

TRUST as A Pillar of Religious Moderation in Islamic Education: A Multicultural Approach to Diversity

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Abstract: This study explores the strategic role of Islamic education in promoting religious moderation through a multicultural approach. Responding to the increasing diversity in Indonesian society, the research seeks to answer how Islamic education integrates the values of tolerance, inclusivity, and social harmony into learning. Using a meta-synthesis method, 25 relevant journal articles published between 2020–2024 were analyzed to identify the patterns of implementation, challenges, and strategies in promoting religious moderation. The study finds that religious moderation is practiced through curriculum integration, dialogical pedagogy, and role modeling by educators. A multicultural approach—encompassing inclusive, critical, and humanistic perspectives—enhances empathy and social understanding. However, challenges such as political interference, exclusivist resistance, and pedagogical limitations remain significant. To address these, the study proposes the TRUST model (Tolerance, Respect, Understanding, Solidarity, Togetherness) as a conceptual and practical framework to reinforce harmony in Islamic educational settings. This model bridges Islamic teachings with multicultural values, offering a relevant paradigm for contemporary education.

Keywords: Islamic education, multicultural approach, religious moderation, TRUST model

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji peran strategis pendidikan Islam dalam menginternalisasi nilai-nilai moderasi beragama melalui pendekatan multikultural. Dalam menghadapi keberagaman masyarakat Indonesia, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana pendidikan Islam mengintegrasikan nilai toleransi, inklusivitas, dan harmoni sosial ke dalam proses pembelajaran. Dengan metode meta-sintesis, sebanyak 25 artikel jurnal yang relevan pada tahun 2020–2024 dianalisis untuk mengidentifikasi pola implementasi, tantangan, dan strategi penguatan moderasi beragama. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa moderasi beragama diterapkan melalui integrasi dalam kurikulum, pendekatan pedagogis dialogis, serta keteladanan pendidik. Pendekatan multikultural yang meliputi perspektif inklusif, kritis, dan humanis dinilai efektif dalam meningkatkan empati dan kesadaran sosial peserta didik. Namun, tantangan seperti politisasi agama, resistensi kelompok eksklusif, dan keterbatasan pedagogis masih menjadi hambatan. Untuk mengatasi hal tersebut, penelitian ini menawarkan model TRUST (Tolerance, Respect, Understanding, Solidarity, Togetherness) sebagai kerangka konseptual dan praktis dalam memperkuat harmoni di

lingkungan pendidikan Islam. Model ini menggabungkan nilai-nilai Islam dengan prinsip multikulturalisme sebagai paradigma pendidikan yang relevan di era kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: model TRUST, Moderasi beragama, pendekatan multikultural, pendidikan Islam



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INTRODUCTION

The concept of religious moderation is fundamental as an approach to maintaining harmony and overcoming social polarization caused by excessive fanaticism. Religious moderation does not mean obscuring religious teachings but instead placing religious values within an inclusive, fair, and balanced framework.¹ The Indonesian government, through the Ministry of Religion, has made religious moderation one of its national priority programs since 2019. The goal is to build a non-extreme religious perspective, attitude, and practice, either to the left or to the right, and to encourage peaceful coexistence in a pluralistic society.²

However, the implementation of religious moderation is not free from complex challenges. Amidst the flow of globalization of information and social media, the spread of hate speech and radicalism is increasingly easy to reach the wider community.³ Many groups deliberately manipulate religious issues for the political or ideological interests of their groups. It is exacerbated by the low level of religious literacy and a culture of peace in some communities, which makes them vulnerable to provocation and misinformation.⁴ Therefore, efforts to build religious moderation must be accompanied by strengthening character education, increasing interfaith dialogue, and coaching religious leaders and youth as agents of social change.

Furthermore, religious moderation also demands active involvement from all elements of society, including educational institutions, community organizations, and the media. Education is a strategic space to instill the values of tolerance, mutual respect, and respect for differences from an early age.⁵ In addition, social media needs to play an educative and constructive role in spreading narratives of peace and

¹ Turhamun, "Implementation of Religious Moderation in the Non-Formal Education in Forming a Multicultural Society," *International Journal of Social Science and Religion (IJSSR)*, January 3, 2024, 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.53639/ijssr.v5i1.196>.

² Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi Beragama* (Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, 2019).

³ Munawiah Abdullah et al., "Moderation of Thought in the Age of Radicalism: The Role of Social Media and Political Education in Countering Hate Content," *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* 6, no. 1 (January 17, 2025): 94–110, <https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v6i1.1373>.

⁴ Samantha May et al., "The Religious as Political and the Political as Religious: Globalisation, Post-Secularism and the Shifting Boundaries of the Sacred," *Politics, Religion & Ideology* 15, no. 3 (July 3, 2014): 331–46, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21567689.2014.948526>.

⁵ Daviq Chairilsyah, "Raising Tolerant Attitude to Children," *Aulad : Journal on Early Childhood* 2, no. 3 (December 11, 2019): 81–90, <https://doi.org/10.31004/aulad.v2i3.38>.

brotherhood.⁶ The success of religious moderation is ultimately determined by the extent to which society is able to build a shared consensus in maintaining diversity as the basis for a civilized national life.

In this framework, Islamic education plays a strategic role in shaping the character of students who are not only intellectually intelligent but also spiritually and socially mature. One important dimension that is highlighted in this context is the formation of a moderate, inclusive, and tolerant religious attitude towards differences. Religious moderation in Islamic education aims to instil the values of justice, balance, and respect for diversity, as taught in the teachings of Islam, which are *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. Azra argued that ideal Islamic education should not be oriented solely toward textual mastery of Islamic knowledge, but should also equip students with the capacity to understand social realities critically and empathetically so that they can live peacefully in a pluralistic society.⁷

In Indonesia, the spirit of religious moderation has been integrated into various educational policies, such as the curriculum for Islamic Education (PAI), character education strengthening programs, and policies for the institutional transformation of madrasahs and Islamic boarding schools. The Ministry of Religious Affairs, for example, through the 2020–2024 Religious Moderation Roadmap, emphasizes the importance of Islamic Education that is not exclusive and indoctrinating but rather dialogical, reflective, and contextual.⁸ However, even though there are supporting policies, the concrete implementation of religious moderation in Islamic education still faces various challenges. Musyahid's research shows that many Islamic educational institutions, especially at the grassroots level, are still oriented towards dogmatic and teacher-centred pedagogical patterns, thus hindering the internalization of moderate values.⁹

When the religious learning process focuses more on memorizing dogmas and a literal understanding of texts, without opening up space for contextualization and critical discussion, students tend to grow up with a narrow religious perspective. Several studies have shown that Islamic Education (PAI) materials in schools still do not fully reflect the spirit of diversity and tolerance. For example, findings from PPIM UIN Jakarta in 2019 revealed that many PAI teachers still use narratives that contain bias against other groups or religions, both explicitly and implicitly. It is certainly

⁶ Muhammad Maga Sule and Attahir Shehu Mainiyo, "Effectiveness of Social Media Platforms in Disseminating Qur'anic Teachings Among Contemporary Muslims," *Spektra: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 5, no. 1 (September 22, 2023): 47–64, <https://doi.org/10.34005/spektra.v5i1.2668>.

⁷ Azyumardi Azra, "Islamic Education and Reintegration of Sciences: Improving Islamic Higher Education," *Media Syari'ah* 15, no. 2 (2013): 257–64, <http://jurnal.ar-raniry.ac.id/index.php/medsyar/article/view/1779>.

⁸ Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi Beragama*.

⁹ Musyahid Musyahid and Nur Kolis, "Religious Moderation Implementation in Islamic Education: A Systematic Review," *FITRAH: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 9, no. 2 (December 31, 2023): 265–84, <https://doi.org/10.24952/fitrah.v9i2.9547>.

contrary to the spirit of moderation, which prioritizes balance, justice, and respect for differences.¹⁰

Another challenge that is no less significant is the rapid flow of information in the digital era. Social media and online platforms have become new arenas for the spread of religious ideologies and narratives, including those that are exclusive and radical. Students who are psychologically still in the stage of searching for their identity are very vulnerable to absorbing provocative and immoderate religious content. As stated by Nyanasuryadadi, the digital space is currently an ideological battleground that often misleads the younger generation if they are not equipped with adequate digital and religious literacy.¹¹ Unfortunately, not all educational institutions are prepared to face this challenge systematically, both in terms of curriculum, teacher capacity, and supporting facilities.

The multicultural approach in Islamic education is a pedagogical strategy that is oriented towards the formation of students' character so that they are able to live in a pluralistic society with an open, inclusive, and tolerant attitude. In the context of Indonesia, which is multiethnic, multicultural, and multireligious, Islamic education cannot only focus on the transfer of religious doctrine dogmatically.¹² Instead, education needs to be developed as a space that sows universal human values that are in line with the principle of *rahmatan lil' alamin* in Islam. The multicultural approach invites students to understand that diversity is not a threat but rather a gift that contains great potential to strengthen national solidarity and unity.¹³

In practice, a multicultural approach can be integrated through various aspects of learning, starting from a curriculum that reflects the values of pluralism and learning methods based on dialogue and cooperation, to strengthening a school culture that upholds the values of social justice.¹⁴ For example, teachers can develop Islamic education teaching materials that discuss the contributions of Islamic figures in a multicultural context or present case studies from various religious communities that live side by side. Mala and Hunaida stated that the integration of multicultural

¹⁰ "PPIM Gelar FGD Tentang Moderasi Beragama Di Kalangan Guru PAI," accessed February 19, 2025, <https://uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/id/ppim-gelar-fgd-tentang-moderasi-beragama-di-kalangan-guru-pai>.

¹¹ Partono Nyanasuryanadi et al., "Mainstreaming the Value of Religious Moderation by Teachers in the Digital Era," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 15, no. 2 (April 12, 2023): 1357–68, <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v15i2.3198>.

¹² Darmawati Jufri and St. Wardah Hanafie Das, "The Nature of Multicultural Education in Indonesia: A Perspective on Islamic Education," *Harmony Philosophy: International Journal of Islamic Religious Studies and Sharia* 1, no. 4 (December 30, 2024): 01–14, <https://doi.org/10.70062/harmonyphilosophy.v1i4.26>.

¹³ Nurlaelah Nurlaelah et al., "A Multicultural Approach on Islamic Religious Education," *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research* 06, no. 04 (April 18, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijsshr/v6-i4-38>.

¹⁴ Syarof Nursyah Ismail and Zulkarnain Zulkarnain, "Embracing Diversity: Islamic Education through the Multicultural Lens of the Quran," *Edukasia: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 18, no. 2 (December 30, 2023): 203, <https://doi.org/10.21043/edukasia.v18i2.25456>.

education into Islamic education can strengthen religious moderation because both prioritize the spirit of respect for differences and social justice.¹⁵

However, the implementation of a multicultural approach in Islamic education also faces challenges, such as resistance from some groups who still view diversity negatively, limited human resources who have a multicultural pedagogical perspective, and the unequal understanding of teachers regarding the concept of religious moderation¹⁶. Tilaar emphasized that multicultural education is an important foundation in building a peaceful, democratic, and highly civilized national civilization—in line with the ideals of Islam as a religion that brings blessings to all of nature.¹⁷

Previous research on religious moderation within Islamic education has generally focused on doctrinal interpretation, theological frameworks, and the cultivation of tolerant religious attitudes. For instance, Khasanah et al. argue that religious moderation in Islamic education rests on the theological foundation of *tawassuth* (the middle way) and *tasāmuh* (tolerance), which together form the core of a balanced Islamic worldview.¹⁸ Similarly, Rahmadi and Hamdan stated that approach moderation from a multidisciplinary lens—combining theological, sociological, and anthropological perspectives—to show that the notion of *wasathiyyah* should guide not only belief but also educational practice and institutional ethos.¹⁹ Both studies frame moderation primarily as a doctrinal and ethical principle rooted in Islamic theology, emphasizing values of harmony and balance.

Meanwhile, other studies have explored religious moderation from the standpoint of curriculum policy and pedagogical reform. Suparta determines how the Islamic University of Indonesia's boarding school curriculum integrates moderation values to counter radicalism and cultivate peace-oriented student identities.²⁰ In a related study, Abidin and Murtadlo explore how multicultural-based Islamic education curricula can serve as a vehicle for internalizing the values of tolerance, inclusivity, and

¹⁵ Asnal Mala and Wiwin Luqna Hunaida, "Exploring the Role of Religious Moderation in Islamic Education: A Comprehensive Analysis of Its Unifying Potential and Practical Applications," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 11, no. 2 (December 31, 2023): 173–96, <https://doi.org/10.15642/jpai.2023.11.2.173-196>.

¹⁶ Muthoifin Muthoifin et al., "Islamic Education Management in Promoting Multiculturalism, Democracy and Harmony," *Journal of Management World* 2025, no. 1 (January 13, 2025): 445–56, <https://doi.org/10.53935/jomw.v2024i4.713>.

¹⁷ Firman Mansir and Ben Wadham, "Paradigm of H.A.R Tilaar Thinking About Multicultural Education in Islamic Pedagogy and Its Implication in the Era Pandemic Covid-19," *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 19, no. 2 (December 2, 2021): 253–68, <https://doi.org/10.21154/cendekia.v19i2.2612>.

¹⁸ Nur Khasanah, Achmad Irwan Hamzani, and Havis Aravik, "Religious Moderation in the Islamic Education System in Indonesia," *QALAMUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama* 15, no. 1 (2023): 629–42, <https://doi.org/10.37680/qalamuna.v15i1.4115>.

¹⁹ Rahmadi and Hamdan, "Religious Moderation in The Context of Islamic Education : A Multidisciplinary Perspective and Its Application in Islamic," *Khazanah: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Humaniora* 21, no. 1 (2023): 59–82, <https://doi.org/10.18592/khazanah.v20i1.8487>.

²⁰ Suparta, "Religious Moderation-Based Curriculum for Urban Muslims : A Study in Islamic University of Indonesia Islamic Boarding School," *AKADEMIKA: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 29, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.32332/akademika.v29i1.8732>.

humanism in Indonesian schools.²¹ However, most of these studies remain focused on policy and curriculum formulation rather than classroom-level pedagogy. Consequently, research that explicitly bridges multicultural pedagogical models with the cultivation of moderation values in Islamic education remains limited, particularly in practical and instructional contexts.

This study aims to explore the role of Islamic education in internalizing the values of religious moderation through a multicultural approach. In the context of Indonesia's multiethnic and multireligious society, Islamic education is faced with a significant challenge to not only teach religious doctrine but also instil the values of inclusivity, tolerance, and diversity as part of national identity. Therefore, this study is designed to understand more deeply how a multicultural approach in Islamic education can be a strategic instrument in building the character of students who are moderate and open to differences.

Building on the gaps and challenges described above, this study focuses on examining how religious moderation is applied within Islamic education as a means of engaging with diversity in Indonesia. It seeks to explore the multicultural approaches employed by Islamic educational institutions to cultivate values of tolerance and respect for difference among learners. In addition, this study aims to identify the obstacles encountered in implementing religious moderation in school and madrasa settings, as well as strategies that educators adopt to address these challenges. Finally, the research investigates the extent to which Islamic education can contribute to fostering social harmony and mitigating potential conflicts arising from religious and cultural pluralism within society.

The relevance of this research is very significant in the current socio-political context, where issues of polarization, intolerance, and radicalism still often arise, especially in the environment of the younger generation. Islamic education, as one of the main pillars of the formation of national character and morality, plays a strategic role in countering various forms of extremism and building a peaceful and inclusive society. The results of this study are expected not only to enrich the academic treasury in the field of Islamic education and multiculturalism but also to provide direct implications for strengthening the national education system that is oriented towards building a tolerant, just, and civilized national character.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a meta-synthesis method to integrate and reinterpret findings from various scholarly works on religious moderation in Islamic education, utilizing a multicultural approach. Meta-synthesis was chosen because it enables the consolidation of insights across qualitative studies, producing a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of how Islamic education contributes to the cultivation

²¹ Achmad Anwar Abidin and Muhammad Ali Murtadlo, "Curriculum Development of Multicultural-Based Islamic Education as An Effort to Weaver Religious Moderation Values in Indonesia," *The International Journal of Islamic Education, Research and Multiculturalism* 2, no. 1 (2020): 29–46, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.47006/ijierm.v2i1.30>.

of social harmony. The analysis focuses explicitly on madrasas and Islamic boarding schools, as these institutions represent the foundational level of Islamic education where students' religious identity, values, and attitudes are shaped, and where challenges related to dogmatic pedagogical practices are most visible. Examining these settings allows the study to identify conceptual patterns that can inform more inclusive policies and practices in Islamic education.

Literature searches were conducted systematically through the Scopus database using the following Boolean query: *(Islamic education OR madrasah OR pesantren) AND (religious moderation OR multicultural education OR tolerance) AND (implementation OR challenges OR strategies OR social harmony)*. Articles were selected based on the following inclusion criteria: publications from 2020 to 2024, in English, peer-reviewed, and relevant to the context of Islamic education in Indonesia. The 2020–2024 period was chosen because it coincided with the implementation of the Religious Moderation Roadmap 2020–2024, which has encouraged increased academic discourse on religious moderation. Of the 44 initial articles found, screening based on publication year yielded 33 articles; limiting publication type (journal articles only) left 32 articles; and screening based on full-text availability yielded 25 articles that met all criteria and were included in the research dataset.

Data analysis was conducted through coding, grouping, and thematic categorization based on the research questions. Selected articles were grouped into several main themes, such as the application of religious moderation in Islamic education environments, multicultural learning approaches, various implementation barriers, and strategies for strengthening social harmony. The next stage was meta-synthesis, a process of comparing, interpreting, and integrating findings to identify patterns that support, differ, or complement each other. This interpretive integration produces a line-of-argument synthesis that formulates a broader conceptual pattern, while simultaneously giving birth to the TRUST model—Tolerance, Respect, Understanding, Solidarity, and Togetherness. TRUST emerges as a core value consistently emphasized in the literature and serves as a primary mechanism for internalizing religious moderation in Islamic education. Thus, this meta-synthesis not only summarises previous findings but also provides new theoretical contributions regarding the role of Islamic education in building an inclusive and harmonious society.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Religious Moderation in Islamic Education: A Constructive Response to Diversity

Religious moderation in Islamic education is an essential approach to creating peace and harmony in a pluralistic society. In the context of education, religious moderation functions as a response to the increasingly complex diversity of religions and cultures in this era of globalization. Islamic education plays a vital role in instilling an attitude of tolerance and mutual respect between religious communities, as well as teaching that Islam, as a religion of *rahmatan lil-'alamin* (blessing for all nature), prioritizes balance and harmony in social life. Religious moderation in Islamic

education is not only understood as a theoretical concept but also as a practical effort to integrate moderate values into the curriculum and pedagogy applied in schools.²²

Conceptually, religious moderation refers to principles that avoid extreme attitudes, both in views and actions. Some of the main principles that are often used as a guideline in religious moderation are *tawassuth* (moderation), *tawāzun* (balance), *i'tidāl* (simplicity and balance in religion), and *tasāmuh* (tolerance of differences).²³ In various studies, religious moderation is considered a means to manage differences that exist in a multicultural society peacefully and openly, avoiding violence and radicalization. This concept teaches Muslims not to get caught up in extremism but rather to choose a wise path and prioritize balance in religion.²⁴

The implementation of religious moderation in Islamic education is also reflected in the curriculum and pedagogy applied in schools. It is evidenced by the research of Ma'arif that shows how the integration of moderation values in the curriculum and culture of madrasahs based on the principles of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) has led to the formation of moderate character in students.²⁵ It shows that a curriculum that includes the values of religious moderation can help students understand the importance of diversity and tolerance from an early age. The research of Nasution also underlines the importance of utilizing the *Kitab Kuning* in spreading the values of *Wasathiyah* Islam in the *Ma'had al-Jami'ah* environment, where the *Kitab Kuning* is an important medium in instilling a moderate attitude in academic life in Islamic boarding schools.²⁶

In addition, research by Ichsan et al. suggests that the integration of religious moderation values in Islamic Education (PAI) subjects, such as *Aqidah*, *Akhlak*, and *Fiqh*, can strengthen moderate students' character.²⁷ This is in line with the view that Islamic education not only aims to teach religious teachings but also to teach the importance of living side by side with diversity. Interfaith and cultural dialogue-based learning is a very effective model for achieving this goal, as expressed by Alsulami.²⁸

Teachers' exemplary behaviour in practising religious moderation also plays a major role in shaping students' character. Research by Saepudin states that the application of moderate values in the teaching and learning process, as well as

²² M A Ma'arif et al., "Shaping Students' Moderate Islamic Character at Madrasah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 2 (2024): 323–35, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v10i2.34029>.

²³ Ahmad Nurrohm et al., "The Concept of Islamic Moderation in Indonesia: A Comparative Study in Tafsir An-Nur and Tafsir of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA)," *International Journal of Religion* 5, no. 10 (June 24, 2024): 2110–25, <https://doi.org/10.61707/5b1e9h02>.

²⁴ Choiriyah Muchtar et al., "Religious Moderation in The Framework of Life," *International Journal of Islamic Education, Research and Multiculturalism (IJIERM)* 4, no. 2 (November 28, 2022): 135–49, <https://doi.org/10.47006/ijierm.v4i2.142>.

²⁵ Ma'arif et al., "Shaping Students' Moderate Islamic Character at Madrasah."

²⁶ S Nasution, H Asari, and H Al-Rasyid, "Kitab Kuning and Religious Moderation: A Study on State Islamic Universities in Indonesia," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 19, no. 2 (2024): 73–88, <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol19no2.5>.

²⁷ Y Ichsan, S Syamsudin, and Z Nuryana, "Realizing Islamic Education Based on Religious Moderation with the Wasathiyah Islamic Paradigm from the Perspective of the Qur'an," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 21, no. 1 (2024): 247–63, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v21i1.9944>.

²⁸ N D Alsulami, "Developing Religious Moderation in Indonesian Islamic Schools Through the Implementation of the Values of Islām Wasathiyah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 19, no. 2 (2022): 207–22, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.2022.192-03>.

teachers' exemplary behaviour, will strengthen students' moderate character.²⁹ Teachers who demonstrate moderate, open, and tolerant attitudes will be role models followed by students in their daily lives.

In the institutional context, the transformation of Islamic boarding school management is also a form of response to the challenges of modernity. Research by Darwanto shows that Islamic boarding schools now not only teach religious knowledge but also strengthen social values and student character through adaptive management to the current context.³⁰ In fact, the implementation of an integrative curriculum that combines general and religious knowledge, as implemented in Sidik, is able to form students who are knowledgeable and moderate in their beliefs.³¹

Thus, various studies show that religious moderation has been applied in a layered and systematic manner in the world of Islamic education, starting from curriculum design and teaching approaches to institutional management strategies. It strengthens the position of Islamic education as a strategic agent in forming a generation that is tolerant, inclusive, and ready to face the complexity of diversity in global society. The application of religious moderation in education also provides a strong foundation for students to face the challenges of diversity in an increasingly connected and complex world. It prepares them to live in a pluralistic and multicultural society. To summarize the key patterns emerging from the thematic synthesis, the classification of subthemes identified in this subchapter is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Mapping the Coded Landscape of Religious Moderation Practices in Islamic Education

Themes	Key Subthemes	Interpretive Insight
Conceptual foundations of religious moderation	<i>Tawassuth</i> , <i>Tawāzun</i> , <i>I'tidāl</i> , <i>Tasāmuh</i> ; rejection of extremism	Moderation values form the doctrinal and ethical base for pluralistic Islamic education
Curriculum integration of moderation values	NU-based curriculum; integrative curriculum combining general religious knowledge; <i>Kitab Kuning</i> as a medium of Wasathiyah	Curriculum becomes a transformative instrument for shaping student dispositions toward tolerance and balance.
Moderation embedded in Islamic education subjects.	Integration in Aqidah, Akhlak, Fiqh; interfaith dialogue learning	Moderation is operationalized within core religious subjects, showing curriculum-level internalization

²⁹ A Saepudin et al., "Strengthening Character Education: An Action Research in Forming Religious Moderation in Islamic Education," *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 22, no. 12 (2023): 84–105, <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.22.12.5>.

³⁰ A Darwanto et al., "Transformation of Boarding School Management Models in Enhancing Student Accessibility and Educational Quality," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 21, no. 1 (2024): 145–64, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v21i1.8632>.

³¹ M F Sidik et al., "Conceptualization of the Integrated Islamic Religious Education Curriculum: A Literature Study at Imam Hatip Schools Turkey and MAN Insan Cendekia Indonesia," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 21, no. 1 (2024): 111–30, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v21i1.7617>.

Teachers as agents of moderation	Role modelling; pedagogical behaviour; classroom interactions	Teachers transmit moderation not only through instruction but through performative moral example
Institutional transformation	Adaptive pesantren management; curriculum ecology; social-value strengthening	Institutions construct an environment where moderation becomes part of the educational habitus.
Systemic implementation of moderation	Layered practice across curriculum, pedagogy, and institutional culture	Moderation emerges as an ecosystem, not isolated initiatives, forming readiness for multicultural coexistence

Multicultural Approaches in Islamic Education: Nurturing Tolerance and Embracing Diversity

The multicultural approach in Islamic education is an important strategy for building tolerance, strengthening social cohesion, and responding to the diversity inherent in modern society.³² Based on the results of the literature review, this approach not only reflects the universal values of Islam but also affirms Islam's commitment to justice, equal rights, and respect for fellow human beings regardless of ethnic, cultural, or religious background. In this context, Islamic education has great potential to transform into a means of strengthening multicultural values through an inclusive, critical, and humanistic approach.

Theoretically, multicultural education in the context of Islam refers to educational efforts that instil awareness of diversity as a social reality that must be accepted and appreciated. Islam, as a universal religion, recognizes the existence of differences and teaches the principles of peaceful coexistence. Verses in the Qur'an such as QS. Al-Hujurat: 13 states that humans were created into tribes and nations so that they could get to know each other, which becomes the normative basis that plurality is part of divine will. From this perspective, Islamic education is required not only to teach faith and worship but also to promote social values that encourage openness, respect for differences, and active participation in a pluralistic society.

Islamic education plays an important role in building social harmony by making multicultural values an integral part of the educational process. Through the curriculum, teaching materials, learning methods, and social interactions in the school environment, Islamic education can form a generation that is open-minded, reflective, and inclusive.³³ One of the multicultural approaches that is widely discussed in the literature is the inclusive approach, namely the use of a curriculum that reflects the

³² Zaenal Mukarom et al., "A Multicultural Approach in Islamic Education to Increase Tolerance," *International Education Trend Issues* 2, no. 2 (September 8, 2024): 300–307, <https://doi.org/10.56442/ieti.v2i2.851>.

³³ Siti Sumadiyah and Sri Wahyuni, "Development of Multicultural Islamic Religious Education Curriculum in Building Religious Moderation at Universitas Islam Kadiri Kediri," *EDU-RELIGIA: Jurnal Keagamaan Dan Pembelajarannya* 7, no. 1 (June 26, 2024): 80–89, <https://doi.org/10.52166/edu-religia.v7i1.6919>.

social and cultural diversity of students.³⁴ This approach includes recognizing the contributions of various ethnic and cultural groups in history, including in the Islamic context, as well as the preparation of teaching materials that feature figures from different backgrounds. This approach aims to create a learning space that respects the identities of all students and encourages equality in learning.

For example, Abdullah and Herlambang's research shows how Muslim students' multicultural knowledge is used as social capital in plural life in Indonesia, providing deeper insight into the importance of multicultural-based education in building a harmonious society.³⁵ Likewise, Rahman revealed that Islamic boarding schools in post-conflict and disaster Aceh were able to adapt to become educational institutions that integrate multicultural values by bringing students from various backgrounds closer together.³⁶

This inclusive approach is also reflected in Aryati and Suradi, who investigated the practice of interfaith tolerance between Islamic boarding school students and the Hindu community in Bali.³⁷ This study illustrates how Islamic boarding schools can be a model of education that not only teaches Islam but also prioritizes the values of tolerance between religious communities. In addition, Nuha's research found that the teaching strategies implemented by teachers in Catholic schools and Islamic Madrasahs in Bajawa were very effective in instilling values of tolerance in students, especially in dealing with religious and cultural diversity.³⁸

In addition to the inclusive approach, Islamic education can also adopt a critical approach as part of a multicultural strategy. This approach aims to develop students' critical awareness of issues of diversity, discrimination, and social injustice. In this context, students are invited to not only understand the facts of diversity but also reflect on their positions and attitudes in complex social structures. Through dialogue, case studies, and reflection on life experiences, a critical approach helps students build higher social sensitivity and encourages active involvement in building a more just and equal society. In Islamic education, this approach is in line with the principle of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, namely, encouraging good and preventing evil in social life.

Equally important is the humanist approach, which focuses on developing empathy and social awareness through direct experience. This approach emphasizes

³⁴ Noor Hamid and Sri Wahyuni, "A Multicultural Islamic Religious Education Curriculum Development," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 14, no. 2 (September 2, 2024): 113–27, <https://doi.org/10.38073/jpi.v14i2.1731>.

³⁵ F Abdullah and S Herlambang, "Multiculturalism among Students in Madrasah: Knowledge, Challenges, and Social Capital," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 2 (2024): 390–408, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v7i2.4710>.

³⁶ B A Rahman, "Islamic Revival and Cultural Diversity: Pesantren's Configuration in Contemporary Aceh, Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 12, no. 1 (2022): 201–29, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v12i1.201-229>.

³⁷ A Aryati and A Suradi, "The Implementation of Religious Tolerance: Study on Pesantren Bali Bina Insani with Bali Hindus Communities," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 10, no. 2 (2022): 471–90, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v10i2.646>.

³⁸ U Nuha et al., "Religion Teachers' Strategies to Internalize Tolerance Values at Catholic and Islamic Schools in Bajawa Nusa Tenggara Timur," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 18, no. 2 (2021): 295–306, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.2021.182-05>.

interaction between individuals from different backgrounds, whether through exchange programs, collaborative projects, or cross-cultural and cross-religious social activities. Direct experience in the context of multicultural interaction has a significant impact on forming a deep understanding and positive attitude towards diversity. In Islamic education, this approach is in line with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, who was full of compassion and empathy for fellow human beings, regardless of social or religious background.

In addition, Naim's research shows how the integration of madrasah diniyah into Islamic universities can provide a broader multicultural approach by instilling diverse values among students and increasing their understanding of plurality.³⁹ By integrating inclusive, critical, and humanist approaches into the educational process, Islamic education can become an effective agent of social transformation in promoting the values of tolerance, justice, and peace. The literature shows that Islamic educational institutions that implement these approaches tend to produce graduates who are more open, tolerant, and ready to be part of a diverse global society. Therefore, the development of a multicultural approach is not merely a response to existing social realities but also a strategic effort to build an inclusive and humanist Islamic civilization amidst the challenges of globalization and increasingly strong identity conflicts. To highlight the conceptual structure underlying this theme, the classification of subthemes resulting from the coding is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The Classification of Coded Approaches to Multicultural Education in Islamic Settings

Themes	Key Subthemes	Interpretive Insight
Theoretical and Islamic foundations of multicultural education	Qur'anic basis for diversity; plurality as divine will; peaceful coexistence	Islam provides normative theological grounding for multiculturalism as part of religious identity formation
Inclusive multicultural approach	Diversity-conscious curriculum; representation of diverse cultural groups; identity-affirming teaching materials	Inclusion ensures students see themselves and others represented, fostering equality and social cohesion.
Interfaith and intercultural interaction approach	Interfaith tolerance practices; everyday interactions across religious groups; social bridging	Direct contact and daily engagement reduce prejudice and normalize tolerance in religiously mixed contexts.
Critical multicultural approach	Awareness of discrimination, social justice, dialogic learning, and reflection on structural inequality	Critical reflection encourages students to question bias and engage ethically with diversity.
Humanist experiential approach	Empathy-building activities; lived experience; collaboration	Empathy emerges from experience, enabling deeper

³⁹ N Naim, A Aziz, and T Teguh, "Integration of Madrasah Diniyah Learning Systems for Strengthening Religious Moderation in Indonesian Universities," *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education* 11, no. 1 (2022): 108–19, <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v11i1.22210>.

	across groups; experiential projects	internalization of respect for plural identities.
Institutional adoption of multicultural models	Integration across madrasah–university pathways; adaptation in post-conflict contexts	Institutions act as systemic carriers of multicultural values, embedding tolerance beyond classroom instruction.
Systemic impact of multicultural approaches	Formation of open, tolerant, globally oriented graduates	Multicultural approaches operate synergistically: inclusive + critical + humanist strategies create holistic tolerance

Bridging Challenges and Solutions: Implementing Religious Moderation in Islamic Educational Settings

The implementation of religious moderation in Islamic educational environments faces various complex and multidimensional challenges. Although conceptually, the idea of religious moderation has been widely promoted in contemporary Islamic discourse, its practice still faces structural, cultural, and ideological obstacles.⁴⁰ One of the main challenges is the politicization of religion, which often infiltrates the realm of education.⁴¹ In many cases, religion is used as a political tool to shape public opinion or maintain power, which ultimately creates an ideological dichotomy in educational institutions. This leads to the emergence of biased curricula and teaching materials, as well as restrictions on the space for dialogue between groups with different views. As a result, Islamic educational institutions are no longer neutral spaces that support inclusivity but instead reinforce narrow and exclusive religious narratives.

Afwadzi's research identified that one of the main challenges faced by students in higher education is their perception of religious texts, which often hinders the development of religious moderation.⁴² This research emphasizes the importance of education that teaches students to read religious texts contextually and critically in order to understand moderation as a value that emphasizes balance in religion. Athoillah's research also shows that the politicization of religion in Islamic boarding schools exacerbates this challenge by prioritizing more exclusive teachings and ignoring the importance of interfaith dialogue.⁴³ This study found that moderation policies in Islamic boarding schools are often not consistently practised, thus slowing down efforts to build moderation in Islamic boarding school communities.

⁴⁰ Musyahid and Kolis, "Religious Moderation Implementation in Islamic Education: A Systematic Review."

⁴¹ Mohd. Rafi Riyawi and Denny Febriansyah, "The Urgency of Religious Moderation in the Perspective of Islamic Education," *Journal of Social Research* 2, no. 8 (July 24, 2023): 2578–91, <https://doi.org/10.55324/josr.v2i8.1309>.

⁴² B Afwadzi et al., "Religious Moderation of Islamic University Students in Indonesia: Reception of Religious Texts," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 80, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i1.9369>.

⁴³ Mohamad Athoillah et al., "Policies and Practices Religious Moderation in Pesantren," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 2 (December 16, 2024): 387–96, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v10i2.27543>.

Another significant challenge is the lack of a comprehensive understanding of the concept of religious moderation among educators. Many Islamic religious teachers do not yet have adequate theoretical and pedagogical capacity to convey the values of moderation effectively. They tend to rely on textual and normative approaches without a contextual understanding of issues of social and cultural diversity. The absence of training that focuses on multicultural learning and religious moderation makes the educational process insensitive to the pluralistic realities of students. Burhanuddin and Ilmi's research highlights how universities face difficulties in internalizing the values of religious moderation due to the diverse approaches used and the lack of pedagogical skills to deal with issues of diversity.⁴⁴ This results in the inability of educators to bridge the differences in ideological views that exist among students.

In addition, resistance from groups that have exclusive views on diversity is also a serious obstacle. These groups often view religious moderation as a form of Islamic liberalization that threatens the purity of teachings. This kind of narrative causes the rejection of dialogical and inclusive approaches in education, and, in some cases, it puts pressure on teachers and institutions that try to implement them. Ainissyifa et al.'s research examines the challenges faced by madrasas in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum that integrates the values of religious moderation.⁴⁵ In this study, it was found that the lack of academic freedom in curriculum management is often a barrier to the effective implementation of moderation values.

To overcome these challenges, a comprehensive and sustainable strategy is needed. Curriculum reform is a crucial first step, namely by developing a curriculum that is more oriented towards inclusive and multicultural values. The Islamic education curriculum should not only emphasize mastery of religious texts but also open up space for understanding the social context, the history of diversity, and the values of peace and justice. Such a curriculum will help students understand religion as a moral force that encourages unity, not division. Kosim's research suggests the development of a structured curriculum module based on religious moderation for secondary schools, using the ADDIE (Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, Evaluate) model, which can be a reference for creating a curriculum that teaches not only religious values but also social diversity.⁴⁶

In addition, increasing teacher capacity through ongoing training is an essential strategy. This training includes not only a conceptual understanding of religious moderation but also pedagogical skills in delivering socially and culturally sensitive

⁴⁴ N Burhanuddin and D Ilmi, "Typologies of Religious Moderation in Indonesian Higher Education Institutions," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 16, no. 2 (2022): 455–79, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2022.16.2.455-479>.

⁴⁵ H Ainissyifa, Y M Nasrullah, and N Fatonah, "Empowering Educational Autonomy to Implement Kurikulum Merdeka in Madrasah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 1 (2024): 25–40, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v10i1.35133>.

⁴⁶ M Kosim et al., "Developing A Religious Moderation-Based Curriculum Module for Laboratory Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Islamic Higher Education," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 2 (2024): 350–62, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v10i2.39163>.

materials. Teachers need to be equipped with participatory and reflective approaches, such as problem-based learning and interfaith dialogue, which allow students to internalize the values of tolerance naturally in their learning experiences. Prayitno et al.'s research shows that the praxis model can be a practical approach to developing moderate student character through intra/extracurricular activities that involve students in activities based on the values of religious moderation.⁴⁷

The last strategy that is no less important is strengthening the role of schools as social spaces that encourage cross-religious and cultural interactions. Schools need to build an inclusive culture through extracurricular activities, thematic discussions, inter-school partnership programs, and campaigns for peaceful and tolerant values. An open, safe, and diversity-appreciating learning environment will support the internalization of religious moderation more effectively and sustainably. With a comprehensive approach, existing challenges can be managed strategically so that Islamic education is not only a means of transmitting religious teachings but also a space for social transformation that forms a generation that is moderate, open, and ready to live side by side in a pluralistic society. In the context of globalization and the increasing potential for identity-based conflict, strengthening religious moderation in Islamic educational environments is becoming increasingly urgent to create sustainable peace in society. The interpretive synthesis of this theme is mapped in Table 3, which categorizes the subthemes emerging from the coded studies.

Table 3. Table 3. The Classified Patterns of Challenges and Strategic Responses Derived from the Coding Results

Themes	Key Subthemes	Interpretive Insight
Politicization of religion in educational settings	Ideological infiltration; biased curricula; restricted dialogue space	Politicization distorts the neutrality of Islamic education and narrows the discursive space required for moderation
Textual–literal reading of religious texts	Limited contextual interpretation; resistance to critical engagement	Literalism obstructs students' ability to internalize moderation as balanced, context-aware religious reasoning
Limited teacher competence in moderation pedagogy	Insufficient training; over-reliance on normative teaching; lack of multicultural sensitivity	Educators become bottlenecks: without pedagogical capacity, moderation fails to translate into classroom practice.
Resistance from exclusive groups	Accusations of liberalization; rejection of dialogical and inclusive methods; pressure on institutions	Conservative resistance creates institutional risk and diminishes academic freedom needed to implement moderation.
Curriculum reform as a strategic response	Inclusive and contextual curriculum	Structured curriculum design operationalizes moderation into

⁴⁷ H J Prayitno et al., "Character Strengthening Model of Religious Moderation Praxis Method to Improve and Develop Student Morale," *Revista de Gestao Social e Ambiental* 18, no. 2 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.24857/RGSA.V18N2-076>.

		explicit learning outcomes and coherent instructional sequences.
Teacher capacity building	Training in reflective, participatory, culturally sensitive pedagogy; problem-based learning; interfaith dialogue	Pedagogical innovation becomes the conduit through which moderation shifts from theoretical value to lived practice.
Institutional culture building	Extracurricular activities; inter-school collaboration; inclusive school climate	Schools function as social ecosystems that normalize tolerance through daily interaction and collective culture.
Holistic approach to managing challenges	Multi-level strategy: curriculum–teacher–institution synergy	Effective implementation requires systemic alignment, not isolated interventions

TRUST as the Cornerstone of Religious Moderation in Islamic Education

The concept of TRUST (Tolerance, Respect, Understanding, Solidarity, Togetherness) serves as a foundational value framework for strengthening religious moderation in Islamic education. Rather than functioning merely as an acronym, TRUST represents a set of interconnected principles that enable students to engage constructively with diversity and cultivate harmonious social relations. Thoyib et al.'s research illustrates how pesantren contexts nurture tolerance by instilling awareness of cultural and religious plurality as an inherent part of human life.⁴⁸ Such values echo the prophetic example of peaceful coexistence practiced in Medina, grounding TRUST in Islamic normative teachings.

The TRUST framework also provides a coherent and directly relevant response to the specific challenges identified in implementing religious moderation within Islamic educational settings. In contexts where politicization of religion shapes biased curricula and narrows opportunities for open dialogue, Tolerance and Understanding function as corrective forces by encouraging contextual engagement with religious texts and fostering balanced exchanges across differing viewpoints. The tendency toward literal, rigid, and decontextualized interpretations—one of the pedagogical limitations noted in previous studies—can be addressed through Understanding, which promotes deeper interpretive awareness and reduces absolutist tendencies.

Moreover, the limited pedagogical capacity of teachers, who often rely on normative and text-centred instruction, may be mitigated through Understanding and Solidarity, as these values orient educators toward dialogical, participatory, and culturally responsive approaches. Resistance from exclusivist groups, which often reject moderation as a threat to doctrinal purity, can be countered through Respect and Togetherness, encouraging ethical recognition of diversity and helping build a shared sense of community. Structural obstacles, such as inconsistent institutional policies and restricted academic autonomy, also align strategically with Togetherness, which

⁴⁸ M E Thoyib et al., "Religious Tolerance among Indonesian Islamic University Students: The Pesantren Connection," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 19, no. 2 (2024): 239–50, <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol19no2.16>.

emphasises a collaborative culture and collective responsibility. In this way, TRUST stands not merely as a normative ideal but as a synchronised and practical model that directly responds to the ideological, pedagogical, and structural barriers documented in the literature.

- a. Tolerance, as the first element of TRUST, emphasizes openness and acceptance toward difference. In educational practice, this value equips students to navigate diversity without fear or suspicion. Research by Huda confirms that pesantren environments can cultivate this disposition through lived experiences of interaction with peers from varied backgrounds.
- b. Respect deepens the practice of tolerance by encouraging active appreciation of other perspectives. Hanafi's study shows that dialogical teaching methods integrating moderative values help students develop empathy and respectful engagement.⁴⁹ This pedagogical model shifts the learning atmosphere from monologue-based instruction to mutual recognition and dialogue.
- c. Understanding highlights the importance of interfaith and intercultural literacy in building peaceful coexistence. Nasir and Rijal's research demonstrates that higher education institutions contribute significantly to this dimension by embedding moderation-oriented curricula that encourage students to explore religious diversity in constructive ways.⁵⁰ Such approaches generate learning spaces that are open, reflective, and conducive to meaningful dialogue.
- d. Solidarity adds a social dimension to TRUST by fostering collective responsibility and care. Wardi's findings reveal that collaborative activities between students from different educational backgrounds strengthen awareness of shared humanity and mutual support, reinforcing social cohesion across boundaries.⁵¹
- e. Togetherness emerges as the culmination of the previous values. Haryanto and Muslih's study shows that integrating tradition and modernity in pesantren-based universities can shape students into individuals capable of promoting social harmony and peaceful coexistence, demonstrating that Togetherness is both an outcome and a catalyst of the other TRUST values.⁵²

In practical terms, TRUST can be embedded in Islamic education through inclusive learning materials, dialogical pedagogical practices, and the cultivation of a school culture that values diversity. Mulyana's research on Islamic education textbooks indicates that moderation-infused learning resources offer strong potential for

⁴⁹ Y Hanafi et al., "What Content Offers and How Teachers Teach: Religious Moderation-Integrated Teaching in Indonesia," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 79, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i2.9070>.

⁵⁰ M Nasir and M K Rijal, "Keeping the Middle Path: Mainstreaming Religious Moderation through Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 11, no. 2 (2021): 213–41, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v11i2.213-241>.

⁵¹ M Wardi et al., "Implementation of Religious Moderation Values Through Strengthening Diversity Tolerance in Madrasah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2023): 241–54, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v9i2.27952>.

⁵² S Haryanto and M Muslih, "Uniting Tradition and Modernity: Scientific Paradigms of Pesantren-Based Universities," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 3 (2024): 684–704, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v7i3.48>.

institutionalizing TRUST principles in everyday educational practices.⁵³ Beyond classroom instruction, TRUST must also be translated into broader social engagement. Activities such as inter-school dialogue, cross-religious collaboration, and community service provide concrete opportunities for students to practice moderation values in real-life settings. Saepudin et al.'s research shows that character education grounded in moderation and TRUST effectively transforms cognitive understanding into sustained social behavior.⁵⁴

In this way, Islamic education plays a central role in shaping a just and harmonious social fabric. Amid rising global challenges of intolerance and identity-based conflict, TRUST provides a relevant and applicable conceptual model for producing a generation that is religiously grounded, socially empathetic, and committed to sustaining peace and diversity. These findings are synthesized in the classification presented in Table 4.

Table 4. The Conceptual Mapping of TRUST Values Emerging from the Meta-Synthesis

Themes	Key Subthemes (TRUST Components)	Interpretive Insight
Tolerance	Recognition of religious/cultural differences; peaceful coexistence	Tolerance functions as the foundational moral orientation that normalizes diversity and reduces intergroup anxiety
Respect	Valuing different identities, empathetic attitudes, and dialogic pedagogy	Respect elevates tolerance into intentional ethical engagement, forming deeper interpersonal recognition
Understanding	Interfaith learning; cultural literacy; contextual religious knowledge	Understanding provides cognitive grounding for moderation, enabling dialogical awareness and preventing prejudice
Solidarity	Social concern; collective action; cooperation across groups	Solidarity extends moderation into social practice by fostering communal responsibility and shared social goals
Togetherness	Harmonious interactions; peace-building roles; unity-in-diversity	Togetherness represents the holistic outcome of TRUST: integrated coexistence sustained through shared values
Curricular and pedagogical integration of TRUST	Moderation-based Islamic Education materials; dialogical methods; inclusive school culture	TRUST becomes operational when embedded in curricular design and pedagogical

⁵³ R Mulyana, "Religious Moderation in Islamic Religious Education textbook and Implementation in Indonesia," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 79, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.4102/HTS.V79I1.8592>.

⁵⁴ Saepudin et al., "Strengthening Character Education: An Action Research in Forming Religious Moderation in Islamic Education."

		processes, not just moral discourse
Institutional embodiment of TRUST	School as a safe plural space; cross-school dialogue; interfaith collaboration; community programs	Institutions actualize TRUST by turning values into lived social practices, completing the cognitive and practical transformation.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that Islamic education has an important role in instilling the values of religious moderation and multiculturalism in order to respond to increasingly complex diversity in the global era. Through the principles of *tawassuth*, *tawāzun*, *i’tidāl*, and *tasāmuḥ*, religious moderation is implemented in the curriculum, pedagogy, and teacher role models to shape the character of students who are tolerant and open to differences. In addition, a multicultural approach that includes inclusive, critical, and humanist perspectives has proven effective in encouraging empathy, social awareness, and reflective understanding of the plurality of society. However, the implementation of moderation in the educational environment faces challenges, such as the politicization of religion, resistance from exclusive groups, and limited understanding among educators. Strategies that can be applied to overcome this include curriculum reform, improving teacher competence, and strengthening the school culture that supports cross-religious and cross-cultural interactions.

As a conceptual contribution, this study offers the TRUST (Tolerance, Respect, Understanding, Solidarity, Togetherness) model as an integrative approach that strengthens the role of Islamic education in building social harmony and preventing diversity conflicts. This model provides a relevant practical framework to face the challenges of the times by combining Islamic values and contemporary educational needs. The novelty of this study lies in the unification of the concepts of religious moderation and multicultural education in one applicable educational model. To strengthen these findings, further research is recommended to empirically test the application of the TRUST model in various contexts of Islamic educational institutions, as well as explore the use of digital technology in expanding the reach of moderate and inclusive education.

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