

## Diversity and Urgency of Religious Moderation Education According to The Public Perception

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study aims to analyze the public's perception of religious moderation in Indonesia amid diversity and to measure the role of education in instilling the values of religious moderation in Indonesia. To answer these objectives, this research uses qualitative methods, while data collection techniques are carried out through interviews, documentation studies, and the distribution of questionnaires through Google Forms. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion, and data validity checking was done by triangulation. The findings of this study indicate that all elements of the profession are aligned with the internalization of the values of religious moderation in education, both in terms of curriculum subject matter and strengthening teachers' understanding of the concept of religious moderation in Indonesia. The limitation of this study is that researchers have yet to conduct empirical research related to moderation education on the object of research. This research implies that moderation education in educational institutions in Indonesia needs to be expanded, considering the Indonesian state, which consists of various ethnicities, tribes, and cultures. This research is original in terms of the data found, and the analysis carried out, which shows that moderation education according to public perception is very important to be developed, especially in Indonesia.*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis persepsi masyarakat terhadap moderasi beragama di Indonesia di tengah keberagaman dan mengukur peran pendidikan dalam menanamkan nilai-nilai moderasi beragama di Indonesia. Untuk menjawab tujuan tersebut, penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif, sedangkan teknik pengumpulan datanya dilakukan melalui

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wawancara, studi dokumentasi, dan penyebaran kuesioner melalui Google Forms. Data dianalisis melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan, serta pemeriksaan keabsahan data dilakukan dengan triangulasi. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa seluruh elemen profesi selaras dengan internalisasi nilai-nilai moderasi beragama dalam pendidikan, baik dari segi materi pelajaran kurikulum maupun penguatan pemahaman guru terhadap konsep moderasi beragama di Indonesia. Keterbatasan penelitian ini adalah peneliti belum melakukan penelitian empiris terkait moderasi pendidikan pada objek penelitian. Penelitian ini mengandung makna bahwa pendidikan moderasi pada lembaga pendidikan di Indonesia perlu diperluas mengingat negara Indonesia yang terdiri dari berbagai suku, suku, dan budaya. Penelitian ini original dari segi data yang ditemukan, dan analisis yang dilakukan menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan moderasi menurut persepsi masyarakat sangat penting untuk dikembangkan khususnya di Indonesia.

**Keywords:** *Religious Education, Moderation, Tolerance, Multiculturalism, Pluralism*

*Received: Nov 20, 2023; Revised: March 5, 2024; Accepted: April 15, 2024*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation can be defined as something that is in the middle *wasathiyah* or not extreme to the right and not to the extreme left (Ritonga, Wahyuni, & Novigator, 2023). This shows that religious moderation is understanding and implementing spiritual teachings reasonably and rationally (Bakir & Othman, 2017) to avoid extreme or excessive behaviour when implementing them (Liu et al., 2017). Moderate perspective and character in religion are very important for a plural and multicultural society like Indonesia. Only then can diversity be addressed wisely, and tolerance and justice can be realized (Kawangung, 2019).

All Indonesian people must understand religious moderation as a shared commitment to maintain a complete balance (Girivirya et al., 2022). In every region in Indonesia, there are many differences in ethnicity, culture, tradition and ethnicity, so we must be able to accept each other's differences, be willing to listen to the opinions of others and be willing to learn from each other to implement the skill of not accentuating existing differences (Roslidah & Komara, 2017). In short, religious moderation is closely related to togetherness and tolerance between people (Husna & Thohir, 2020). The heritage of our ancestors and founding fathers in Indonesia teaches us to understand each other and feel each other is different from us (Albantani & Madkur, 2018).

Lately, the context of religious life in Indonesia has received attention from various parties within and abroad (Mandaville & Hamid, 2018). One of the causes of this reality is the emergence of social conflicts motivated by unpreparedness in accepting different religious understandings (Whitehouse et al., 2019). Starting from cases of religious blasphemy, destruction of houses of worship, hate speech on social media and mutual discredit between one community and another (Mozafari, Farahbakhsh, & Crespi, 2020). The proliferation of these phenomena inevitably sharpens religious sentiments in Indonesia (Mietzner, 2020). As a result, harmony and a sense of kinship as a nation became tenuous, and groups emerged based on their respective religions and beliefs. So,

it is necessary to teach the values of religious moderation in educational activities to have a comprehensive understanding that can accommodate and rectify ideas contrary to the culture of living together for the sustainability of religious life.

One of the obstacles to sowing harmony between religions is the lack of knowledge about diversity and the lack of awareness of tolerance among religious people (Vilà Baños, Sánchez-Martí, & Rubio Hurtado, 2020). This happens because educational institutions in the community, especially non-formal and informal ones, do not provide material on differences in religion and belief (Affeldt, Tolppanen, Aksela, & Eilks, 2017). Each educational institution emphasizes the truth claim of its religion while discrediting the truth of other faiths (Demirel Ucan & Wright, 2019).

On the other hand, there has also been a shift in the values of tolerance and religious harmony in Indonesia (Utomo & Wasino, 2020). In the context of a pluralistic Indonesian society, religious educational institutions must play a role in maintaining harmony in plurality (Winia, Harsananda, Maheswari, Juniarta, & Primayana, 2020). The role of education is seen as strategic in caring for and providing education to students through subject matter that is accommodated in the school curriculum (Zein, 2017). Intolerance and indifference to the realization of religious moderation are believed to have originated from the students' weak understanding of the importance of being moderate and living side by side with other religions.

The shift from a peaceful attitude to intolerance that occurs in society today is a big task that all parties, including the community, must complete. Educational institutions, both formal and non-formal education, are also factors that support the intense awareness of respecting plurality or even become counterproductive to it (Nugroho, 2018). Moreover, there has been an assumption that some educational institutions in Indonesia also experience conservatism, so they are less pro-plurality (Mietzner & Muhtadi, 2018). This issue cannot be allowed to continue to deepen, but we must immediately find a solution as a joint solution to maintain diversity in Indonesia (Li, 2021).

The world of education, whose duties and functions give birth to professional and educated personnel, has a big responsibility to be able to play a role in helping the government resolve cases of intolerance in all its forms. This is because universities are at the forefront of the delivery and development of science and technology. Do not let universities become a burden on the government because, consciously or unconsciously, they have given birth to cadres who have *ifrath* and *tafrith* thoughts in all aspects of life, especially in religious life (Hasbiyallah, Sulhan, & Khoiruddin, 2017). Moreover, nowadays, cases of violence in the name of religion are often encountered, where the actors are graduates of specific universities (M. A. Abdullah, 2017).

The rise of content that voices issues of radicalism, intolerance, counter-culture and religion through social media is a new reading consumption that often appears (Berlianti, Atika, & Nadeak, 2019). Undeniably, people with bad intentions use easy access to social networks to plunge into the harmonious and peaceful nature of the Indonesian people. This is also one of the warnings that the government and we must heed as a moderate religious community (Bourchier, 2019) to continue strengthening the ranks and not be quickly provoked and clashed by people or groups in the name of religion.

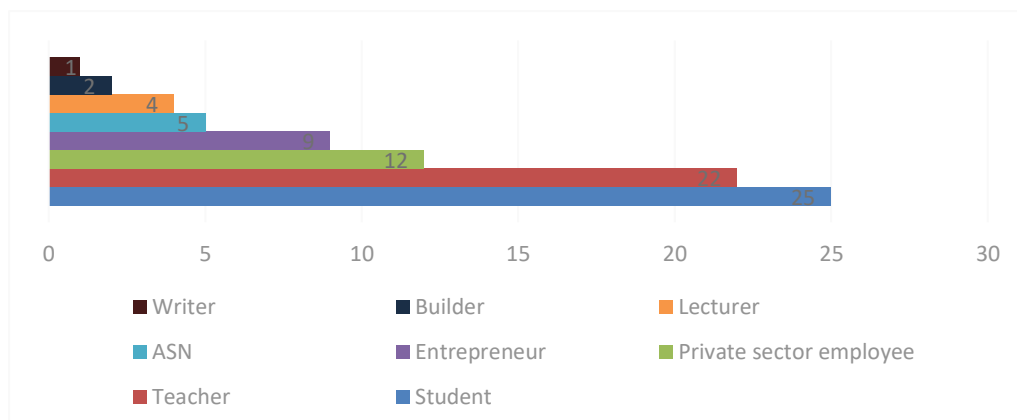
The importance of studies on religious moderation has been in the spotlight of scholars in Indonesia and abroad. This is evidenced by the large amount of literature discussing the issue of religious moderation as the output of their research. As research results

show, Nasir and Rijal state that the educational process in schools and universities is a vehicle for inculcating the values of religious moderation in students (Nasir & Rijal, 2021). Research findings Rashid et al. state that one of the advantages of moderate Muslims is that they can play a role in the interests of international relations and have the opportunity to promote the practice of moderate character in global politics (Ab Rashid et al., 2020). Even more surprising, the results of research by Indra et al. (Indra, Ritonga, & Santosa, 2023) reveal that the concept of jihad, which has a cruel meaning, can be transformed into humanism, which involves working hard to improve welfare, accepting pluralism, inclusivism, tolerance, and rational action.

The above research has not revealed the public perception of religious moderation in educational institutions. Therefore, research is needed on public perceptions of religious moderation amid Indonesia's diverse religions, cultures, and ethnicities. On that basis, the formulation of the research problem is focused on exploring public perceptions of the values of religious moderation and the role of education in realizing the character of a moderate society amid plurality and multiculturalism in Indonesia. Thus, the study's results can provide a concrete approach to religious moderation as the right solution for the community to maintain inter-religious harmony in Indonesia.

## II. METHOD

Based on the problems and problem formulations described above, the appropriate method for this research is qualitative (Moloeng, 2014). This descriptive study aims to describe and explain in detail the problem under study (Sugiyono, 2017), where the perception of the Indonesian people towards moderate attitudes toward religion and the role of education in creating religious moderation for the Indonesian people are described by the responses and answers of the respondents. Existing facts define data. Therefore, factual, systematic, and accurate data descriptions are the basis of this research and qualitative research in general. The purposive sampling technique combined with convenience sampling was used to determine the sample in this study. In its operation, the researcher first determines the criteria for respondents who can be designated informants based on the availability of elements and the ease of obtaining research data (Sugiyono, 2017). The following is an overview of the total respondents taken from various professions, as many as 80 respondents spread across multiple regions of Indonesia.



*Figure 1. respondents from various professions*

Data were collected through interview techniques assisted by Google Forms and distributed to all respondents in this study. The development of question items from this interview consists of 2 aspects: *first*, the community's or respondents' perception about the current moderation of religion in Indonesia. This first question will describe how the Indonesian people understand the existing religious moderation and their attitude towards the religious diversity that exists in Indonesia. *Second*, about the role of education in creating a moderate society in religion. The data will explain in detail the urgency of education for religious moderation and how education contributes to creating a religiously moderated society.

Research data is analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions. Triangulation techniques determine the validity of the data (Moloeng, 2014); after the data is collected, it is analyzed critically, briefly, and clearly. The research conducts primary and secondary data classification by reducing the data. Furthermore, the researcher presents the existing data by the formulation and limitations of this study. They continue by concluding as a whole from the results of the study.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Perceptions of Current Religious Moderation in Indonesia

The diversity of ethnicity, language, race, and religion in Indonesia often leads to conflicts, especially those related to religious understanding; therefore, religious moderation must be developed in Indonesia (Fahri & Zainur, 2019). Indonesia's multicultural, multiethnic conditions will be a threat when an exclusive attitude toward religion is highlighted; groups that only recognize the truth and safety of groups will expand internal religious conflicts and even between religions (Akhmadi, 2019). In other literature, it is revealed that when Indonesian people can apply moderate religious values, religious diversity, and multiculturalism, once they are a threat, they will become a significant capital and opportunity to realize an advanced Indonesia (Ropi, 2019).

After several efforts made by the government, both central, regional, and other authorities in disseminating and reaching to the community about how the community must have a moderate attitude toward religion, which includes several indicators such as tolerance, commitment to nationalism, anti-violence, and attitudes towards accept the local culture (Harto, 2021). It is clear and significant that some respondents have begun to understand how religious moderation is applied in Indonesia. Several respondents argued that their understanding of religious moderation was as follows:

*"Moderation or tawasuth if in Arabic, I happen to be among nahdyiyin who are required to follow the pillars of sauyunan in the worship of their respective religions, not to berate, insult, and force other people to convert to our religion (laa ikroha fiddin). As for moderation, we need to apply this religion in our socializing in Indonesia. Whether it's social between schools and religions, I personally strongly condemn radicalism and terrorism in this world." (Interview with Iman, Head of the Gontor Islamic Boarding School, 27 January 2022).*

Based on this opinion, the attitude of the respondents who already understand the meaning of moderation in religion is evident. This opinion implies how the Indonesian people should respond to differences by not coercing and respecting their respective faith owners. Shihab believes this moderate attitude exists in the middle but remains a

tug of war on both sides. This means that someone moderate in his religion tries to embrace both sides and not let it go (Shihab, 2019). In Arabic, it is known as *al-wasathiyah*, which means *tawassuth* and being in the middle (Saifuddin, 2019).

Every religion teaches religious moderation to its adherents, and it is known that every religion is inseparable from extreme understanding. Therefore, in Christianity, moderation is also instilled in Christians to mediate extreme understanding and interpretation of Christian teachings (Reck, 2012). Likewise, in the Catholic Church, religious moderation is understood as a "communion of faith, hope and love", i.e. these three have in common and have the same basis in faith (Muhammad, 2013). Whereas Hindus have implemented religious moderation for thousands of years, this practice was carried out to overcome religious turmoil with the nature of the times, which was unavoidable and became a historical necessity. Meanwhile, among Hindus, religious moderation strengthens individual awareness in practising religious teachings (Lipner, 2006). Other opinions regarding the implementation of the meaning of tolerance itself among religious communities are as follows:

*"The attitude of respect and cooperation among human beings even though they are of different religions, because according to history, when respecting and helping people are more able to preach and be accepted with open arms, namely discussing. Because history proves if we bully their god, then the next victim to be bullied is our go. So, the Qur'an explains that, and it is part of religious history." (Interview with Wanda, 27 January 2022) "Religious moderation is a conception that can build a tolerant and harmonious attitude to strengthen the unity and integrity of the nation," he said. In my opinion, religious moderation in Indonesia is to maintain harmony and harmony." (Interview with dian, 27 January 2022).*

*"Tolerance in terms of adab/morals and not in terms of aqidah. If it is related to habluminannas, tolerance is obligatory without regard to differences in religion, ethnicity, or race. As for habluminallah, it is adjusted to each other's beliefs and does not force others to be by what we believe." (Interview with Mila, 27 January 2022).*

As for some of the respondents' opinions above, it seems that they already understand how, as a society, they have an attitude of tolerance towards several other religions. Being a person and citizen who adheres to tolerance is necessary and must be spread in Indonesia; this view is based on the motto of "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*", which means that although there are many differences, they are still united. Togetherness and unity will not be possible without being based on readiness to appreciate differences and the ability to accept differences. Essential human nature requires a safe, peaceful life without friction; in reality, violence based on religion still occurs, such as commotion and even criminal acts by damaging religious facilities.

Moderation and tolerance are not difficult things to realize; the most important thing is not to justify one's group without accepting the religious beliefs and understandings of others; in Islam, for example, some groups practice *tahlilan*, *yasinan*, then groups that are not in the same direction as this group should not unilaterally blame (Sobhan, Ritonga, & Kholidah, 2023). This form of tolerance is further strengthened by the policy that there is no compulsion in religion. Prophet Muhammad and other scholars are only a giver of news, not coercion (Fahri & Zainur, 2019). This tolerance attitude certainly positively impacts religious communities and society, preventing violence and other issues. As can be seen from the opinion of the respondents expressed about anti-violence:

*"The perspective of attitude, behaviour and always taking the middle, and acting fairly and not extreme in religion, including not destroying houses of worship and disturbing worship of other religions is one of the attitudes to prevent violence" (Interview with Iwan, 27 January 2022).*

Religion must face violence not because violence is difficult to control and must be subdued but because religion, as the final statement of the meaning of life, must always teach virtue and wisdom in dealing with chaos (Arifinsyah, Andy, & Damanik, 2020). It is for this reason that religion then assumes the task of creating an order that cannot be denied, as well as affirming the meaning of life, even though that religion then legitimizes the use of violence (Sainuddin, 2016). Violence is more repressive and contains an immoral element because it always prioritizes coercion of the will of others, which means this is also a violation of the sense of freedom in social interaction (Davids, 2017). As in Surah Al-Mumtahanah: 28 explains:

لَا يَنْهَىٰ اللَّهُ عَنِ الدِّينِ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَا يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ { ٨ } إِنَّمَا يَنْهَىٰ اللَّهُ عَنِ الدِّينِ قَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَن تَوَلَّوهُمْ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ { ٩ } .

*"Allah does not forbid you to do good and to do justice to those who do not fight you in religious matters and do not expel you from your hometown. Verily, Allah loves those who act justly. Verily Allah only forbids you to make them your friends, those who fight you in religious matters and expel you from your hometown and help (others) to expel you. Whoever takes them as friends, they are the wrongdoers." (QS. al-Mumtahanah [60] verses 8-9).*

Through this verse according to Ibn Katsir, this verse is information on the permissibility of doing good to followers of other religions, that Allah does not forbid Muslims from doing good to non-Muslims who do not fight them, and Allah does not forbid them to do good with adherents of other religions. Any form, as long as it has nothing to do with matters of *aqidah* and worship. Fahri and Zainur explained that instilling this attitude towards other religions' followers is certainly not easy (Fahri & Zainur, 2019). However, moderate and inclusive religious education can eradicate complex attitudes or radicalization in the name of religion. Moreover (Aminah, 2016) said that the government's role is also vital to overcoming other acts of violence through several efforts such as strengthening policies, increasing boarding education institutions, increasing media use, changing the pattern of deradicalism, and improving the community's economy. Another essential thing to prevent attitudes that damage the unity and integrity of the Indonesian nation is to maintain the ideology, namely *Pancasila* (Subagyo, 2020). As a state ideology, Pancasila must be saved by all country components. Its values are divinity, humanity, unity, deliberation and consensus, and justice, which must be taught, understood, lived and practised by all components of the nation of society (Ridwan, 2017). By instilling these values in life and as a nation and state, it has become a community committed to its own country.

A person's love for the country depends on his national insight on looking inside and outside as a nation with ideology. In this case, national insight is also influenced by the quality of a sense of nationalism, eagerness to maintain nationality, and the establishment of a sense of nationalism and patriotism (Nisvilyah, 2013). Everyone who loves the nation and state of Indonesia will feel sad when there is an understanding that

is not in harmony with the four pillars of nationality (Ridwan, 2017). Citizens who understand moderation correctly also feel sad when traitors and abuse of authority appear about this content abuse in the name of religion, so they will always try to find solutions to every problem (Japar, Sahid, & Fadhillah, 2019). One form of commitment to the Indonesian nation, a respondent revealed that:

*"Refusing organizations and preventing people from following teachings that are oriented towards radicalism, terrorism, and contrary to Pancasila are manifestations of a commitment to Indonesian nationality."*

The law and philosophy of the Indonesian nation must be a reference for the Indonesian people. Obedience to law and philosophy is a concrete manifestation of our living up to the values of Pancasila as the ideology of the state (Salter, Sharp, & Chen, 2013). The State of Indonesia is a multi-religious country; all religions are allowed to enter, unifying and inviting people to enter religion; they must not force themselves and force others, let alone harm and disturb others. Moreover, the right to freedom of religion is regulated in Article 129, paragraph (1) and (2) of the 1945 Constitution paragraph (1), which reads: "The state is based on the One Godhead." This means that the Indonesian people believe in God Almighty. Paragraph (2) reads: "The state guarantees the independence of every resident to embrace his religion and to worship according to his religion and belief." The existence of religion in Indonesia has been ratified by the state and guaranteed by the state itself.

Another thing that must be done according to research data is that several respondents revealed that Indonesia has many different tribes and traditions. If the tradition is wrong/wrong but does not conflict with their respective religions, it must be preserved (Van Tongeren, Raad, Mcintosh, & Pae, 2013). This is a form of acceptance of local culture or traditions. The opinions of the respondents are as follows:

*"Indonesia is a rich country, rich in natural products and rich in culture. It should be remembered that Indonesia's independence is not necessarily only fought for by a group of Ummah; it is true that Muslims are more dominant in the struggle for the independence of the Republic of Indonesia, but as a good country and appreciate a struggle, we still appreciate and give appreciation to some of the other people who took part in the struggle—the independence of the Republic of Indonesia" (Interview with Ahmad, 27 January 2022).*

Apart from differences in religion. Cultural diversity and religion are the pride of the Indonesian nation. It is said that Indonesia is a nation with various cultures, religions, and tribes. This multiculturalism will be a proud part when it can be appropriately managed through the growth of moderation and tolerance in every citizen. Therefore, moderate education is an integral part of realizing the Indonesian nation as a developed nation in the future (Karmadi, 2007). Culture is a way of life created and shared by a group of people and passed down from generation to generation. Culture comprises many complex elements, including religious and political institutions, customs, language, tools, clothing, architecture, and works of art. Language, like culture, is an inseparable part of humans, so many people tend to consider it hereditary. One can communicate with people from different cultures and adapt to their differences, proving that culture can be learned. Culture is a comprehensive way of life (Harlan, 1983). Culture is complex, abstract and vast. Many aspects of culture also determine communicative behaviour. However, in reality, not all cultures conform to the teachings of a particular religion.



## **The Role of Education in Religious Moderation**

Education is present as the primary foundation for the realization of the values of religious moderation in Indonesia (Alviana & Pandin, 2021). Education based on the love of peace presents an attitude of tolerance for differences and provides the freedom to use religious labels according to their respective beliefs (Ma'arif, Sebastian, & Sholihan, 2020). The presence of education is expected to be the foundation for strengthening the values of moderation for students. The participation of the Indonesian people, who have a strong desire to establish a religion-based educational institution (Roqib, 2021), needs to be emphasized to make the principle of moderation a principle of education.

In general, the informants proposed three main principles to build an understanding of religious moderation in Indonesia: *first*, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) lessons in every Islamic educational institution are substantially directed at the formation of moderate Islamic characters; *second*, exemplary teachers and supervisors in promoting moderation in every activity and behaviour both when teaching in the classroom or outside the school; *third*, the formation of an environment that supports the realization of moderate Islam both in the realm of formal education and in non-formal education such as in religious lectures, *tabligh akbar*, and social activities. This principle is in line with the guidelines, which emphasize that religious moderation education is pursued based on the example shown by the teacher as a role model for students (Albrecht, 2018).

Apart from that, the informant also stated that an attitude of religious moderation should be built among the community through the stages of in-depth discussion. Discussion activities are essential, especially for students, lecturers, and teachers, so that their understanding of the concept of religious moderation deepens. Students are asked to look at case phenomena related to religious moderation, intolerance, understanding radicalism, acts affiliated with terrorism, and so on. Through these cases, it is hoped that students can explore better and counteract ideas contrary to religious moderation in society (Billingsley & Hurd, 2019).

Students' understanding of religious moderation education is seen as a unit of value that cannot be separated from students' degrees as social control. Students have a big responsibility to control the realization of a harmonious and peaceful life in society (Soares & Sudarsana, 2018), and the same responsibility is also for the community to maintain harmony in the environment and accept differences between other religious communities. The following are excerpts of student answers when asked about the concept of religious moderation:

*"Respect each other, respect differences and maintain harmony because Indonesia is a country with Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, freed by many fighters from various races, ethnicities, and religions. Different. Therefore, we must uphold each other's tolerance attitude with the means and provisions of our respective religions" (Interview with Ramadhan, January 25, 2022).*

*"Religious moderation is a concept that can build tolerance and harmony to strengthen the unity and integrity of the nation's elements. I believe religious moderation in Indonesia maintains harmony and peace." (Interview with Iman, January 2, 2022).*

*"Religious moderation is important to social and state life in a pluralistic Indonesia. Moderation can build a spirit of mutual tolerance and mutual help to build peace.*

*Without being inclined to the extreme right or left, moderation invites us to live a balanced religious life by prioritizing the concept of rahmatan lil' alamin, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad when he lived in Medina. Different religions, ethnicities, cultures, and races are allowed but must respect and help each other". (Interview with Karisma, January 26, 2022)*

The excerpt from the interview with the informant above conveys the beauty of practising a religion based on love and compassion. People with love and kindness will try to bring peace and avoid division (Lewis & King, 2019). In Islam, religious moderation is shown through love of peace. Islam justifies the peace of a Muslim with a non-Muslim as well as a form of religious moderation based on the provisions of the *shari'a* (Mercier-dalphon, 2021). One form of religious moderation taught in Islam is through the love of peace. The permissibility of peace between a Muslim and a non-Muslim is, of course, based on the provisions stipulated in the *shari'a*; Allah says: *"If they humble themselves to make peace, then humble them and put their trust in Allah. Verily, He is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing."* (Surah Al-Anfal: 16).

The informant admitted that he was disappointed with the school curriculum, which did not address national issues regarding strengthening religious moderation. The school room is a breeding ground for the seeds of nationalism, fostering the values of multiculturalism, spreading religious messages peacefully, and campaigning for messages of love for humanity (Kingston, 2019). The critical points above are indicators that must be included in the school curriculum as the government's encouragement to implement the values of religious moderation in Indonesia.

In addition to these points, there are at least three aspects that can be taken as strategic steps by the government: *first*, religious moderation is made a national issue in every government institution, every program implemented adheres to the principle of religious moderation, this is the government's seriousness in mainstreaming values. Moderation among religious people in Indonesia. *Second*, schools and formal and non-formal educational institutions should be extensions of the government campaigning for religious moderation to strengthen human values, harmony values, and values of peace and *third*, developing social media, websites, and other digital platforms as sources of information containing religious moderation literacy so that moderation literacy is easily accessible without being hindered by space and time.

The four strategic steps fought for in national issues as government programs will later become a guide for everyone to organize a peaceful, harmonious life and suppress the emergence of conflicts between religions and groups in this archipelago. Conflicts with religious backgrounds can happen to groups or groups within the same religion but can also occur to groups of different faiths. Usually, conflicts with religious backgrounds begin with selfish attitudes and feelings of being the most right (Trip, Bora, Marian, Halmajan, & Drugas, 2019), blaming each other for the interpretations of other schools, and closing themselves to the interpretations and religious opinions of others.

In religious moderation, it is necessary to develop a religious education design and strengthen multiple or multi-literacies to broaden perspectives. Through the development of diversity literacy and human literacy, this is one way to deepen the role of religion. The importance of developing religious and human literacy is used to see religion as more profound and richer than various kinds of Islamic literature.

*"The role of education is seen as important for religious moderation learning. One of the informants said that the education domain should contain moderate notions, "the*

*role of education in religious moderation is important from an early age, starting with family education followed by school educators to tertiary institutions. This is done so that students avoid the wrong things related to religion" (Interview with Abdul Razak, January 25, 2022).*

Implementing the spirit of nationalism and love for the homeland must be genuinely embedded at all levels of education, whether it is religion-based education or general-style educational institutions. Cultivating an attitude of nationalism is common for the younger generation to create a spirit of patriotism and submission to the state (Murdiono & Wuryandani, 2021). Through education, students are expected to feel proud to be part of the citizens of the Indonesian homeland, where they grow and develop into fully human beings, not even more proud of the culture of other countries (Ismawati, 2018). Indonesians may like artists from different countries and be proud of their products, but they must love and admire Indonesian culture more.

Educational institutions need to educate students about the history of the founders of the Republic of Indonesia and introduce them to multiculturalism in Indonesia so that they can more easily appreciate and accept all differences. All education stakeholders must teach their students how to protect Indonesia from the threat of radicalism, terrorism, intolerance, and so on. Caring for Indonesia can also be done using social media platforms by spreading messages of peace (S. D. A. Abdullah & Alfatra, 2019).

Incorporating the values of moderation in education is part of efforts to strengthen Indonesia. Informants support all forms of efforts made to internalize religious moderation in education. The following are statements from informants supporting religious moderation in educational institutions:

**Table 1. Position of moderation in education**

No	Professional Classification	Excerpts of Answers
1.	MR/Students	Religious moderation education is expected to answer the target of a mental revolution that requires the birth of students' self-character with integrity, have a work ethic and have mutual spirit cooperation, and the realization of a dignified, modern, advanced, prosperous and prosperous national culture.
2.	PAR/Private Employees	As said by Ali bin Abi Talib "Teach your children according to their times, because they live in their times not yours. Indeed, they were created for their times, while you were created for your times" So the existence of education in Indonesia played an important role in its era.
3.	NL/Students	Internalization of moderation in education is certainly a noble intention, this is expected to be able to lead the Indonesian people to a good and quality teaching and education process.
4.	MF/Entrepreneur	Religious Entrepreneurs are able to answer the times and are able to become the foremost fortress of a country. Because <i>trust</i> that comes from morality is something more valuable than intelligence based on hypocrisy.
5.	SF/ASN Teachers	The role of education in religious moderation in Indonesia is very important and has a very vital function because the nation's character can be realized through an education process that is correct and in accordance with Islamic principles and does not conflict with applicable laws.

No	Professional Classification	Excerpts of Answers
6.	MLR/IT Staff	It must be emphasized that living by the values of tolerance is very important. Because of this era, many cases occur and most of them lead to religious phenomena as a diversion. It must also be understood that we cannot live alone without the help of others.

Source: Interview Results Online, 2022

Table 1 presents statements from all groups regarding the internalization of moderation in education. The support above should be directly proportional to the efforts made by the government in responding to the realization of moderate Islam in Indonesia (Subaidi, 2020). Mentions that the government, in this case, the Minister of Education and Culture and the Minister of Religion, needs to formulate a counter-radicalism curriculum; this aims to ensure that the learning process that takes place in schools and universities is free from infidelity and misleading other groups.

Moderate education is a crucial thing to socialize; through this, moderation is seen to minimize the spread of radicalism in all sectors of community life, and the existence of religious moderation education will also give birth to inclusive individuals in a multicultural society (Daimah, 2022). Many students in various educational institutions today are starting to be exclusive, inseparable from their need to understand the importance of a moderate attitude toward diversity (Rapp & Corral-Granados, n.d.). The condition of such learners is very likely to cause them to become individuals who cannot socialize with the broader community, even the environment where they live. So, educational institutions are at the forefront of building citizens with a moderate attitude in a multicultural nation.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Mainstreaming religious moderation as a symbol of a peaceful, harmonious life and mutual respect for differences in Indonesia. Everyone has the right to feel a safe environment free from threats and conflicts. The results of this study have implications for the affirmation that the attitude of religious moderation needs to be instilled in students from an early age through formal and informal education forums to maintain harmony and peace between religious communities in Indonesia. The results of this study show. *First*, all respondents applied the values of several indicators of existing religious moderation, such as tolerance and anti-violence in Indonesia, a commitment to the nation and state, and acceptance of some differences from different cultures. It is in Indonesia. *Second*, the internalization of religious moderation in the realm of education is a necessity that must be carried out by all education stakeholders, teachers, school management, educators, students and guardians of students through teaching peaceful messages in classrooms. More than that, teachers and parents must appear as models who show moderate character in everyday life. The campaign to strengthen religious moderation education can also be carried out through social media, which has become a popular digital platform for many people today. The findings of this study describe that the values of religious moderation in Indonesia can be accepted by all professions, both teachers, students, students, private employees, and State Civil Apparatus (ASN) employees, meaning that moderation that wants to live in peace and harmony is the dream of all inter-religious people.

## V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to the head of the Islamic Higher Education YPI al-Ikhlâs Pesisir Selatan, who has allowed researchers to conduct collaborative research with teachers in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri (MTsN) 8 Pesisir Selatan and also lecturers from Muhammadiyah University of West Sumatra.

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