classroom realities.

From the perspective of school climate theory, the significance of these findings becomes more apparent. School climate research consistently emphasizes that institutional norms, leadership support, and shared expectations form the socio-cultural conditions that enable or constrain pedagogical innovation and value formation (Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016). The present findings suggest that religious moderation operates not merely as a curricular theme but as part of a broader normative climate that structures everyday interaction. This insight strengthens and extends earlier studies on moderation programs in schools, which often document the presence of activities or initiatives but provide limited explanation of the institutional mechanisms that sustain them (Armedi et al., 2025; Idris et al., 2021). By foregrounding the interaction between policy frameworks and school culture, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how educational values are institutionalized and maintained over time.

Equally significant is the role of collective commitment among teachers, students, and staff, which participants repeatedly identified as a decisive factor in implementation. While prior research acknowledges the importance of teacher roles and student participation, it frequently treats these elements as isolated variables rather than as components of a shared moral ecology (Chalis et al., 2024; Hak & Achdi,

2025). The present findings indicate that moderation functions as a socially distributed practice sustained through cooperation, modeling, and non-discriminatory interaction. This interpretation aligns with the concept of lived pedagogy, which conceptualizes educational values as emerging through everyday routines, relational practices, and institutional culture rather than through formal instruction alone (Visser et al., 2023). By documenting how moderation values are enacted in daily interaction through dialogue, conflict mediation, and collaborative activities, this study provides empirical support for theoretical claims that moral and civic dispositions are formed through repeated social practice rather than declarative knowledge transmission.

The reported impacts of implementation strengthened relationships, improved communication, openness to difference, and a more peaceful learning environment further reinforce the interpretation of moderation as a socially enacted process. Previous studies have often measured religious moderation primarily through attitudinal surveys or behavioral indicators (Harmi, 2022), thereby identifying outcomes without fully explaining the processes that generate them. The present findings contribute to bridging this explanatory gap by linking observable outcomes to institutional conditions and pedagogical practices. From the standpoint of dialogic pedagogy, the development of tolerance and empathy is closely associated with structured opportunities for dialogue, perspective-taking, and collaborative decision-making (Cui & Teo, 2021). The interview data describing deliberation, respectful disagreement, and collective problem-solving illustrate how dialogic interaction functions as a mechanism through

which moderation becomes habitualized in everyday school life.

This study also makes several contributions to the international literature. Empirically, it provides one of the relatively few in-depth accounts of how religious moderation is implemented and experienced in everyday pedagogical practice, thereby addressing a global gap between normative discourse and classroom realities. Theoretically, it demonstrates the value of integrating lived pedagogy, dialogic pedagogy, and school climate theory as complementary analytical frameworks for understanding how educational values are formed and sustained. Methodologically, by examining influencing factors, implementation processes, and educational impacts within a single analytical framework, the study offers a more holistic model for researching value-based education, responding to the fragmentation that characterizes much of the existing scholarship. Contextually, the research contributes a detailed case from eastern Indonesia, a region that remains underrepresented in global discussions of religious education, thereby broadening the geographical scope of the field and providing insights relevant to other plural and multicultural societies. Ultimately, by demonstrating that moderation is enacted through interaction, institutional culture, and shared practice, this study advances a more robust and practice-oriented understanding of how educational institutions can cultivate dispositions conducive to peaceful coexistence in diverse societies.

CONCLUSION

The present study investigated the enactment of religious moderation through Islamic Religious Education in secondary schools in Kendari, Indonesia, by examining

three interrelated aspects: forms of implementation, influencing factors, and educational impacts. The findings demonstrate that religious moderation is not limited to curricular representation but is primarily enacted through everyday pedagogical practices and school activities. A key contribution of this study lies in showing that moderation operates as a lived pedagogical process shaped by the interaction of classroom learning, extracurricular programs, institutional policy, and school culture. By integrating analysis of implementation processes, influencing conditions, and outcomes within a single empirical framework, this study offers a more holistic perspective than much of the existing research, which often treats these dimensions separately.

Regarding the first research question, the findings indicate that religious moderation is implemented through both intracurricular and extracurricular domains. In classroom settings, teachers integrate moderation values by contextualizing lesson materials, facilitating discussions that engage differences of opinion, promoting collaborative learning, and guiding students in resolving conflicts through principles of fairness and balance. These practices are reinforced through extracurricular programs such as scouting, social visits, leadership activities, and environmental initiatives, which provide experiential contexts in which students practice cooperation, responsibility, and respect for diversity in everyday interaction. In relation to the second research question, the study identifies several factors influencing implementation. Government policy embedded in the curriculum provides an important structural foundation and legitimacy for moderation-oriented programs, while collective commitment among teachers, students, and school staff

plays a decisive role in sustaining these practices. Supportive school policies, teacher role modeling, and collaborative participation contribute to creating an environment conducive to the internalization of moderation values. Concerning the third research question, the findings reveal that the implementation of religious moderation contributes to strengthened relationships, improved communication, greater openness to differences, and the development of a more peaceful and conducive learning environment. These outcomes indicate that moderation values influence not only students' attitudes but also the broader social climate of the school.

The implications of this study suggest that strengthening religious moderation requires more than curriculum revision. It also necessitates enhancing teachers' pedagogical competencies, fostering dialogic and collaborative learning environments, and cultivating inclusive school cultures that enable moderation values to be practiced repeatedly. This study contributes empirically by linking policy, pedagogy, and school culture in explaining how moderation values are formed and sustained, while contextually expanding the literature through evidence from eastern Indonesia. Nevertheless, the study is limited by its focus on a single city and a qualitative design. Future research should conduct comparative and longitudinal studies across diverse regions to better understand the sustainability and broader applicability of religious moderation practices in education.

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