

Integration of Religious Moderation Values in Social Studies Learning at Islamic Junior High Schools: An Analysis of the Social Construction of Reality

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Abstract

Religious moderation is a perspective and attitude that places respect for religious, racial, ethnic, cultural, and cultural diversity as a primary principle in social life. This attitude not only emphasizes the importance of mutual respect but also prioritizes balance in interactions between differences. The goal is to strengthen interfaith unity, prevent social conflict, and maintain the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia as a pluralistic nation. In its application at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Banyumas, the values of religious moderation are realized through an attitude of mutual respect, appreciation, and non-discrimination between each other. This application aims to strengthen national unity, foster tolerance among diversity, build a humanitarian attitude, and create a peaceful and harmonious life. In addition, students are also taught to recognize and understand each other's differences, both in terms of culture, ethnicity, race, and other backgrounds so that a complete unity is formed. This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach through interviews with the principal, social studies teachers, and students. The results show that MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas has integrated the values of religious moderation into the Madrasah curriculum so that students are accustomed to implementing attitudes of tolerance, mutual respect, and living side by side harmoniously amidst diversity.

Keywords

Integration; Moderation; Tolerance; Diversity



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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as a multicultural nation with diverse religions, faces serious challenges in maintaining tolerance and social harmony within its pluralistic society. This pluralistic reality requires an educational approach that goes beyond simply transmitting religious knowledge, but also instills moderate behavior and tolerance of differences from an early age through the formal education system. Islamic

Religious Education (PAI) is a key instrument in developing moderate and inclusive religious character in Indonesia's younger generation. However, intolerance and narrow understanding of religion are still found at various levels of formal education, including madrasas (Islamic schools), which requires strengthening the values of religious moderation through a systematic and comprehensive curriculum in the learning process (Adib, 2025).

The importance of understanding the values of religious moderation is reflected in Law Number 3 of 2017, which emphasizes that the implementation of the book system must be based on the principles of diversity, nationalism, togetherness, the archipelago, justice, mutual cooperation, and cultural values. Furthermore, Educational institutions also bear the responsibility of incorporating the values of moderation into the learning process. This is emphasized in the Ministry of National Education Regulation Number 23 of 2006 concerning Graduate Competency Standards, which states that students at every level of education are expected to respect and appreciate diversity of religion, culture, ethnicity, race, and economic groups, both within the school environment and in the surrounding community (Siti Nuhaliza, Hasan Asari, 2024).

Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) is one of the levels of education that makes an important contribution to building understanding and Students' responses to differences in social life. During this period, students begin to demonstrate increased critical thinking skills and growing social awareness, so that the educational process not only prioritizes academic outcomes, but also focuses on the formation of social, moral, and religious values, but also the positions of social studies teachers as those with a strategic role in fostering religious moderation in students.

The world of education in Indonesia currently faces the challenge of creating a harmonious society amidst diverse ethnicities, races, cultures, and beliefs. As a country with a pluralistic society and a Muslim majority, the implementation of religious moderation is a crucial strategy for maintaining harmonious relations between religious communities. Social studies instruction in Islamic Junior High Schools (MTs) focuses not only on providing material but also as a means of introducing students to the social, cultural, and religious diversity in their environment. By understanding these differences, students are expected to develop an attitude of tolerance, respect for others, and peaceful coexistence in society (Ramadhani, 2025).

This study aims to understand in depth the implementation of religious moderation values in the learning process, as well as to identify various aspects that

can facilitate or hinder the success of its implementation. Based on this background, this research is expected to contribute ideas to the character formation process at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Banyumas. Furthermore, the findings of this study are also expected to serve as a reference and input for teachers and madrasa administrators in creating a more inclusive, tolerant, and harmonious learning environment. By strengthening the value of religious moderation, students are expected to develop into individuals with good morals, open perspectives, and the ability to make positive contributions to community life.

Based on the identification of the background of the problem, this research is directed at integrating the values of religious moderation into the social studies learning process at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas. The scope of this research is limited to the Madrasah Tsanawiyah environment, is local in nature, and involves the principal, teachers, and students at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas as the main research subjects. Furthermore, this research is focused only on the context of the madrasah, so its scope is limited and does not include other educational institutions(Hulzana, 2024).

METHOD

This research is a field study based on its object of study. Data collection was conducted through various sources, such as school documents, observation results, interviews, a guidebook on religious moderation values, and teaching materials used in the teaching and learning process. In this context, researchers attempted to understand and examine the values of religious moderation as theoretically explained in existing guidelines. This research employed a descriptive qualitative method. In its implementation, researchers collected textual data related to the focus of the study, namely the application of religious moderation in social studies learning at Islamic junior high schools.

The data sources in this study include three elements, namely: (1) people, consisting of the Principal, Social Studies Teachers, and students at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas; (2) place, namely the research location such as classroom 8D and facilities and infrastructure at the school that supports the implementation of religious moderation values in Social Studies learning, including teacher teaching activities and student involvement in various school activities; (3) paper, namely documents such as teaching modules, report cards, and evaluation reports that describe the performance of educators and the development of students(Husna et al., 2023).

The data collection techniques in this study were observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted by observing the teaching and learning process and social interactions within the school environment, both inside and outside the classroom. Interviews were used to explore the informants' views and experiences regarding the integration of religious moderation values into the social studies learning process at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas. Documentation was used to strengthen the research data through teaching materials, learning modules, documentation, and other supporting elements. Data analysis in this study was conducted using an interactive analysis model that encompasses three main steps: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data processing was carried out continuously, from data collection to research completion. To ensure data validity, this study employed triangulation as a data source and technical triangulation by comparing data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation to obtain more accurate data validity from various informants (Destin Dwi Pangesti, 2026).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Meaning of Religious Moderation Integration

Indonesia's cultural, ethnic, national, and religious diversity is a gift from God that we should all protect and cherish. A pluralistic society fosters mutual respect and tolerance in everyday life. In this regard, religious moderation plays a crucial role in helping students understand how to act and behave wisely among differences. Therefore, the application of religious moderation values is a primary focus in classroom and school learning activities. Instilling these values can also be achieved through several strategies, one of which is the implementation of inclusive education. The term integration essentially implies the process of uniting various elements into an interrelated whole. In education, integration is understood as the effort to connect various educational components so that they operate harmoniously and support learning objectives. In this research, integration is intended as an effort to incorporate the values of religious moderation into the implementation of inclusive education to create a harmonious, peaceful, and harmonious educational environment among school members (Ajizah, 2023).

Religious moderation can be understood as a person's way of viewing, responding to, and practicing religious teachings in moderation. Moderation in religion is reflected in an understanding and practice of religious teachings that avoids extreme behavior, whether overly strict or overly lenient. Religious moderation embodies the principles of justice and balance. Justice is defined as an

attitude that is not excessively partial but oriented toward truth, while balance demonstrates a perspective and actions that uphold the values of humanity, equality, and justice in social life. Furthermore, religious moderation encourages all religious communities to adopt a moderate attitude toward differences and diversity. This attitude is reflected in the ability to interact, adapt, and coexist with various community groups without limiting oneself to exclusivity. Thus, religious moderation teaches the importance of mutual learning, mutual respect, and building harmonious social relationships amidst pluralistic life (Prakosa, 2022).

From an Islamic perspective, religious moderation is recognized through the concept of *al-wasathiyah*, a key characteristic of Islamic teachings. This term describes a lifestyle that prioritizes balance, moderation, and avoids extreme actions. *Wasathiyah* encompasses a moderate attitude, justice, and the best choices in life. Maintaining a middle ground is seen as a form of justice, as it avoids excessive bias toward one side or the other. The concept of *wasathiyah* also encompasses consistency in religious teachings, humility, and the ability to maintain harmony between worldly and afterlife affairs. In practice, a person is required to focus not only on spiritual aspects but also to pay attention to social needs and daily life in a balanced manner. Thus, the value of *wasathiyah* teaches Muslims to position themselves proportionally when facing various life challenges.

Adopting a moderate attitude in life will shape behavior that is free from fanaticism and excessive actions. M. Quraish Shihab explains that *wasathiyah* is a balanced attitude in living life in both worldly and hereafter, while still considering religious guidance and the real conditions faced. Therefore, we can understand religious moderation as a mindset and attitude that chooses the middle path, thus creating a harmonious, tolerant life that does not conflict with the principles of Islamic law (Fahmi, 2021). Thus, religious moderation means practicing religious teachings by prioritizing balance and harmony. Someone who applies this attitude is called a moderate individual. Moderation has a meaning equivalent to *tawassuth* (being in the middle) to be moderate and not taking excessive sides in facing differences of opinion, *i'tidal* (fair) To be fair and put something in its portion, *tawazun* (balanced) maintaining balance in social and religious life, *tasamuh* (tolerance) towards adherents of other religions and beliefs, national commitment that places national unity above group interests. In an effort to support the nation in overcoming radicalism among students, it is necessary to integrate the values of religious moderation (Sirojuddin, 2025).

In the context of educational institutions, the social construction of religious moderation occurs through three stages. First, externalization occurs through ongoing social interactions between teachers, students, families, and the community, fostering attitudes of tolerance, cooperation, and mutual respect, thus forming a shared social culture. Second, objectivation occurs when the values of religious moderation are institutionalized in school rules, learning, school culture, and community life, becoming a commonly recognized habit. Third, internalization occurs when individuals understand and interpret the values of religious moderation based on their social experiences. so that these values become a guideline for living daily life. Internalized values are then re-embodied in social actions as part of the subsequent externalization process (Nasruddin & Anshori, 2025).

Effective Integration Strategy at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas

Field findings at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas indicate the integration of religious moderation values into the social studies learning process, implicitly implemented through teachers' daily pedagogical practices. The principal emphasized that because all students share the same religion, the moderation that emerges focuses more on tolerance toward differences in religious groups or understanding within the religion itself. Mutual respect for differences in religious choices is treated as normal and unnecessary for controversy. This demonstrates that the construction of religious moderation in the madrasah is built through the normalization of tolerance and social acceptance within school life.

Teachers don't use the term "religious moderation" directly, but its values are still present in classroom interaction patterns, the choice of learning methods, and the management of classroom discussions. Internalization of the values of moderation is more effective through habituation than through conceptual explanation (Sure, 2025). Classroom learning that integrates the values of religious moderation successfully creates a conducive, calm, comfortable, and respectful learning environment. Through this teaching and learning process, students are encouraged to understand the importance of tolerance, respect for diversity, and maintaining harmony in communal life. Teachers also provide a space for open dialogue so that students can express their opinions, think critically, and gain a deeper understanding of differences.

Based on the results of the study, it shows that the implementation of the value of religious moderation at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas has succeeded in establishing a positive and inclusive school environment. By instilling the value of religious moderation, students from different backgrounds can live side by side with

mutual respect, cooperation, and tolerance among each other. MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas has integrated the values of religious moderation into the teaching and learning process by creating a culture of tolerance among students. By respecting differences with others. Thus, students understand that everyone has the freedom to practice their beliefs. And accept all the weaknesses and strengths of all students without discrimination. In addition, in daily interactions within the school environment, students provide support and demonstrate an attitude of mutual tolerance towards each other towards existing differences, whether in terms of opinion, religion, group, or learning ability.

The role of the madrasa committee and parents is evident in their support for community outreach activities. Student community service programs, such as distributing rice and cooking oil to the surrounding community regardless of the recipient's background, demonstrate the concrete implementation of the value of religious moderation in social life. The committee's and parents' support for these activities demonstrates the synergy between the school, family, and community in fostering the values of caring, tolerance, and humanity in students. Overall, these interviews demonstrate that religious moderation in madrasas is constructed through religious habits, tolerance of internal differences, guidance on exclusive behavior, collaboration with religious institutions, and social activities that instill humanitarian values. From a social construction perspective, the value of religious moderation is formed through ongoing social interactions within the madrasa, becoming a shared culture accepted and practiced by the school community (Hanif et al., 2016).

Activities to integrate the values of moderation are internalized through religious habituation activities such as praying together before starting lessons, reciting the Koran, reciting the Asmaul Husana (Asmaul Husana), and performing the Dhuha prayer. These activities are carried out collectively without discriminating between students' social backgrounds. These findings demonstrate that madrasas view strengthening religious moderation as a crucial element in building religious character and a harmonious social life within the school.



Figure 1. Dhuha Prayer Activities

The learning approach applied in the context of religious moderation at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas is designed to provide a global classroom environment, so that every student feels accepted, recognized, and appreciated without any differences in treatment. In learning practice, the externalization process is carried out using participatory learning methods, such as group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and case study solutions. Teachers choose these methods because they are considered effective in training students to respect others' perspectives, appreciate differences, and foster an open attitude in social interactions. Furthermore, the use of contextual examples close to students' lives makes the value of religious moderation easier for students to understand and internalize. The process of externalizing the values of religious moderation also occurs through social relationships between teachers and students during the learning process. Therefore, the teacher's role is not merely as a transmitter of material, but also as a companion, guiding and directing students when intolerant views or tendencies toward extremism emerge. The teacher chose a persuasive and dialogical approach, providing gradual understanding and opening up discussion so students could explore different perspectives. This approach demonstrates that the social studies learning process focuses not only on mastering knowledge but also on developing social attitudes and developing moderate character.

For example, teachers might raise the issue of cooperation within the school or community to encourage students to think about the importance of creating a harmonious life amidst diversity. By using contextual methods, students not only stop at understanding the concept of moderation intellectually but also begin to see the relevance of this value in their own social lives. However, teachers also face several obstacles in the process of externalizing the value of religious moderation. The influence of social media and the social environment is a major challenge because it can influence students' perspectives on differences. Furthermore, some students still find it difficult to accept different perspectives. This situation indicates

that externalizing the value of religious moderation is a dynamic process and requires ongoing support from the school, family, and community.

Teachers encourage open discussion and dialogue in the classroom so that students have the opportunity to express their opinions regarding religious moderation. Furthermore, teachers create a safe and comfortable learning environment so that students can discuss their beliefs and religious experiences without fear of ridicule or negative judgment. In addition to discussions, teachers utilize contextual case studies as a learning tool so that students can connect the values of religious moderation to everyday life. Through analysis of various cases related to religious issues, students can deepen their understanding of applying moderation in dealing with diverse and complex situations.



Figure 2. Learning Approach in Class

In classroom practice, social studies teachers focus not only on delivering theoretical material but also on creating a learning process that encourages students to understand and cultivate the values of religious moderation through social interactions. The methods used by social studies teachers include group discussions, Q&A sessions, and case studies to explore social issues related to diversity. Teachers utilize social studies materials such as Indonesian cultural diversity, social interaction, and social conflict as a medium to instill the values of tolerance, mutual respect, and cooperation. Group discussions encourage students to listen carefully, appreciate diversity, and express ideas politely and non-dominantly. This indicates that the classroom becomes a social space where students learn to develop moderate attitudes through direct interaction experiences.

The objectification of the value of religious moderation is also evident in changes in student attitudes during the learning process. Social studies teachers assess the success of internalizing moderation through student behavior during discussions and group work. Students who are able to listen to others' opinions,

refrain from teasing their peers, and collaborate with anyone demonstrate that the values of tolerance and moderation are beginning to become part of classroom social habits. Thus, the value of moderation is no longer merely a concept taught by teachers but has become a social reality accepted and practiced by students.

On the other hand, when intolerant views emerged during class discussions, the social studies teacher employed a persuasive approach by gradually providing understanding and opening up dialogue between students. The teacher also engages other students to present different perspectives to foster mutual understanding within the classroom. This demonstrates that the objectification of the value of moderation occurs through a dynamic social interaction process, where students learn to negotiate the meaning of differences and build a shared understanding of the importance of tolerance in social life. Overall, the interview results show that the identification of religious moderation values in social studies learning is realized through participatory learning methods, classroom social interactions, the use of contextual examples, and the cultivation of mutual respect in the learning process. Social studies learning becomes an intersubjective space that allows students to collectively build a shared understanding of the importance of tolerance, cooperation, and moderation in social life (Ajizah, 2023).

The objectivation process is further strengthened through evaluation of student attitudes during learning. Teachers assess the success of religious moderation based on student behavior, such as respecting the opinions of peers, refraining from teasing, and being able to cooperate with others. Assessment of these social behaviors demonstrates that the value of moderation has become a shared standard in classroom interactions. This habituation is further strengthened through the role of the principal and teacher, who provide concrete examples of the importance of tolerance. Within the school environment, relationships between teachers, between teachers and students, and among students demonstrate mutual respect for religious and class differences, demonstrating an awareness of the importance of maintaining harmony.

During learning activities, students are taught to respect each other, not to disrupt religious practices, and not to discriminate against friends based on their religious backgrounds. Furthermore, teachers set an example by refraining from teasing each other, vilifying other religions, or spreading false information or hoaxes. The instillation of tolerance must also be carried out continuously during the learning process when teachers deliver material. These ongoing efforts ensure that tolerance is deeply and sustainably embedded in students (Pahlawi & Hanif, 2025).

Extracurricular activities such as the Student Council (OSIS), the Islamic Student Council (Rohis), and the Scouts (Pramuka) are effective platforms for instilling the values of moderation. These activities involve students from diverse backgrounds in social activities, such as community service. These activities not only provide direct experience in practicing tolerance but also foster an awareness that differences are not threats, but rather riches that should be valued. Through intense cross-group interactions, students learn to understand others' perspectives and develop empathy (Umami, 2025).

The results of the study indicate that students who participated in the social studies learning process that integrated the values of religious moderation experienced significant changes in attitudes in carrying out their daily lives, both at school and in the wider community. These changes were not only visible in the aspect of understanding, but also reflected in the social behavior that they implemented continuously and consistently. One important aspect that emerged was an increase in mutual respect for friends who have different beliefs, where students showed more open acceptance without any discrimination or exclusion. In addition, students also showed better appreciation for the diversity of traditions, cultures, and customs that exist around them. This diversity is no longer considered something foreign or causing social distance, but is understood as part of the social reality that needs to be appreciated and interpreted. This shows that social studies learning has contributed to shaping the perspective of students who are more accepting of the diversity that exists in society. Thus, the results of this study demonstrate real success in achieving the goal of integrating religious moderation values into social studies learning at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas. This description provides a comprehensive overview of how the madrasa is able to integrate religious moderation values into social studies learning, resulting in producing students who are tolerant and respectful of differences.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, the application of religious moderation values in social studies learning at MTs Negeri 1 Banyumas is carried out through a social construction process that includes three stages, namely externalization, objectivation, and internalization. In the externalization stage, social studies teachers implement values such as tolerance, justice, balance, and respect for differences through lesson plans and interactions that occur during teaching and learning activities. The objectivation stage is seen when these values are applied in real terms through

discussions, group work, case studies, and the habituation of mutual respect in the classroom environment. Furthermore, the internalization process is seen from changes in students' attitudes who are starting to be able to apply the values of religious moderation in everyday life, such as accepting differences with an open attitude, working together without differentiating backgrounds, and resolving problems through deliberation and peace.

This research shows that social studies learning makes a significant contribution to shaping students' character, developing a balanced, non-extremist, open-minded, and respectful attitude toward diversity. The integration of religious moderation values is not only realized through theoretical delivery but also reinforced through teacher role models, madrasa culture, the instilling of tolerance, and the application of learning methods that encourage student activity and participation. These conditions make the madrasa environment a social space that supports the formation of mutual respect and a harmonious life amidst diversity.

However, this study still has limitations, as it focused on only one madrasa with a limited number of informants. Therefore, the findings of this study still cannot describe the overall condition of the madrasah. Therefore, further research is expected to involve more educational institutions with more diverse characteristics to obtain more comprehensive and in-depth results. Furthermore, future research could also expand the study of the application of religious moderation values to other subjects and examine the sustainability of its influence on student attitudes and behavior in the long term.

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