

Internalization of the Values of Religious Moderation through Islamic Religious Education Learning in Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the process of internalizing the values of religious moderation through Islamic Religious Education (ISE) learning in secondary schools. The background of the study is based on the complexity of student diversity and the need to strengthen balanced, tolerant, and inclusive religious attitudes during adolescence. The research approach used was qualitative with a descriptive design, which allows for in-depth exploration of learning practices and social dynamics in the school environment. The research subjects included Islamic Religious Education teachers, students, and school officials directly involved in the learning process. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies, while data analysis was carried out interactively through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results show that internalization of religious moderation values occurs through reflective, dialogic, and contextual learning strategies, supported by teacher role models and an inclusive school culture. The synergy between formal learning and school social practices strengthens the meaning of values in a sustainable manner. Islamic Religious Education plays a strategic role in shaping students' religious attitudes that are adaptive to the reality of diversity and able to contribute to the creation of social harmony.

Keywords: Religious Moderation; Islamic Religious Education; Secondary School

INTRODUCTION

The development of modern society demonstrates the increasingly complex and multi-layered dynamics of religious diversity, particularly in formal secondary education settings. Secondary schools serve as a meeting place for students with diverse backgrounds in beliefs, cultures, and religious practices. This situation demands that educational institutions be prepared to foster a sustainable attitude of mutual respect. The challenges of diversity arise not only in the form of differences in rituals but also in differing perspectives on social and moral values. Students' unpreparedness to address differences has the potential to give rise to prejudice and social conflict. Education plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes and character that are adaptive to pluralistic realities. The role of schools is no longer limited to the transfer of knowledge but also to the development of national values and attitudes. The need to strengthen the value of religious moderation becomes increasingly relevant at the secondary education level (Aziz, 2024).

The phenomenon of diversity present in secondary schools places students in social situations that demand maturity in attitude and understanding. Adolescence is a transitional phase marked by the search for identity and the strengthening of personal value systems. This search process is often influenced by the social environment, the

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media, and religious authority figures. Exposure to unfiltered religious information has the potential to create narrow and unbalanced understandings. The emotional psychological state of adolescents can reinforce the acceptance of black-and-white religious narratives. When the learning process does not provide space for critical reflection, exclusive attitudes can develop unconsciously. Schools have a moral responsibility to guide the process of developing healthy religious attitudes. The need for an educational approach that instills balanced values is increasingly urgent.

Islamic Religious Education in secondary schools has a mandate to shape students who are faithful, moral, and have a national perspective. Islamic Religious Education teaching materials actually contain universal values that support harmonious social life. The values of justice, tolerance, and balance are integral to authentic Islamic teachings. The learning process often still focuses on mastering cognitive material and normative memorization. Lecture-dominant learning patterns have the potential to reduce the space for dialogue and reflection on values. Students need learning experiences that allow religious values to be understood contextually and applicably. Learning that emphasizes the internalization of values can shape more moderate and inclusive attitudes (Rahmadi & Hamdan, 2023). Islamic Religious Education has a significant potential to become a medium for transforming students' religious attitudes.

The values of religious moderation reflect a middle-ground attitude that rejects extremism and excessive fanaticism. The principle of balance is the primary foundation for building harmonious social relations amidst differences. Students who understand religious moderation tend to be open to differing views. Developing a moderate attitude cannot be achieved solely through the delivery of theoretical concepts. The learning process must be designed so that these values are experienced, understood, and deeply internalized. The interaction between teachers and students plays a crucial role in shaping these attitudes. Teachers' role models are a key factor in effectively instilling the value of moderation. Islamic Religious Education needs to integrate the value of moderation into all learning activities.

Internalization of values is a process that simultaneously involves cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects. Students are not only required to understand the concept of religious moderation but also to experience and practice it. The internalization process occurs gradually through habituation and continuous reflection. A dialogic classroom environment can encourage students to respect differences of opinion. Guided discussions enable students to understand diversity as an inevitable social reality. Experiential learning can strengthen the personal meaning of the value of moderation. Values that are deeply understood tend to shape consistent attitudes. Islamic Religious Education needs to be designed as a safe space for the development of mature religious attitudes.

The role of Islamic Religious Education teachers is crucial for the successful internalization of the value of religious moderation. Teachers serve as facilitators, guiding the learning process toward a balanced understanding. Their pedagogical competence and moderate attitudes serve as role models for students. Open communication fosters trust and a comfortable learning environment. Varied learning strategies accommodate students' differing learning styles. A reflective approach allows students to connect the material to their social experiences. Teachers should avoid a doctrinal approach that closes the door to dialogue. Humanistic learning contributes to the formation of inclusive religious attitudes.

Secondary schools, as educational institutions, play a strategic role in fostering a culture of religious moderation. School policies can support the systematic implementation of moderation values. Intracurricular and extracurricular activities can

be utilized as a means of reinforcing these values. Interactions between students provide a practical space for practicing tolerance and mutual respect. An inclusive school culture creates a conducive learning climate. Collaboration between teachers, students, and the school strengthens the internalization of values. A supportive environment facilitates students' application of moderation values in their daily lives. Islamic religious education is an integral part of an educational ecosystem oriented toward social harmony.

Internalizing the values of religious moderation through Islamic Religious Education in secondary schools has long-term implications for national life. Students with moderate attitudes tend to be able to contribute positively to society. Value-oriented learning fosters adaptive and tolerant character. The challenges of globalization demand that young people live peacefully side by side. Education serves as a bulwark against extreme religious beliefs. Secondary school is a crucial phase in developing mature religious attitudes. Islamic Religious Education has a strategic responsibility in preparing a moderate generation. Strengthening religious moderation through learning is a sustainable social investment

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive design to gain a deep understanding of the process of internalizing the values of religious moderation through Islamic Religious Education in secondary schools. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the meanings, experiences, and interpretations of the research subjects regarding learning practices in the school environment, focusing on the processes, strategies, and interaction dynamics that contribute to the development of moderate attitudes among students. The research was conducted at a secondary school characterized by diverse students and actively implementing Islamic Religious Education according to the national curriculum. The location was purposively selected to represent the social context and the variety of student backgrounds, while the research subjects included teachers, students, and school staff directly involved in the learning process, with informants chosen through purposive sampling based on the relevance of their roles and the depth of information they could provide.

Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document studies. Observations captured the learning process, teacher-student interactions, and classroom situations reflecting the internalization of religious moderation values, while semi-structured interviews provided insights into teacher perceptions, experiences, and strategies as well as student responses to learning. Document studies examined learning tools, syllabi, lesson plans, teaching materials, and other supporting documents related to the integration of moderation values. Data analysis was conducted interactively and continuously, including data reduction, presentation, and meaning-making based on patterns, themes, and relationships among categories, presented in a comprehensive descriptive narrative. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation, accompanied by repeated checks to minimize bias. The study was conducted with strict adherence to ethical principles, including obtaining informant consent, ensuring confidentiality, and responsibly handling data, with the aim of producing a thorough understanding of the internalization of religious moderation values through Islamic Religious Education in secondary schools..

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Islamic Religious Education Learning Strategy as a Medium for Internalizing the Values of Religious Moderation

Islamic Religious Education (IS) teaching in secondary schools demonstrates a strategic role as a medium for instilling the value of religious moderation through structured lesson planning. The learning materials developed by teachers reflect efforts to integrate the values of balance, tolerance, and justice into learning objectives. The selection of teaching materials is directed not only at mastering normative concepts but also at strengthening students' contextual understanding. This strategy provides space for students to understand religious teachings as a living and dynamic value system. A reflective learning approach encourages students to connect the material to the social realities they experience. This process strengthens the personal and ongoing meaning of values. The value of religious moderation is not positioned as an abstract concept separate from everyday life. Learning becomes a means of substantive value transformation (Ilyas et al., 2026).

The implementation of Islamic Religious Education (IS) learning features a variety of methods oriented towards active student participation. Class discussions are used as a space for dialogue to express religious views openly and responsibly. Dialogic interactions encourage students to appreciate the differing perspectives that emerge during the learning process. This situation fosters critical thinking skills and empathy for other views. The question-and-answer method strengthens conceptual understanding while opening up opportunities for clarification of potential misunderstandings. Learning activities are no longer centered on the teacher as the sole source of knowledge. Students play an active role in the process of searching for meaning. This type of learning supports the natural internalization of the value of moderation.

The use of religious case studies enriches the learning process by presenting real-life issues relevant to students' lives. The cases discussed relate to the dynamics of diversity and social relations between religious communities. Case analysis encourages students to consider multiple perspectives before drawing conclusions. This analytical process trains the ability to assess a problem proportionally and in a balanced manner (Kurniati et al., 2025). The value of religious moderation is understood as an attitude born of rational and ethical considerations. Case discussions help students avoid simplistic judgments. Learning experiences become more meaningful because they relate directly to social reality. Learning transforms into a vehicle for developing mature religious attitudes.

Learning evaluation is aimed at assessing not only cognitive aspects but also the development of students' attitudes and behaviors. Attitude assessment instruments are used to observe changes in students' perspectives and responses to differences. The evaluation process is continuous and integrated with learning activities. Teacher feedback helps students reflect on their learning process. Reflection is an essential part of strengthening the value of religious moderation. Authentic assessment provides a more comprehensive picture of learning outcomes. Learning does not stop at academic achievement alone. The educational process is directed at developing balanced character.

The integration of planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning strengthens Islamic Religious Education's position as a vehicle for internalizing the value of religious moderation. Consistent learning strategies create a continuous learning experience. Students are given the opportunity to gradually understand, experience, and practice the value of moderation. This process fosters inclusive and adaptive religious attitudes. Learning becomes a space for systematic value inculcation. The value of moderation is not imposed but is cultivated through meaningful learning experiences.

Islamic Religious Education contributes to the formation of a harmonious school climate. The process of internalizing values aligns with national education goals.

2. The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Shaping Students' Moderate Attitudes

Islamic Religious Education teachers play a central role in guiding the internalization of religious moderation values through exemplary attitudes and behaviors. Teachers' moderate attitudes are reflected in how they deliver material, respond to differences, and manage classroom discussions. This exemplary behavior serves as a concrete reference for students in understanding the value of moderation. Daily interactions between teachers and students foster a relationship of mutual respect. Teachers function not only as instructors but also as value guides. The presence of inclusive teachers creates a safe and comfortable learning environment. Students feel valued as individuals with diverse backgrounds. The learning process takes place in a conducive psychological climate (Talibo, 2025).

Teachers' pedagogical competence plays a crucial role in designing values-oriented learning. A teacher's understanding of student characteristics influences the effectiveness of the learning strategies they implement. Teachers who are sensitive to classroom dynamics are able to flexibly adapt their learning approaches. This ability helps manage differences of opinion that arise during discussions. Teachers act as mediators, maintaining a balanced interaction. The learning process proceeds constructively without creating tension. Students learn to express their opinions politely. Moderate attitudes are formed through positive interaction experiences (Arikarani et al., 2024).

The teacher's ability to connect teaching materials to social realities strengthens the relevance of learning. Contextual explanations of the material help students understand the meaning of moderation in real life. Teachers guide students to view religious teachings as ethical guidelines for social relations. This approach prevents a rigid and textual understanding of religion. Students are encouraged to think reflectively about the social phenomena they encounter. The reflection process deepens the personal meaning of values. Teachers act as facilitators of critical thinking. Learning becomes a means of developing balanced religious insight.

The interpersonal communication established by teachers influences the effectiveness of value internalization. The language teachers use reflects respect and openness. Teachers' responses to students' questions demonstrate respect for the learning process. Dialogic relationships strengthen students' trust in the teacher. This trust forms the basis for accepting the values conveyed. Teachers are able to guide discussions without being authoritarian. Students feel they have room to grow intellectually and emotionally. The educational process takes place in a humanistic manner.

The consistency of teachers' attitudes inside and outside the classroom reinforces the message of values conveyed. Teacher behavior in school life reflects the values of moderation taught. Students indirectly observe and imitate their teachers' attitudes. The process of learning values occurs through social conditioning. Teachers serve as reference figures in developing proportional religious attitudes. This role positions teachers as agents of value change. Islamic religious education gains moral legitimacy through teacher exemplars. The process of internalizing values occurs naturally and sustainably.

3. School Culture and Social Dynamics as Strengtheners of Internalization of Religious Moderation Values

School culture plays a significant role in strengthening the internalization of religious moderation values acquired through learning. Values instilled in the classroom are reinforced through social practices within the school environment. Interactions between students reflect the results of the ongoing values education process. Schools become social spaces where values are tested and practiced. An inclusive environment encourages students to develop mutual respect (Suprpto, 2020). Harmonious social relationships foster meaningful learning experiences. The value of moderation extends beyond the conceptual realm. The educational process extends into the social realm.

School activities involving collaboration among students reinforce the habit of tolerance. Group activities encourage students from diverse backgrounds to work together. Collaborative experiences foster adaptability and respect for differences. This process fosters mutual trust and empathy. Students learn to manage differences constructively. Social interaction becomes an effective means of learning values. Schools function as social laboratories. The value of religious moderation is internalized through practical practice.

The role of school policies is to support the creation of an educational climate conducive to strengthening the value of moderation. School rules are designed to ensure a sense of security and fairness for all members of the school community. These policies reflect the institution's commitment to inclusivity. Policy implementation is consistent and transparent. Students experience the presence of justice in school life. This experience reinforces the normative understanding gained in the classroom. Schools serve as miniature representations of a pluralistic society. The process of values education occurs systematically (Warsah & Istan, 2025).

Relationships between teachers and students outside the classroom also strengthen the internalization of values. Informal interactions provide an unstructured yet meaningful learning space. Students observe teachers' behavior in various social situations. This observation shapes their perception of the school's values. Consistent attitudes across the entire school community create a strong culture of moderation. Values are practiced collectively in daily life. The process of learning values occurs implicitly. The school becomes an ecosystem for character education.

The synergy between Islamic Religious Education (IS) and school culture results in a comprehensive process of internalizing values. Students gain a holistic and sustainable learning experience. The value of religious moderation is instilled through a combination of formal learning and social practices. This process fosters inclusive and adaptive religious attitudes. Schools act as effective agents of value socialization. Education contributes to the formation of a generation capable of peaceful coexistence. The value of moderation becomes part of students' identities. The process of internalizing values is continuous and meaningful.

CONCLUSIONS

The discussion shows that the internalization of religious moderation values through Islamic Religious Education (ISE) learning in secondary schools occurs as a planned and ongoing pedagogical process. Reflectively designed learning strategies enable the values of balance, tolerance, and justice to be substantively integrated into students' learning experiences. The role of ISE teachers emerges as a key factor through exemplary attitudes, pedagogical competence, and the ability to build inclusive dialogical interactions. The participatory learning process encourages students to develop religious understanding that is not only cognitive, but also affective and behavioral. Internalization

of values is reinforced by learning evaluations that emphasize reflection and ongoing observation of attitudes. An inclusive school culture contributes as a social practice space for the values of religious moderation learned in the classroom. Interactions among school members extend the process of learning values into everyday life. School policies that uphold justice and diversity strengthen the consistency of the value messages received by students. The synergy between formal learning and the social dynamics of the school creates a holistic and meaningful educational experience. This process shapes religious attitudes that are adaptive to pluralistic realities. ISE serves as a strategic medium for developing moderate character in students. Strengthening religious moderation through secondary education is an important foundation for creating long-term social harmony.

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