

Development and Evaluation of Religious Moderation Education Curriculum at Higher Education in Indonesia

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Abstract:

This study investigates the development and evaluation of a religious moderation education curriculum at the Ponorogo State Islamic Institute of Indonesia (IAIN Ponorogo). The curriculum addressed the government's policy of countering religious conservatism and intolerance by promoting religious moderation in higher education. A qualitative approach with a case study research descriptive design was employed. Data collection techniques included Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), interviews, observations, and documentation. The study involved 18 religious science lecturers and 97 students in the spiritual moderation education course in the first semester of 2022. The curriculum development involved adding a 2-credit Islamic and Religious Moderation course, resulting in 146 credits. The result of the study showed that there are students with knowledge, skills, and attitudes to foster religious moderation, national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and local cultural accommodation. Evaluation of religious moderation education was based on four character aspects, with an average score of 81.9 (equivalent to a grade of 3.00) for the student group. This research contributes to understanding curriculum development and evaluation in the context of religious moderation education. It offers a novelty and valuable insights into integrating spiritual moderation principles within higher education institutions, particularly in Indonesia. The identified factors influencing curriculum effectiveness guide other institutions implementing similar programs. The study serves as a reference for promoting religious moderation and values of tolerance and cultural accommodation in academic programs. These findings support the government's efforts to minimize conservatism and religious intolerance at the Indonesian higher education level.

Keywords: Management, curriculum, education, religious moderation, evaluation, learning plans.

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of intolerance and radicalism in religion has been getting stronger lately. Several educational institutions are indicated to be breeding grounds for discrimination. Several educational institutions are meant to be the seedbeds for this understanding. BNPT (2018) noted that seven state universities were exposed to radicalism (Murtadlo 2021). Meanwhile, The Setara Institute survey (2010) also states that 8.5% of youth over 17 agree with radical religious movements (Murtadlo, 2021). Namely, an ideology refers to ideology or thoughts that tend to be extreme and contrary to the fundamental values held by society in general. The idea of radicalism may threaten the stability and safety of society. Many people are hurt by violence and terrorism, frequently linked to radicalism. Radicalism can also result in prejudice, intolerance, estrangement, and poverty. Radical groups often violate human principles like democracy, free speech, and human rights through their violent actions (Chaney and Sahoo, 2020). To prevent and combat radicalization, which threatens societal stability and humanity, the community must be aware of the risks.

The root causes, and problems of intolerance in the Indonesian education system are complex and multifaceted. Historical factors, such as socio-political turmoil, deep-seated prejudice, and mistrust between religious and ethnic groups, have undoubtedly contributed to the problem. In addition, the education system in Indonesia, with its centralized governance and rigid curriculum standards, may limit the ability of educators to incorporate diverse perspectives and experiences into their teaching practices (Herry Setyawan et al., 2019). This can lead to a narrow view of the world and a reluctance to accept and appreciate differences in others. Other factors contributing to intolerance in Indonesia's education system include inadequate teacher training and professional development, lack of resources and support for schools and teachers, and lack of general awareness and understanding of diversity, tolerance, and inclusion issues. Therefore, the development of religious education curriculum and implementation in higher education needs to be evaluated.

The findings above become a paradox from the development of education in Indonesia. Growth in education is currently faced with increasingly complex challenges in the context of national life, namely the weak character of the nation's children (Harianto et al., 2020; Raya et al., 2023). **Therefore, developing religious character education requires a breakthrough in overcoming it. By integrating religious values more deeply, education can form a young generation that is not only academically intelligent but also has strong strength of character. This step can be implemented through ethical and moral discussions in the context of religious teachings, thus forming attitudes and behaviors that are by religious values.**

In response to the above conditions, as a continuation of the 2006 deradicalization program (Ulyana and Riyansyah 2021), Joko Widodo, the president of the Republic of Indonesia, established religious moderation education as social capital to combat the deterioration in students' character (Junaedi 2019: 392). Education is the foundation of hope for reinforcing the values of fair character, mutual respect and respect for differences, and a balanced/moderate attitude (Budiman & Samani, 2021). For this reason, community participation is needed in education that can internalize these values in students. So it is very appropriate if religious moderation is used in every government program and policy (Hefni 2020). As a concrete form of religious moderation education, the government issued a policy to establish an institution called the House of Religious Moderation (RMB) at universities in Indonesia (Suyudi and Putra, 2022).

However, some circles have questioned whether the institutionalization of religious moderation by forming the House of Religious Moderation (RMB) can carry out the big idea concept

of religious moderation or it is narrowing down the conception and implementation of the value of tolerance because the government's program approach places more emphasis on a project (Susilo and Dalimunthe 2019). Furthermore, the potential risk of instrumentalization and politicization of religious moderation initiatives is a concern raised by skeptics. the establishment of the House of Religious Moderation represents a notable step, the critical perspectives suggest the importance of continuous evaluation and refinement to ensure that the initiative aligns with the overarching goal of promoting genuine religious moderation and tolerance in Indonesia.

According to Syamsuddin Arif (2022), if we explore further, the discourse on religious moderation is threefold with the ideas of secularisation, democratization, liberalization, and deradicalization. Therefore, according to Angel Rabasa et al., America and Western countries need to establish closer relationships and cooperate with local partners whom he calls 'potential partners' - namely 'secularist,' 'liberal,' and 'traditionalist' groups (Rabasa et al. 2010). This difference in views sometimes makes civil society uncomfortable working with the government because they consider the idea of religious moderation not final. However, this strategic approach raises challenges, particularly in the realm of civil society engagement. The discomfort experienced by civil society organizations when working with governments is rooted in the perception that the concept of religious moderation remains fluid and evolving. This uncertainty can hinder collaborative efforts, as civil society may be hesitant to align with government initiatives that they perceive as lacking a definitive and universally accepted understanding of religious moderation.

The novelty of this study emphasizes the development and evaluation of the moderation education curriculum at the Ponorogo State Islamic Institute of Indonesia (IAIN Ponorogo) at the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages of its program. In essence, the divergent views on religious moderation contribute to a delicate dynamic between the government and civil society, which highlights the need for ongoing dialogue and collaboration approaches that respect the evolving nature of these concepts and evaluate the implementation of programmatic achievements.

1.1. Conceptual review

Much research discussing religious moderation in Indonesia has been carried out, but most of it is still focused on socialization and government policies regarding religious moderation in Indonesia. First is the study of religious moderation education by inserting into one relevant subject (Purwanto, dkk, 2019; Caswita, 2019; Tastin, 2019; dan Hiqmatunnisa & Az Zafi, 2020). Second, religious moderation education in various educational activities is a form of socialization (Irama & Zamzami, 2019; dan Akhmadi, 2019). Third, the study of religious moderation policies is associated with the issue of radicalism, which has entered the world of education (Arifianto, 2018; Superta & Sirin, 2018; Saihu & Marsiti, 2019). Some studies above have yet to specifically and in-depth on implementing religious moderation in tertiary institutions by changing the curriculum and how the learning is achieved. So the research will provide important information about how to implement moderation in religious education using curriculum reform and implementation of learning evaluations.

1.2. Educational context

IAIN Ponorogo feels challenged to carry out a series of movements to encourage a common perception of religious moderation. So, the concept of religious moderation can be operationalized and implemented in the field. IAIN Ponorogo has not only stopped establishing RMB. **It has carried out an intellectual movement by involving academics to enrich the concept of moderation through national and international conferences such as the International Conference on Islamic Studies (ICIS), seminars, research themes, and scientific publications. It is committed to supporting the RMB program in its totality.**

In addition to the above, the Ponorogo State Islamic Institute 2021 has taken concrete steps by conducting a curriculum review and forming a new subject, "Islam and Religious Moderation". However, until now, adequate information about the design and evaluation of the religious moderation education curriculum has yet to be OK. This research will analyze the development of religious moderation curricula in tertiary institutions as a case study. The focus is whether the curriculum development carried out by IAIN Ponorogo can implement religious moderation education policies. What are the expectations to be achieved for students, lecturers, or the community at large? Why is IAIN Ponorogo so important in this case? What impacts will this RMB program have on them?

So that the primary purpose of this study is to analyze in depth and more critically the curriculum reform and evaluation to ensure that the moderate character is truly internalized in students. For this reason, reading and mapping of program planning will be carried out here in response to the religious moderation education policy that underlies curriculum changes. Apart from that, it offers solutions based on the root of the problem and, at the same time, the significance of the role of higher education institutions through teaching religious moderation and its evaluation.

1.3 Empirical Review

Since the Religious Moderation policy was enacted in 2019, the theme of religious moderation has been increasingly discussed in Indonesia. However, the study of restraint is not new. The first work that thoughtfully examines moderation is Thematic Tafsir, published by the Ministry of Religion in 2012, in which one of the themes is Islamic moderation (Subchi et al. 2022). This work was written by a special team in which one of the sources was M. Quraish Shihab, a Muslim scholar in Qur'anic sciences and former Minister of Religion in the VII Development Cabinet (1998). Religious moderation has increasingly gained momentum since the Ministry of Religion published the book Religious Moderation in 2019. Several studies suggest that increased discourse on religious moderation correlates with radical-extremist phenomena and terrorism. (H Haedar 2019). Other studies have shown a connection between extreme Salafi Jihadi groups and a series of acts of terror in the country. These militant religious groups have the potential to threaten Indonesia's reputation as a country that adheres to Islam and is tolerant and inclusive. This is where the importance of proper management of

religious diversity lies. (Hasan 2008). Almost all studies on religious moderation are associated with an increase in anarchist, radical-extreme actions in the name of Islam (Fuad, 2020; Islamy, 2021). Religious moderation has become widespread in response to the government's commitment.

Etymologically, several Indonesian figures, such as; Hamka (Abdullah and Adnan 2011), Hasbi (Ibrahim 2022), and Quraish Shihab (Nasihin, Ainol, and Khumaidi 2023), Define moderation in various languages. In Arabic, the word moderation is generally known as “wasatīyyah”, which means; middle, good, choice, fair, balanced, and commendable. While in terms of religious moderation, according to Quraish Shihab, is a spiritual attitude that is in the middle by not taking sides to the left and right (Putri and Fadlullah 2022). This impartiality makes humans act pretty to become role models for all parties. (Ministry of Religion, 2019; Schmidt, 2021).

The Indonesian government defines moderate as a modest attitude toward religion in its social-religious life. This definition is the same as "wasting" in Arabic, which was introduced by a 21st-century mujtahid, namely Al-Imam Professor Yusuf Al-Qaradawi (Sumbulah, Zainuddin, and Bawazier 2021), A great scholar from Qatar who was born in Egypt, an alumnus of Al-Azhar University in Egypt. In various studies, religious moderation is often translated as 'just-balance Islam,' 'the middle path,' or 'the middle way' of Islam, in which Islam functions as a mediator and counterweight (Bakir and Othman 2017). In this context, justice (al-'adl) and balance (tawazun) are essential to prevent Muslims from being trapped in two extreme poles: right and left, fundamentalists and liberalists (Ningrum and Zuhriyah 2023). The concept of religious moderation above wants and requires all religious people not to be exclusive (Amri, 2021).

How is the moderation of the Western version? An American strategic research institute formulates that 'moderate' Muslims accept and support democratic values, such as human rights (HAM), gender equality, religious freedom, pluralism, and secular law, and reject terrorism and violence (Rabasa et al. 2010). This concept is almost the same in spirit as the concept of the Muslim scholars above, which is essentially the importance of promoting tolerance, interfaith dialogue, and preventing extremism as a solution to face fundamentalism and radicalism.

Fawwaz argued that the paradigm of religious moderation, which has the principle of a middle way (moderate), has the view of secularism, and pluralism is heresy (Fawwaz, n.d.-b). Religious moderation is considered propaganda originating from the West and has entered various educational institutions and published multiple modules under the guise of peace between the nation's children. Fawwaz further explained that mainstreaming religious moderation is an effort to attract sociological plurality towards theological pluralism in the name of diversity and tolerance. An even bigger goal is to perpetuate colonialism in Muslim countries. Wasathiyah Islam and moderate Islam have different meanings. Propaganda of religious moderation is considered to be damaging to aqidah. The term wasathiyah comes from the Qur'an, while reasonable comes from Western epistemology. Equating the two would mislead people with a mixed epistemology.

The criticism of the notion of religious moderation above is a distinct challenge the government must face in implementing religious moderation in Indonesia. In addition, some groups still maintain a more conservative and intolerant understanding of diversity, making it challenging to promote religious moderation (Hefner 2009). Other critics highlight that religious moderation is only the responsibility of the state and religion, without involving civil society. Dina Afrianty offers a solution by emphasizing the importance of involving civil society to moderate religion and increase community participation and inclusive initiatives (Afrianty 2012).

The debate is not only on the idea of religious moderation but also on establishing a religious moderation education policy by selecting the House of Religious Moderation. This policy has the potential to place religious moderation in a vacuum full of meaningless indoctrination, which can make the fundamental value of religious moderation move away from national life and become a dogma that has lost its essence. On the other hand, religious moderation education will make a concept, value, or norm that applies in society to be directed and become a binding and more systematic organizational or institutional value that can clarify the direction of the foundation of national and state life (Syafar et al. 2019). Policy here, then, means a value system. The norms contained in religious moderation will always be related to institutions and hold the meaning of buildings that require structure so that something that has been institutionalized will be binding and regulate a particular society within it. Institutionalization is likened to a cover or casing that can maintain the values of religious moderation through the institutions of the institution.

However, amid these challenges and criticisms, there are also opportunities to strengthen the implementation of religious moderation through education and teaching in educational institutions. Indonesian society has long embraced the concept of religious moderation in the practice of Indonesian classical education, such as in Islamic boarding schools (Helmy, Kubro, and Ali 2021). The attitude of *tawasut*, *tawazun*, *iktidal*, and *tasamuh*, as well as the teaching of the yellow book, is the scientific responsibility of *pesantren* to form a moderate mindset of the society, which is then duplicated by higher education to institutionalize religious moderation because higher education has more basic capital of a scientific perspective in studying any science: type and field.

Bridging the two currents regarding the idea of moderation in religion above, it is better if moderation of religion conceived by the state should not only be faced with the challenges of intolerance and radicalism but also must be in direct contact with various other significant challenges, such as equality, poverty, and inequality. Thus the concept of religious moderation still needs to receive criticism and input from civil society so that other vital agendas also become common concerns. This is a kind of warning from the government that the religious moderation project may not run smoothly as expected. The emergence of various groups who claim to represent moderate Muslims, such as Wahhabism, as well as other conservative movements, shows the lack of clarity in the definition and characteristics of reasonable Islam.

The religious moderation above is essential for students as the next generation tasked with advancing the nation in the future, mainly to prevent radicalism. One concrete step in imparting the values of religious moderation to the younger generation is education (Sumardjoko and Musyiam 2018). Therefore, it provides an understanding that religious moderation can permeate various aspects, including specific elements in education such as paradigms, approaches, curricula, models, strategies, development of learning media materials, and methods used in the learning process as a whole, starting from the first stage planning to evaluation. The application pattern can vary significantly depending on the focus and other factors. However, a fundamental aspect that requires more attention is how to apply the concept of religious moderation effectively in the learning process.

Amin Abdullah provides three approaches for implementation (Abdullah 2014): the integration of the curriculum, the name of the course (subjects), and the integration of the course topics (issues). These three integrative strategies align with the Drake and Burns-developed theory of curriculum integration. He claims that the most basic definition of *curriculum integration* is the creation of linkages. Additionally, they provide multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary perspectives as a beginning point for comprehending the various integration methods. These three groups are part of a continuum that includes the terms "fusion," "multidisciplinary," "interdisciplinary," and "transdisciplinary" to help understand the various approaches to building an integrated curriculum that can result in deeper learning. By putting students as learning leaders, deep learning refers to a transition from surface learning to an in-depth comprehension of a topic. Thus, depending on the subject, context, and level of integration, curriculum integration is essential in uniting many disciplines incorporated into a learning process.

It is necessary to practice religious moderation education systematically. The final objective that needs to be accomplished is spiritual moderation learning, specified in the semester learning plan document. The decision of which learning approaches and strategies to use will undoubtedly be impacted by this learning achievement (CP). The learning strategy is crucial in reaching the best learning objectives (Gómez Zermeño and Alemán de la Garza 2021). This strategy aims to improve learning efficiency, encourage enthusiasm, build students' abilities and character, present real-world learning settings, and boost student achievement

The Problem-Based Learning approach is highly recommended to form moderate character (Aqil et al. 2022). Problem-based learning is a learning method that teaches students to solve problems and reflects on their experiences, thus enabling the development of thinking skills (reasoning, communication, and connections) in solving meaningful, relevant, and contextual problems (Ramadhani, Syamsul, and Rofiqul 2019). In line with this research, problem-based learning as an effort to build an attitude of religious moderation is intended in student learning. by prioritizing its critical power to explore, identify, and analyze problems related to religious moderation.

Winata et al. research (Winata et al. 2020) demonstrates how teaching religion through a problem-based/contextual learning paradigm can improve students' comprehension of the religious ideals of moderation regarding cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. Furthermore, the study discovered that by fostering concord and participating in social events in a neighbourhood, kids might more immediately understand how to practice religious moderation through contextual learning. **Moreover, Winata et al.'s research highlights the significance of affective and psychomotor development in the context of teaching religious moderation. This hands-on engagement contributes to the affective domain by nurturing empathy, tolerance, and emotional intelligence. The incorporation of real-life scenarios and community engagement serves as a powerful catalyst for instilling these values, making the learning process not only educational but also transformative for students.**

Accordingly, Purwanto et al. demonstrate that the process of internalizing moderation values through religious courses is carried out with great care and attention, including by perfecting the curriculum on the theme of religious moderation and adjusting the quality of the material to student input. We are creating a curriculum for tertiary institutions while paying respect to the subject-matter expertise of the lecturers in charge and the campus community's support (Purwanto, Qowaid, and Fauzi 2019).

As a result, the learning model that is believed to be able to help children build excellent character is problem-based. By its attributes, this learning model incorporates difficulties at the start of learning. Students must learn to use a variety of information and collaborate, communicate, and cooperate to solve these difficulties because they are real-world issues that are given in development.

2. Research Methods

2.1. Research design

This study used a qualitative data analysis design that builds on a case study and an approach that informs theoretical/conceptual and empirical literature on religious moderation education at IAIN Ponorogo Indonesia. In this study, individuals can be lecturers who carry out learning and evaluate students as subjects of spiritual moderation learning. This research seeks to reveal how campus policies change the curriculum and conduct evaluations to build students' attitudes toward religious moderation. The type of data used is in the form of primary data and secondary data. As for the preliminary data in this study, data were collected from researchers directly from the source, namely by looking at the results of data from curriculum change FGDs, observations of the implementation of religious moderation learning in class, and religious moderation education policy documents as well as the effects of learning evaluations of two study programs that the 2022-2023 academic year has implemented religious moderation learning. secondary data is published or created by organizations that are not the managers, namely books, articles, journals, university website addresses, and news

on the internet regarding religious moderation education on campus as supporting material for conducting this research.

2.2. Data collection technique

Data collection techniques were carried out using Focus Group Discussion, interviews, observations, and documentation for 5 months, the 2022/2023 "Old Semester" semester from August to December 2022. FGDs were used to collect data through small group discussions facilitated by the Chair of the House of Moderation of Religion as a moderator involving 18 lecturers with expertise in Islamic Education. This FGD's goal is to learn more about the participants' opinions, perceptions, attitudes, and experiences (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). regarding data on curriculum changes and preparation of Semester Learning Plans for the course "Islam and Religious Moderation" where the critical points of the Semester Learning Plans, the objective is to determine the Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK) which includes attitudes, knowledge, and general and specific student competence in religious moderation.

Unstructured interviews were conducted with administrators of the IAIN Ponorogo religious moderation house and lecturers of religious moderation education supervisors. In this interview, the researchers gave the informants the freedom to explain their views or experiences according to their own experiences and perspectives (Rubin and Rubin, 2011). At the same time, the observations focus on student behavior while participating in religious moderation education and its evaluation. As for completing various information, policies, organizational structures, materials, and materials, as well as religious moderation, semester learning plans are carried out with documentation. Data on religious moderation learning outcomes were taken from student study result card documents totalling 97 students with class details for the Al Qur`an and Tafsir Study Program (IAT) A 23 students, IAT B 24 students, IAT C 22 students, and the History study program Islamic Education (SPI) 28 students in odd semester 2022/2023 have programmed the "Islam and Diverse Moderation" course. At the same time, other study programs do not program. It has strategically expanded its curriculum by establishing a new subject, "Islam and Religious Moderation." This new course occupies a strategic position and is the starting point for sowing the religion of students from different streams, both conservative ones. The research involved 18 religious science lecturers and 97 students in the spiritual moderation education course in the first semester of 2022. Curriculum development involves the addition of 2 credits of Islamic and Religious Moderation courses, resulting in 146 credits.

Based on information from RMB administrators (MR, interview, 16 June 2023), programming for the course "Islam and Religious Moderation" does not determine a particular semester. It depends on the faculty/study program when it will program the system for students in the 2022/2023 class. **This flexibility in scheduling demonstrates a responsive and adaptable approach to integrating the subject matter into the academic framework. It enables faculties to consider the optimal timing for introducing "Islam and Religious Moderation" based on the specific needs and priorities of their**

respective programs. This approach also recognizes the dynamic nature of academic planning and allows for the alignment of the course with other relevant components of the curriculum.

Furthermore, to overcome the occurrence of bias in the data that has been collected, it is necessary to check its validity so that its truth is recognized. Reviewing this data uses triangulation of data sources; researchers use data from lecturers, students, and administrators of moderation houses on campus to compare their perceptions of the concept and implementation of religious moderation through classroom learning. Re-checking information from one subject to another until it reaches a state of 'saturation' without rebuttal. Thus, even though the sources of information are limited in number and purposive, with the process of cross-examination, triangulation, and re-cycling, researchers still aim at the unity of the meaning of implementing the development of a religious moderation education curriculum and its evaluation.

2.3. Data analysis

Researchers collected information about managing religious moderation education via focus group discussions, interviews, observations, documentation of curriculum adjustments, and the outcomes of student learning evaluations that included material on religious moderation.

The interactive data analysis methodology proposed by Miles & and Huberman was used to analyze the data above. According to him, The three main steps of qualitative data analysis are as follows: Condensation of data, data visualization, and conclusion/verification (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In addition, to strengthen research findings, this study also evaluates student learning outcomes, including formative and summative evaluations (Bhat and Bhat, 2019). The data analysis process is presented in Figure 1 below:

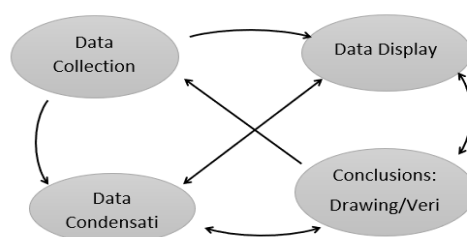


Figure 1. Data analysis

Field notes with two components, descriptive and reflective, detailing the data gathering through interviews, observation, and recording are used by lecturers taking part in the FGD. Descriptive notes are natural notes—notes describing what the researcher personally observed, heard, or experienced, without the researcher's interpretation of what he or she saw or heard. Reflective notes serve as a resource for the following stage's data-collecting strategy since they provide the researcher's impressions, opinions, ideas, and interpretations of the findings. The

conclusions are reached during the study process; temporary conclusions are eliminated after an adequate amount of data has been gathered, and conclusions are reached after the data is complete.

3. Findings

Curriculum development management is a comprehensive term that includes planning, implementation, and evaluation (Mukhibat, 2013). because curriculum development indicates progress and transition (Abidin and Murtadlo 2020). Curriculum development includes designing learning opportunities that aim to direct students toward the expected growth and evaluate the extent to which the change has been implemented for students. The presentation and discussion of the data in this section are to answer the question of how the management of the development of the religious moderation education curriculum includes planning, implementation, and evaluation of spiritual moderation learning.

3.1. Religious Moderation Education Planning

Until 2023, 58 higher education institutions in Indonesia have established religious moderation education by forming the House of Religious Moderation (RMB). This proves that the central government's policies have been effective because they have received a positive response from higher education leaders in Indonesia, including the Ponorogo State Islamic Institute. However, there are still variations in the moderation house development pattern related to its institutional structure, work program, and other support, including financial aspects. (Marfu'ah et al. 2021). So many tertiary institutions autonomously carry out and develop religious moderation education by the dynamics of each tertiary institution.

RMB of IAIN Ponorogo was launched on June 1, 2021, by the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, Yaqut Cholil Qomas (AK, interview, December 2, 2021). The launching program aims to socialize and introduce religious moderation and the existence of the House of Religious Moderation at IAIN Ponorogo in the area of Madiun Residency and its surroundings (AK, interview, 2 December 2021). This launching activity was packaged in a national seminar which also presented several national figures, including Alisa Wahid (Team of Experts on the National Working Group on Religious Moderation and Founder Gusdurian) (Rodríguez 2022) Which conveyed the theme "higher education as a Foundation for Strengthening Religious Moderation."

Based on the Decree of the Chancellor of IAIN Ponorogo number 485/In.32.1/04/2021 concerning establishing a House of Religious Moderation, IAIN Ponorogo has established several strategic programs so that religious moderation education can run as intended. For implementing religious moderation education, IAIN Ponorogo has set program planning divided into several fields of education, research, publication, and community assistance (M.R., interview, March 3, 2023). The various religious moderation education programs have been guided by measurable educational

planning mechanisms using a scientific-technocratic approach, which requires the achievement of scientific (scientific) indicators, meaning that these programs will benefit all IAIN students Ponorogo.

Planning with a scientific-technocratic approach has ensured that implementing religious moderation education is free of normative and logistic activities, such as moderation education limited to socialization activities, training, and interfaith gatherings. These activities have been included in the IAIN Ponorogo Work Plan and Institutional Budget (RK-AL) since 2021, which is integrated with the Tridharma of higher education. The integration of religious moderation education into the IAIN Ponorogo Work Plan and Institutional Budget reflects a strategic and holistic approach. This approach, grounded in the Tridharma of higher education, goes beyond normative and logistical activities, providing a structured and evidence-based foundation for the effective implementation of moderation education within the institution.

In 2022, IAIN Ponorogo established several necessary program plans as a form of program development from the previous year's activities that were carried out. That such as community service and research with the theme of religious moderation, publishing book chapters, strengthening religious moderation for all leaders and education staff, and certification for extension workers—religion (BA (Chairman of the RMB), interview, January 26, 2022).

In addition, IAIN Ponorogo, 2022, has strategically developed its curriculum by establishing a new subject, "Islam and Religious Moderation." This new course occupies a strategic position and is the starting point for the religious sowing of students from various streams, both conservative ones (Nouraey et al. 2020), (Meyer 2015) exclusive, radical, (Mc, 2012) moderate, inclusive, pluralist, and even liberal (Freedden 2015).

3.1.1. Preparation of Semester Learning Plans

The next step is that the implementation of learning for the course goes according to learning outcomes; a Semester Learning Plan for the system "Islam and Religious Moderation" has been prepared. This course weighs 2 Semester Credit Units (Umilia and Septanaya, n.d.). The Semester Learning Plan (RPS) contains components; RPS identity, learning outcomes, learning achievement indicators, learning methods, time, learning experience, criteria and weight assessment, and references. Learning achievement indicators in the RPS provide measurable criteria for assessing students' progress and mastery of the course material. These indicators serve as benchmarks to evaluate the extent to which students have achieved the specified learning outcomes, enabling instructors to gauge the effectiveness of the instructional methods employed.

The developed Semester Learning Plan consists of several components (Nurtanto et al. 2021): the identity of the RPS, learning outcomes, indicators, learning methods, learning time, learning experiences, criteria and weights for assessment, and a list of references. The SRP for Islam and Religious Moderation is prepared by developing knowledge, attitudes, and skills supporting religious moderation. To help these competencies, eleven main topics and sub-topics have been set that

support Course Learning Outcomes, which are detailed in ten critical themes that students must learn and master in one semester (6 months). With the preparation of the learning plan for this semester, the course "Islam & Religious Moderation" has been positioned as an institute hallmark course that must be studied by all students in the 2022/2023 class.

For learning to run effectively and efficiently in the RPS subject "Islam & Religious Moderation," several strategies are also established, including active learning methods and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in various types of subject matter (Hidayatullah 2022). Active learning aims to increase student motivation, involvement, and understanding of the studied material. Problem-based learning or problem-based learning is supported by problem-solving principles (Aslan 2021), where students are taught to identify problems, collect relevant information, analyze data, and take appropriate actions (Lubis, Suryadarma, and Yanto, 2022).

3.2. Implementation of Religious Moderation Education

Based on the lecturers' FGD, have they discussed curriculum reform to implement religious moderation at the Ponorogo State Islamic Institute can be carried out with three strategies? First, insert moderation content in the curriculum. This insertion is a form of optimizing a learning approach that can give rise to critical thinking, respecting differences, respecting the opinions of others, tolerant, democratic, daring to convey ideas, sportsmanship, and responsibility, and organizing programs, education, training and debriefing for students (Rumahuru and Talupun 2021). This pattern provides certainty that the content of religious moderation reaches students and measures the level of understanding and learning outcomes. *Second*, Religious moderation becomes content, knowledge, attitudes, and skills, by forming a separate course that is part of the religious moderation course included in the Personality Development Course in the curriculum structure, and *third*, organizing programs, education, training, and debriefing for students.

According to Faruk (lecturer participating in the FGD), tertiary institutions are more flexible in translating curriculum contents. How can the values of religious moderation be incorporated into the curriculum? Of course, this is done to more effectively internalize the character of religious moderation in students (U F, interview, 15 July 2022). In addition to establishing new courses in the curriculum structure, the FGD participants also developed steps to implement religious moderation education. In tandem with curriculum adjustments, the FGD participants likely outlined practical steps to implement religious moderation education within tertiary institutions. These steps may involve faculty training programs, workshops, and seminars to equip educators with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively convey the values of religious moderation to students.

3.2.1. Problem-Based Religious Moderation Learning

As stated in the RPS above, problem-based learning is one of the learning methods. The choice of this method, based on students' understanding of religious moderation, is closely related to

the learning model used, so it is believed that it will give birth to moderate generations. This method aims to provide students with the skills to solve problems and reflect on their experiences, thus enabling the development of thinking skills (reasoning, communication, and connections) in solving meaningful, relevant, and contextual problems (Lubis et al., 2022).

The learning achievement of religious moderation, as stated in the semester learning plan document, is being able to become a moderate Muslim person and become a Muslim agent who shows tolerance in society. Based on these findings, it can be understood that learning outcomes are the primary basis for starting to instil moderation values in students. Futaqi emphasized that one of the principles of the education curriculum was developed by referring to the principle of diversity (Mazid, Futaqi, and Farikah, 2021). The focus of diversity in curriculum construction is intended to maintain student differences, including differences in religion, race, ethnicity, and other differences.

The Semester Learning Plan (RPS) document for the course includes general elements that can serve as the foundation for fostering in students a sense of religious moderation to achieve this goal. Several subjects about religious moderation in Islam. First, a discussion of the methodology of the Islamic thought of Bayani, Burhani, and Irfani. Second, the Islamic concept of rahmatan lil alamin teaches Islam as a religion of mercy for the entire universe. Third, the policy of realizing inter-religious harmony. Fourth, the discussion on Religious Moderation in the Al-Quran and Hadith. Fifth, the principles of Religious Moderation include tawasuth, tawazzun, i'tidal, tasamuh, musawah, and shura. Sixth, indicators of Religious Moderation include national commitment, anti-radicalism, and accommodation of local culture. Seventh, the importance of solidarity between religious communities and love for the motherland. Eighth, Religious Moderation in the Archipelago. Ninth, the experience of religious Moderation during the Islamic empire. Tenth, Pancasila is the state ideology—the eleventh, religious Moderation in the digital space.

According to Faruq, there are five stages in implementing problem-based learning, which are described in the following table:

Table 1. Problem-based learning model steps

Phase	Learning Activities	Description
1	Orient students to the problem	The lecturer conveys the learning objectives that students will obtain, conducts apperception to students by checking previous material with questions and answers, and provides motivation for enthusiasm for learning.
2	Organizing learning activities	Lecturers organize student learning in groups.
3	Guiding independent and group investigations	Lecturers encourage students to collect data and conduct experiments.
4	Developing and presenting work according to the theme	Lecturers provide opportunities for students to present the results of their discussions and assist in brainstorming activities.
5	Conduct analysis and	Lecturers help students analyze and evaluate their

evaluation of the problem-solving process.	thinking processes in investigations and the intellectual skills used when solving problems and reflecting on the learning that has been done.
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With the steps above, it is hoped that the learning process will influence the growing awareness of tolerance in addressing differences (Aslan 2021), and able to equip the transfer of knowledge and the absorption of values and morals in the realm of practice to develop the wisdom of knowledge, awareness, and character development of students (Aqil et al., 2022). In practical terms, educators can further support the transfer of knowledge by incorporating real-world examples that highlight the benefits of tolerance and understanding differences. This hands-on approach facilitates a deeper comprehension of the subject matter and promotes the internalization of these values (Rifai et al., 2020).

3.3. Evaluation of Religious Moderation Education

Learning assessment is done to see learning outcomes by evaluating changes in attitude, knowledge advancement, and skill advancement following program completion. As a result of this research, four attitudes—national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and acceptance of tradition—can be used to gauge the degree of religious moderation. The researcher emphasizes changes in behavior in the application of religious moderation in this evaluation of behavior. More information on these four attitudes is available, which can then be used to gauge how well the program is working.

Regarding determining the effectiveness of religious moderation, there are many different education methods, such as direct observation, tests, assessments, and group discussions while learning. Throughout the learning process, lecturers observe students in person. The UTS and UAS exams measure students' grasp of the ideals of moderation, tolerance, and tangible acts done by students to implement the ideas of moderation in everyday life. These examinations include written exams and accompanying tasks (Hasanah and Sari, 2021). Students' capacity to apply the virtues of moderation in daily life can be assessed through group discussions by exchanging experiences and offering feedback.

The achievement of these indicators has been described in comprehensive and scientific detail into 10 important themes which contain the values of moderation or wasting, The middle (tawasut), uprightness (iktidal), tolerance (tasamuh), deliberation (syura), reform (islah), pioneering (qudwah), citizenship/love of the motherland (muwathanah), anti-violence (al-la 'unf), and culturally friendly (iktibar al-'urf) are some of the concepts that students have learned for one semester.

The test questions below are organized into a grid for the midterm and final exams to assess religious moderation learning, which contains two components: knowledge of student religious moderation and student religious moderation behavior.

Table 2. Understanding of Student religious moderation

No	Indicator	Description
1	Tolerance	The opinion of students is that people are more concerned with their groups than with being together.
2	reject violence	Students' opinions about people who share content such as videos and photos that contain hate speech because they are disappointed with their understanding that is different from other people
3	National Commitment	Students' opinions about people who continue to participate and work together despite different religions, ethnicities, and races because we are all fellow countrymen
4	Local cultural accommodation	Students' opinions about the application of religion that must be balanced between the world and the hereafter

Table 3. Behaviour of religious moderation

No	Indicator	Description
1	Tolerance	Individuals or members of an organisation have beliefs that conflict with your group's interpretation of religion (religious understanding and worship practices).
2	reject violence	The ability to refrain from doing anything that can divide unity and conflict
3	National Commitment	Must be able to make a beneficial contribution to the country and state. To uphold the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) as a Unitary State, one must be loyal.
4	Local cultural accommodation	Participate in valuing and protecting the uniqueness of local cultures. Does not make distinctions based on group, race, religion, or ethnicity among friends (SARA).

Additionally, several questions for UTS and UAS are created from the lattice above statements and questions. The image below shows the evaluation of learning results for religious moderation education from 97 students after completing moderation education, including midterm exams, portfolios, and final semester examinations.

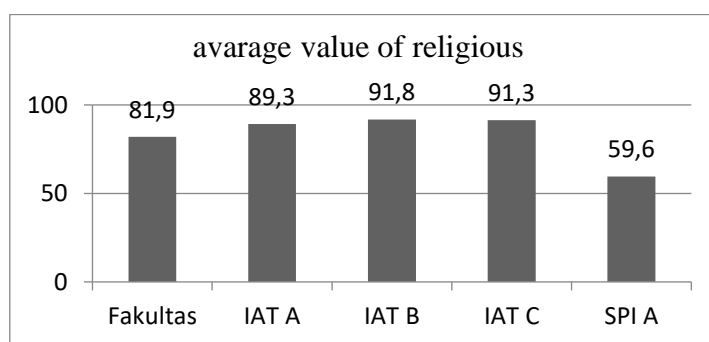


Figure 2. Average value of religious moderation

Based on the picture above, the average score of students who have attended religious moderation education for one semester is 81.9 per cent of the 97 students who are spread over 4 classes. Namely the Study Program of Al-Qur'an and Interpretation (IAT) A, B, C and the Study Program of History of Islamic Education (SPI) A. Based on the academic guidelines of IAIN Ponorogo. Students are declared to have passed a particular subject if they get a minimum score of 56, while the maximum score is 100. On average, all 97 students pass with excellent grades even though they do not pass 100 per cent because 7 students fail or 7.2 percent.

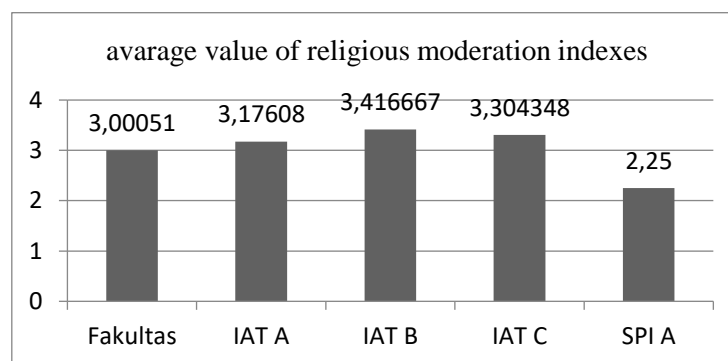


Figure 3. Index of religious moderation values

The results prove that problem-based religious moderation learning effectively instills a moderate attitude toward religion in students. This is in line with Ramdani & Marzuki's research that how the teacher teaches by discussing cases can build awareness of how to act correctly by applying norms to build character indirectly (Ramdani and Marzuki 2019). These results can be concluded that curriculum development and selection of problem-based learning methods have shown positive results in cultivating the values of pluralism and tolerance. It can be said that various moderation education has proven effective in instilling an attitude of religious moderation in students.

There are still many issues with implementing religious moderation policies in tertiary institutions, such as ineffective internal and external coordination and cooperation. Coordination is, therefore, crucial to effectively and efficiently achieve the goals of the religious moderation program. It is simpler for leaders to integrate, synchronize, and simplify duties with connected parties when there is good coordination. Thus, implementing religious moderation in each unit will be strengthened with the full support of all campus residents. The commitment of all parties to collaborate and communicate with all groups without appearing to support any one group, in particular, is the first step in strengthening religious moderation. To execute policies for religious moderation education, higher education as an organization needs to work well together.

4. Discussion

IAIN Ponorogo is a religion-based state university by taking concrete steps to review the curriculum and form a new subject, namely "Islam and Religious Moderation". In its implementation

so far it has been able to answer the challenge of adequate issues regarding the design and evaluation of the moderation education curriculum. It answers the conception and implementation of the value of tolerance because the government's program approach places more emphasis on projects. The House of Religious Moderation (RMB) at universities in IAIN Ponorogo carries out communication, literacy, and religious moderation character education to local government agencies, lecturers, students, education staff, or the public to promote tolerance, harmony, and peace between religious communities. So that the discussion that was built described the findings of the development and evaluation of curriculum implementation at the IAIN Ponorogo campus based on primary and secondary data.

Based on the result finding of IAIN Ponorogo Implemented almost the same spirit as the concept of the Muslim scholars above. It is essentially the importance of promoting tolerance, interfaith dialogue, and preventing extremism as a solution to face fundamentalism and radicalism. IAIN Ponorogo was prepared to put into practice a program of religious moderation by creating a House of Moderation of Religion and creating a religious moderation curriculum.

5. Conclusion

The Ponorogo State Islamic Institute is ready to implement a religious moderation program by developing a curriculum with fulfilled indicators in planning, implementing, and evaluating. Planning a curriculum begins with establishing a policy for implementing religious moderation by forming a House of Moderation of Religion and establishing new courses along with IQF-based lesson plans so that the study load for the undergraduate level is from 144 credits to 146 credits. Implementing Problem-based religious moderation learning consists of 5 critical stages, namely: 1) orienting students to problems of intolerance and radicalism, 2) organizing students in learning, 3) helping students solve problems, 4) facilitating students in conveying solutions to a problem, and, 5) analyzing and evaluating the problem-solving process. The learning results evaluation shows that the learning model is related to forming religious character and moderation. Students respond moderately to statements and case questions submitted both in the learning process and exams; this shows the positive influence of the problem-based learning model on the formation of understanding and moderation and has been able to build awareness of applicable norms. The study's findings demonstrated that there are students who possess the information, abilities, and attitudes necessary to promote tolerance, national dedication, nonviolence, and local cultural sensitivity. Based on four character traits, religious moderation education was evaluated; the average result was 81.9.

The comprehension of curriculum development and evaluation in the context of religious moderation education is enhanced by this research. It provides insightful information on how to incorporate spiritual moderation ideas into institutions of higher learning, especially in Indonesia. The identified factors influencing curriculum effectiveness guide other institutions implementing similar

programs. The study serves as a reference for promoting religious moderation and values of tolerance and cultural accommodation in academic programs. These findings support the government's efforts to minimize conservatism and religious intolerance at the Indonesian higher education level. This research contributes to understanding curriculum development and evaluation in the context of religious moderation education.

However, this research is limited to studying religious moderation for one semester. Therefore, further research is needed to determine the factors influencing students' religious moderation attitudes, including their interactions in the digital world as a medium for internalizing them. In addition, to support the formation of an attitude of moderation, Islamic religious material that contains moderate values, is open, and broad-minded also needs to be provided. This is important to consider in the development of religious moderation education programs. **The result of the study showed that there are students with knowledge, skills, and attitudes to foster religious moderation, national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and local cultural accommodation based on 4 indicators of student religious moderation.**

Several recommendations are made in light of the research. It is including (1) expanding the scope of similar studies to include educational institutions and students, and (2) creating tools for measuring religious tolerance to gauge students' and students' attitudes toward religious moderation.

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Public interest statement

The development and assessment of a religious moderation education curriculum at the Ponorogo State Islamic Institute of Indonesia (IAIN Ponorogo) are the purposes of this study. The curriculum addressed the government's strategy of encouraging religious moderation in higher education to combat religious conservatism and intolerance. It used a case study descriptive research methodology and a qualitative approach. FGDs, interviews, observations, and documentation were some of the methods used to collect data. The result of the study showed that there are students with knowledge, skills, and attitudes to foster religious moderation, national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and local cultural accommodation. This research contributes to understanding curriculum development and evaluation in the context of religious moderation education. It offers a novelty and valuable insight into integrating the principles of spiritual moderation in higher education institutions, particularly in Indonesia.

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