



INTEGRATING RELIGIOUS MODERATION VALUES INTO PESANTREN CURRICULUM: A MODEL FOR DEVELOPING STUDENTS' TAWASSUTH ATTITUDE

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to investigate how Islamic boarding house (Pesantren) Ngalah Pasuruan integrates and insert moderation values into its curriculum content to foster the tawassuth (moderate) character among students (santri). The urgency stems from data issued by the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) which identified 199 Islamic boarding schools (Pesantren) was affiliated with extremist and terrorist networks. This clearly contradicts the friendly and tolerant spirit of Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, the values of religious moderation need to be incorporated into the Islamic boarding school curriculum. National commitment, tolerance, non-violence and accommodating to local culture become the spirit of the leader of Islamic boarding house (Kyai) and student of Islamic boarding house (Santri) in their daily activities especially in Pesantren Ngalah Pasuruan. The focus of the discussion lies in the process of insertion, the design of insertion and the resulting model of insertion. The research used a qualitative approach with a case study model. Data was collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews and documentation studies. Then, the data was analysed using the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis method with the sequence of data condensation, data verification, and drawing conclusions. The results of this research showed that the insertion process is carried out through the students' daily activities, exemplified by Kyai Sholeh as the Islamic boarding school caregiver. Meanwhile, the design takes the form of teaching and implementation through Kyai figures, and the insertion model can be said to be in the form of a sustainable value transformation. It means that all the activities of the Pesantren related to form the attitude of students tawassuth.

Keywords: Moderation, Pesantren's Curriculum, Tawassuth

INTRODUCTION

Pesantren are among the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. This is evidenced by the findings of Azyumardi Azra (2005), who states that the emergence of pesantren coincided with the formation of Muslim communities in the Indonesian archipelago. Based on the principle of their establishment, pesantren have long been identified as institutions that focus on *tafaqquh fi al-din* (deep understanding of Islamic teachings) (Usman, 2013). The knowledge transmitted in pesantren essentially promotes messages of peace rather than radicalism, intolerance, or terrorism. Pesantren traditionally emphasize humanistic values that shape the noble character (*akhlaq al-karimah*) of santri while strengthening their deep understanding of the revealed texts, thereby preventing them from falling into extremist ideologies (Kholis, 2017).

However, in their contemporary development, pesantren are confronted with complex challenges, including the spread of radicalism, extremism, intolerance, and terrorism. The Indonesian National Counterterrorism Agency, *Badan Nasional*



Penanggulangan Terorisme (BNPT), reported that a number of pesantren have been exposed to radical networks. According to data released by BNPT, 199 pesantren and several institutions were allegedly affiliated with terrorist organizations, including 119 linked to *Jamaah Ansharut Daulah* (JAD), 69 linked to *Jemaah Islamiyah* (JI), and 11 linked to *Jamaah Ansharut Khilafah* (JAK) (DetikNews, 2022). Similar concerns have also been highlighted in several empirical studies. A survey conducted by *Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat* (PPIM UIN Jakarta) in 2018 found that a small proportion of students in Islamic educational institutions showed sympathies toward radical narratives, particularly those related to the establishment of an Islamic state and the justification of violence in the name of religion (PPIM, 2018). Furthermore, research by Setara Institute (2021) indicates that the spread of exclusivist religious narratives in educational environments, including some Islamic schools and pesantren, can potentially influence students' attitudes toward intolerance and religious radicalism if not counterbalanced by strong moderation-based education. These findings illustrate that although pesantren historically promote peaceful and humanistic Islamic teachings, they are not entirely immune to external ideological influences. Such conditions contradict the fundamental vision and mission of pesantren, which aim to cultivate santri with noble character (*akhlaq al-karimah*), moral integrity, and moderate religious attitudes.

The formation of *akhlaq al-karimah* among santri cannot be separated from the central role of the *kyai* as the leader and caregiver of the pesantren. A *kyai* does not merely function as an institutional leader but also plays multiple roles in shaping the moral and intellectual development of the students. Samiya (2023) notes that a *kyai* serves as a spiritual guide, educator, role model, supervisor, and communication facilitator. Through these roles, the *kyai* significantly contributes to the character formation of santri.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the *kyai* is usually supported by a board of *asatidz* (teachers) and a set of educational guidelines commonly referred to as the pesantren curriculum. In the early stages of its development, the pesantren curriculum was largely shaped by the expertise and scholarly authority of the *kyai*. The dominant field of knowledge mastered by the *kyai* often determined the primary curriculum for the students. For instance, *Pesantren Lirboyo* is well known for emphasizing the study of *nahwu* and *sharaf*, while Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor places strong emphasis on language mastery, particularly Arabic and English.

Over time, the pesantren curriculum has evolved in response to broader educational developments, including policies initiated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia. Consequently, pesantren curricula have become more structured by considering the hierarchical stages of santri education. This can be seen in the curriculum levels commonly implemented in Indonesian pesantren, such as *ula*, *wustha*, and *ulya*, or their equivalents in formal education levels: *ibtidaiyah*, *tsanawiyah*, and *aliyah*.

The curriculum serves as a key instrument in shaping the attitudes and character of santri. Through a well-designed curriculum, the process of character formation becomes more systematic and measurable. As non-formal Islamic educational institutions, pesantren transmit religious values through their curricular structures. Some pesantren develop their own internal curricula based on their distinctive traditions, while others integrate their curriculum with that of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Cahyani & Rohmah, 2022).



The internal curriculum is generally designed based on the scholarly authority of the kyai, which determines the primary classical texts (*kitab kuning*) studied as well as the teaching methods employed. Meanwhile, the integrated curriculum includes educational structures and learning materials aligned with national standards, such as *fiqh*, *aqidah*, Islamic history, and civic education. In this context, the curriculum functions not only as a medium for transmitting religious knowledge but also as an instrument for fostering national character and tolerance (Muhsni & Nadlif, 2021).

In responding to increasingly complex social realities, pesantren have begun to adapt their curricula by incorporating values of religious moderation. This initiative aims to ensure that santri develop a balanced and moderate attitude (*tawassuth*). These moderation values are not taught as separate subjects; rather, they are integrated into core learning materials as well as daily habituation activities within the pesantren environment. This approach is commonly referred to as the insertion model of religious moderation values in the pesantren curriculum, an educational strategy that aims to produce not only pious santri but also individuals who possess inclusive attitudes, openness to diversity, and moderate religious behavior.

Several scholars have examined the integration of religious moderation values within pesantren education. For instance, Fauzi (2021) designed a moderation-based curriculum model at Pesantren Al-Ma'arif Singosari Malang that emphasizes the principles of *tawassuth*, *i'tidal*, and *tawazun* in the educational process (Fauzi, 2021; Hasan, 2024). Similarly, Wahyuni and Sari (2022) proposed an internalization strategy through co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Their research at Bustanul Ulum pesantren demonstrates that religious moderation values can be strengthened through santri activities and socio-cultural engagement programs (Wahyuni et al., 2024).

Moreover, recent empirical studies have explored various aspects of religious moderation within pesantren education. Several studies highlight the role of curriculum integration and institutional culture in strengthening moderate religious attitudes among santri. For example, a study by Ihsan et al. (2024) shows that pesantren-based madrasahs integrate religious moderation values into lesson plans, teaching materials, and learning activities as part of curriculum management. The findings indicate that moderation values such as tolerance, national commitment, and anti-violence attitudes are embedded in both classroom learning and pesantren traditions. Similarly, research conducted by Rohmaniah et al. (2024) demonstrates that the internalization of religious moderation values in pesantren can be strengthened through local content curricula and santri activities. Their study at Bustanul Ulum pesantren reveals that co-curricular activities, community engagement programs, and socio-cultural initiatives play an important role in reinforcing moderate religious perspectives among students.

Other empirical research also indicates that pesantren curricula that combine classical Islamic studies with character education contribute to the formation of inclusive and tolerant religious attitudes. For instance, Rofiqi (2023) found that the integration of Islamic teachings, character education, and interfaith awareness within pesantren learning systems significantly influences students' understanding of moderation and social harmony.

Despite these important contributions, previous studies tend to focus primarily on general descriptions of religious moderation practices, curriculum integration, or



internalization strategies within pesantren education. Most of these studies emphasize cultural practices, extracurricular activities, or general curriculum frameworks, while few studies provide a systematic and applicable model that explains how moderation values are specifically inserted into the pesantren curriculum to shape the *tawassuth* character of santri in a structured manner. Furthermore, existing research rarely examines the pedagogical mechanisms and curricular design that link moderation values directly with character formation outcomes among santri.

Therefore, there remains a significant research gap regarding how religious moderation values can be systematically inserted into the pesantren curriculum through a clear educational model that is both conceptually structured and practically applicable. Addressing this gap is important, particularly in strengthening pesantren as institutions that not only transmit Islamic knowledge but also cultivate moderate religious attitudes in contemporary plural societies. Accordingly, this study aims to develop and analyze an integrating religious moderation values into pesantren curriculum.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design using a case study approach to explore the model of integrating religious moderation values into the curriculum of Pesantren Ngalah, Pasuruan. The case study approach was selected to obtain a comprehensive and contextual understanding of how religious moderation values are inserted into the pesantren curriculum and practiced in the educational process. Qualitative research allows researchers to examine social phenomena in depth and to understand meanings, perspectives, and practices from the participants' viewpoints (John W. Creswell & J. David Creswell, 2018).

The research site was Pesantren Ngalah located in Pasuruan, East Java. Participants were selected purposively based on their involvement in the implementation and management of the pesantren curriculum. The participants consisted of pesantren caregivers (*kyai*), curriculum managers, teachers (*ustadz/ustadzah*), and santri. These participants were considered to have direct knowledge and experience related to the implementation of religious moderation values in the pesantren learning system.

Data were collected through three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted with pesantren leaders, curriculum managers, and teachers to explore their perspectives on the concept, strategy, and implementation of religious moderation values in the curriculum. Participatory observation was carried out by observing teaching and learning activities, religious discussions, and daily practices of santri in order to identify how moderation values are practiced in the pesantren environment. Meanwhile, document analysis was conducted by reviewing curriculum documents, learning materials, institutional regulations, and pesantren activity programs that reflect the integration of moderation values.

The collected data were analyzed using an interactive model of qualitative data analysis developed by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman (1994), which includes three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involved selecting, focusing, and simplifying the raw data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents. Data display was conducted by organizing the



data into thematic categories related to the integration of religious moderation values in the pesantren curriculum. Finally, conclusions were drawn by interpreting patterns, relationships, and meanings from the findings in order to formulate a model of moderation value insertion in the curriculum.

To ensure the validity and credibility of the data, this study employed data triangulation by comparing information obtained from different sources (caregivers, teachers, and students) and different techniques (interviews, observation, and documentation). Through this approach, the research was able to capture the dynamics, strategies, and challenges in integrating religious moderation values into the curriculum of Pesantren Ngalah.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Pesantren and Religious Moderation

Pesantren in Indonesia has long been known as an educational institution that not only transmits religious knowledge, but also shapes the character of students to be ready to live in a multicultural society. The concept of education in pesantren cannot be separated from the values that encourage a balanced (*tawassuth*) and tolerant attitude. Religious moderation in pesantren is not new, but its packaging in the formal and non-formal curriculum has recently become the focus of more serious development.

Religious moderation then becomes an urgent need in the face of radicalism, hate speech, and inter-religious tensions in a multicultural society. Moderation is understood as a balanced attitude in religion, both in thinking (*fikrah*) and acting (*harakah*) (Cahyani & Rohmah, 2022). This approach not only prevents people from extremism, but also builds harmony in social life. In the context of pesantren education, the insertion of moderation values is carried out through various holistic methods, such as *Kitab Kuning* book learning, spiritual habituation, and integration of nationality materials. The *fiqh* and *akidah* approach is developed flexibly to provide room for adjustment to the social conditions of the santri, in line with the concept of *fiqh al-waqi'* or contextual *fiqh* (Yaqin, 2019). In addition, the *kiai's* example plays a central role in shaping the moderate character of the santri because the *kiai* is not only a teacher but also a moral role model in everyday life (Umam, 2020). Sufism and *thariqah* education also occupy an important position in building inclusive santri spirituality, emphasizing values such as sincerity, sincerity, and treating all of God's creatures well (Muhsi & Nadlif, 2021). The principle of peaceful coexistence and recognition of social, cultural, and religious plurality are the basis for building the character of santri who are ready to become agents of harmony in society (Azra, 2017).

Furthermore, Asrori in his research confirmed that pesantren play an important role in instilling Islamic values that are *rahmatan lil 'alamin* through teaching methods that combine the yellow book, behavioral habituation, and open religious dialogue. However, without a clear strategy in the curriculum, these moderation values are often normative and not measurable in learning outcomes (Asrori, 2020). Susilo added regarding the *tawassuth* attitude of santri in his research. He said that the internalization of the value of *tawassuth* encourages santri to be more open in dialoguing with different groups without losing their Islamic identity (Susilo Romadon Syah, 2024). Thus, it cannot be denied that pesantren is a place to sow moderate understanding away from extreme, intolerant, extreme and terrorist attitudes.



The Insertion of Moderation Values in Learning and *Pesantren* Culture

a. Religious Moderation Value Insertion Process

The process of inserting religious moderation values in the *pesantren* education system is a comprehensive activity that is carried out consciously and planned. This process is the main focus in answering the challenges of increasing intolerance, religious polarization, and radicalism that arise in the midst of a multicultural society. As the main case study in this research, *Pesantren Ngalah*, Pasuruan, East Java becomes a representative model in implementing the process of insertion of moderation values practically and conceptually. Through curriculum approaches, teaching methods, institutional culture, and social experiences, *Pesantren Ngalah* shows a form of Islamic education that is friendly to diversity and contextual to social reality (Cahyani & Rohmah, 2022). In the context of religious moderation, *pesantren* historically have a central role in maintaining the principle of *wasathiyah* (moderation). Sufism teachings taught in many *pesantren* teach a balanced attitude in religion, avoiding extremism and violence (Zakariyah et al., 2022). Values such as tolerance, simplicity, and religious harmony become inseparable from the *pesantren* education curriculum. This is in line with the long tradition of *pesantren* that emphasizes the importance of noble morals and peace as part of the practice of Islamic teachings (Dumiyati et al., 2023).

Ngalah Islamic Boarding School implements a traditional *salafiyah* education system but also adopts a modern approach. This education system is based on Islamic religious values that become a guide to life and are in harmony with the surrounding social reality. The combination of religious teachings with the social context creates educational goals that are not only spiritual, but also practical. Religious teachings with absolute truth have supremacy over relative social truths, but both must run in harmony in the *pesantren* education system (Nafis, 2017).

The process of insertion of moderation values in *Pesantren Ngalah* can be explained in four main frameworks, namely: (1) The Concept of Moderation Value Insertion, (2) Inclusive and Critical Curriculum Design, (3) Dialogical and Contextual Learning Process, and (4) Socio-Cultural Implementation Model. Each of these processes does not run separately but rather strengthens each other to create a *pesantren* atmosphere based on *wasathiyah* principles.

The basic concept of moderation value insertion in *Ngalah Pesantren* is built on the understanding that Islamic teachings essentially uphold the values of balance (*tawazun*), tolerance (*tasamuh*), and proportionality (*i'tidal*). These values are not only introduced in the form of theory, but are inserted concretely in various educational and cultural activities of the *pesantren*. Moderation is understood as a mental attitude and way of thinking that respects differences and rejects all forms of violence, both symbolic and physical (Muhsi & Nadlif, 2021).

The insertion of this concept can be seen in the main subjects such as *fiqh*, *tafsir*, and *aqidah*, which are delivered through a contextual and non-rigid approach. In extracurricular activities, these values are present in scouting activities, discussion forums, cultural arts, and *santri* sports. In the formulation of *pesantren*, religious moderation is interpreted as a balanced attitude in understanding religion, both in thinking (*fikrah*) and acting (*harakah*)" (Cahyani & Rohmah, 2022).



Furthermore, the curriculum design at Pesantren Ngalah is designed to form santri who are not only religiously literate, but also critical and contextual in thinking. The principle of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* becomes the foundation in the preparation of a curriculum that is open to social and cultural plurality. This places education as a means of fostering ethical and humanitarian awareness within the Islamic frame. The curricular materials used to internalize moderation values include: Comparison of madhabs, as a way of introducing differences as a necessity in the Islamic tradition; history of Islamic civilization, to show the diversity of Muslim practices and thoughts throughout history; and study of contemporary issues, such as human rights, the environment, and interfaith relations. This design is supported by the principle of *fiqh al waqi'* or contextual *fiqh*, which is the ability to understand social reality as the basis for determining laws and religious attitudes (Yaqin, 2019).

In the learning process, moderation values are inserted in learning that is not monological, but dialogic and participatory. The teacher acts as a facilitator who encourages santri to think independently, explore meaning, and respond to social issues in an inclusive way (Azra, 2017). The teaching methods used include; Interactive discussions, as a space for expression and exchange of ideas; Case studies, which relate religious teachings to the reality of life; Social simulations, such as role plays and thematic debates; Collaborative projects, which foster the value of togetherness in solving problems. This approach is in line with Paulo Freire's view of liberation education, which is education that forms critical consciousness for social transformation. The insertion of moderation values is also applied through a model of social and cultural activities that are integrated into pesantren life. Education not only takes place in classrooms but also in prayer rooms, agricultural fields, art forums, and interfaith communities. Concrete examples that are applied include: Yellow Islamic classic book studies such as Tafsir al-Maraghi and al-Mahalli, with a contextual approach that emphasizes the value of tolerance; Dawuh Kiai Forum as a means of instilling nationality and moderate Islam; Live-in programs with other religious communities, such as Christians or Hindus; and Open interfaith dialogues with priests, nuns, and faith leaders (Azra, 2017).

In addition, the figure of Kiai Sholeh Bahrudin is an exemplary representation of religious moderation. He is known to be inclusive, communicative, and consistent in encouraging openness to diversity. Kiai's example is not only a mirror of knowledge but also a moral example of organizing a harmonious social life (Umam, 2020). The spiritual dimension is also strengthened through dhikr, night prayers, and thariqah, which refines character and instills compassion for others. These activities strengthen the affective values of moderation in the lives of santri (Muhsi & Nadlif, 2021). Thus, the process of insertion of moderation values in Pesantren Ngalah runs in the unity between structure (curriculum), culture (social practice), and figure (exemplary). This approach becomes a model of Islamic education that is not only tolerant in concept, but also concrete in praxis.

b. Religious Moderation Value Insertion Design

One of the most concrete designs of religious moderation values in Pesantren Ngalah, Pasuruan, is through the implementation of various dialogue and discussion programs across religious themes and backgrounds. These programs are designed not only as an educational tool, but also as a vehicle for internalizing the values of tolerance and



openness through direct practice. In the context of pesantren education, this kind of approach is progressive because it places moderation not only as an idea, but also as a proven social experience. There are three main activities that are an important part of this dialog and discussion: Dawuh Kiai Discussion, Live In Program with Pastors and Nuns, and Plural and Multicultural Discussion at the Darut Taqwa Mosque Porch.

First, the Dawuh Kiai Discussion is an open dialog forum designed to expand the thinking horizons of santri on contemporary issues related to religion and nationality. This forum presents kiai, Islamic thinkers, and community leaders who share their thoughts and experiences regarding national and religious life dynamics. Uniquely, this activity encourages the active involvement of santri in questions and answers, discussions, and even open criticism, so that they are not only recipients of knowledge, but also critical thinkers. Based on the explanation, this forum instills the spirit of open and critical thinking, and trains the courage of santri in responding to complex social realities (Yaqin, 2019). Through this forum, the pesantren strengthens itself as a space for religious discourse that is not anti to contemporary issues such as radicalism, nationalism, and diversity.

Second, the Live in Program with Pastors and Nuns is the most direct form of interfaith experience undertaken by santri. This program invites Christian and Catholic religious leaders to stay several days in the pesantren environment. During the program, there is a natural interaction between religious leaders and santri, which includes discussions about each party's teachings, spiritual experiences, and religious practices. The goal of the program is to build equal and respectful interfaith understanding. One santri noted that learning directly from people of different religions was more meaningful than simply reading a book. This experience erodes stereotypes and fosters respect for humanity as the common ground of all religious teachings. The program directly challenges religious exclusivism and opens awareness of the importance of interfaith encounters.

Third, the Plural and Multicultural Discussion which is routinely held in the foyer of the Darut Taqwa Mosque is a meeting place for various interfaith and cultural figures. This forum is thematic and contextual, raising issues such as "Religion and Women", "God in Different Traditions", and "The Role of Young People in Caring for Diversity". This activity brings together leaders from Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and local faiths in one open forum. Santri learned that dialog is not just communication, but a space to learn together about universal values. One participant mentioned that the mosque, which is usually exclusive to Muslims, became an inclusive space for all religions - an important lesson in the practice of tolerance (Muhsi & Nadlif, 2021). The forum reinforced the understanding that diversity is a blessing that must be nurtured through interaction and mutual understanding. These three programs as a whole show that Pesantren Ngalah does not only make moderation a curriculum, but also makes it a real-life experience. Education based on dialog and active participation like this changes the santri's perspective in interpreting religion-from exclusive to inclusive, from normative to contextual. This is a form of *ta'dib* education design, namely education that not only teaches knowledge, but forms a character ready to dialogue and make peace with plural social realities.

The Formation of Tawassut through the Insertion of Religious Moderation

The implementation of religious moderation values in the curriculum and educational culture at Pesantren Ngalah, Pasuruan, not only results in a more inclusive and



transformative learning process, but also has a significant impact on the character building and social orientation of the santri. The insertion of these values, which is carried out through curriculum approaches, dialog methods, interfaith experiences, and the example of the kiai, has encouraged changes in attitudes and mindsets that are more open, critical, and oriented towards living together in diversity (Cahyani & Rohmah, 2022). There are three main impacts that are most prominent from this program.

First, the increase in tolerance among santri is the easiest social and personal impact to observe. The learning process that emphasizes respect for differences of opinion, active involvement in interfaith discussions, and the experience of living with non-Muslim communities has made santri more open in understanding diversity as a reality that must be respected, not avoided. Concrete experiences such as living in with other religious leaders encourage the emergence of interfaith empathy. A santri noted that after participating in the program, he realized that different religions do not prevent us from respecting each other. Instead, the differences open up space to learn to understand each other. This shows that the formation of moderate attitudes is not enough through theory, but needs to be strengthened by direct and meaningful interactions.

Second, the rejection of extremism is an important indicator of the successful insertion of moderation values. In the contemporary socio-religious context, narratives of hatred and doctrines of violence often spread through social media, closed lectures, or exclusive online forums. However, santri, who participated in the Pesantren Ngalah's moderation program, resisted such provocations. They are trained to filter information critically and build a peaceful and inclusive understanding of Islam. Through the Dawuh Kiai forum and interfaith discussions, they are accustomed to facing differences openly and non-reactively. As explained, santri are getting used to filtering information wisely, and are not easily provoked by narratives that invite hatred or rejection of other groups (Yaqin, 2019). This kind of understanding is an important bulwark in counteracting religious-based radicalism that targets young people.

Third, strengthening national values is one of the most strategic impacts of moderation education carried out in this pesantren. Santri are invited to understand Islam not only as a ritual religion but also as a religion that supports unity, justice, and nationality. They are introduced to the concept of *ukhuwah wathaniyah* (national brotherhood) as part of the values of Islam itself. In various forums, especially in plural discussions and *dawuh kiai*, the importance of loving the homeland as a form of faith is always emphasized. In his *dawuh*, Kiai Sholeh Bahrudin stated, "love for the homeland is part of faith, and protecting Indonesia is part of a noble humanitarian jihad" (Umam, 2020). This awareness strengthens the santri's loyalty to the Republic of Indonesia and makes them agents of constructive and peaceful social change in a multicultural society.

Overall, these three impacts- tolerance, rejection of extremism, and strengthening of national values- complement each other in shaping the character of santri who are spiritually and cognitively religious, socially and nationally mature. Pesantren Ngalah shows that the insertion of religious moderation values carried out in a structured and consistent manner can produce resilient, tolerant, and ready to coexist in the midst of diversity. This kind of moderation-based education is a relevant and much-needed model in the current Indonesian context, which is often shaken by sectarian sentiments and



intolerance. As noted in the research team's reflection, "moderation is not only a tool to fight extremism, but also a bridge to build civilization"" (Cahyani & Rohmah, 2022).

Model of Religious Moderation Value Insertion in Forming Santri's Tawassut Attitude

a. The Effectiveness of Moderation Value Insertion in *Pesantren*

The effectiveness of religious moderation insertion in *pesantren* can not only be measured by the presence or absence of a formal curriculum that contains tolerance values, but more on how these values are implemented in real terms, internalized through participatory methods, and have an impact on the character building of *santri*. Among various Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, *Pesantren* Ngalah Pasuruan appears as one of the most prominent models in designing and carrying out the insertion of moderation values in a lively and contextual manner. Observations of the learning methods used show that the effectiveness of the program is strongly influenced by active, reflective, and direct experience-based approaches (Cahyani & Rohmah, 2022).

One indicator of this success is the application of discussion-based teaching methods, which place *santri* as the subject of learning. In contrast to the one-way lecture model, *Pesantren* Ngalah opens a space for dialogue in the Dawuh Kiai forum, plural discussions, and interfaith dialogues that allow *santri* to express opinions, respond critically and get used to accepting different views. Open dialogue makes *santri* feel valued for their thoughts, while training them to listen to different views without having to judge (Cahyani & Rohmah, 2022). Such a process enriches understanding of religious texts and shapes moderate reasoning power and inclusive attitudes.

Furthermore, this participatory method has proven to be more effective in instilling moderation values because it is not indoctrinative but encourages *santri* to actively build meaning and reflection from the social experiences they encounter. In this context, live-in activities with other religious leaders become the most transformative space. Students understand moderation as a concept and experience it directly through interfaith and cross-cultural interactions. The direct experience of *santri* in dialoguing with other religious leaders has more impact on eroding prejudice than theoretical teaching in the classroom. This shows that emotional and social experiences effectively shape inclusive attitudes.

The effectiveness of the moderation value insertion program at *Pesantren* Ngalah is also increasingly apparent when compared to approaches in other *pesantren* that still use conventional methods. Many other *pesantren* do teach tolerance, but the implementation is symbolic or normative. Communication is one-way; interfaith interactions are barely found in the curriculum or practice. In contrast, Ngalah develops an innovative model that is open to real encounters with different parties. This shows that the success of moderation education is not determined by curriculum documents alone, but by the space for encounters and experiences opened to *santri* (Yaqin, 2019).

Other indicators can be seen in the outputs produced. Many alumni of *Pesantren* Ngalah are now involved in the peace movement, become interfaith dialog facilitators, and are active in interfaith forums in various regions. Some of them also volunteer in multicultural communities, work in NGOs, or are even active in national literacy through social media. *Santri* are not only agents of da'wah, but also agents of harmony who carry a mission of peace in a plural society (Umam, 2020). This shows that the process of insertion



of religious moderation values has a long-term contribution to the formation of inclusive and socially active citizens. Thus, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of the insertion of religious moderation values in *Pesantren* Ngalah is largely determined by innovation in learning methods, the courage to open space for cross-border dialogue, and sensitivity to the needs of the times. Education is no longer seen merely as a transfer of knowledge, but rather a transformative process that combines values, experience, and reflection. This education model deserves to be used as a reference in developing an Islamic education system relevant to the challenges of diversity in contemporary Indonesian society.

b. Challenges in Implementation

Although *Pesantren* Ngalah, Pasuruan shows significant achievements in internalizing the values of religious moderation, the implementation of this program is inseparable from various internal and external challenges. Efforts to make moderation the main framework of Islamic education require a process that is not linear and full of dynamics. These challenges show that building an open, dialogical and contextual Islamic education requires patience, consistency and support from various parties. Based on the findings of the research, there are three main challenges that need to be observed and managed wisely.

First, resistance from certain groups is a significant obstacle in the implementation of the insertion of religious moderation values, especially those related to interfaith dialog. Some parties, both from the internal environment of the *pesantren* and the surrounding community, still consider that openness to other religious understandings can weaken *aqidah* identity. This conservative view is generally born from a narrow, exclusive religious understanding, and is not accustomed to diversity literacy. This attitude sometimes appears in the form of passive rejection, such as reluctance to participate in interfaith activities, to active forms such as open criticism of *pesantren* that are considered too "soft" or liberal. Some groups see the moderation approach as a form of religious liberalization, thus rejecting it ideologically and emotionally (Cahyani & Rohmah, 2022). In this context, inclusive education must be accompanied by a persuasive approach that respects local traditions but encourages openness.

Second, limited human resources and facilities are also technical challenges that affect the effectiveness of the implementation of moderation value insertion. Dialogue-based, cross-cultural, and multicultural education approaches require infrastructure support such as open discussion rooms, libraries with interfaith references, and network connections between communities. However, not all *pesantren* have access to these things. In addition, educators are also needed who not only master classical Islamic knowledge but also have interfaith communication competencies and social and political sensitivity. Challenges arise because some *ustadz* or teachers are still accustomed to traditional teaching methods that emphasize memorization and sole authority. Not all teachers are ready to become dialogue facilitators because they are not used to participatory and transformative teaching patterns (Muhsi & Nadlif, 2021). This shows the importance of special training for educators to be able to carry out new roles in moderation, value-based education.

Third, external social and political dynamics greatly affect public acceptance of the concept of religious moderation. In vulnerable socio-political situations, such as increasing religion-based polarization, the spread of hoaxes, and the strengthening of exclusive group



identities, pesantren that carry an open approach can actually come under pressure. Counter narratives from certain groups sometimes accuse the moderation approach as an effort to secularize or obscure Islamic identity. Even in some cases, pesantren figures active in interfaith dialogue experience stigma or resistance from parties not in line. The biggest challenge from outside is non-acceptance and a counter-narrative that corners moderation efforts as a religious secularization project (Yaqin, 2019). This kind of tension requires pesantren to be good at reading the context and formulating communication strategies that are not only academic, but also cultural and political.

These three challenges should not be considered as absolute obstacles, but rather as part of the dynamics of change that are natural in the process of educational transformation. Pesantren that want to build moderation-based education must be able to manage the tension between traditional values and the spirit of openness with a constructive approach. Efforts to build synergy between kiai, teachers, santri, and the surrounding community are important to ensure that moderation values are not rejected, but accepted as a common need. In practice, Pesantren Ngalah shows that this challenge can be faced with a collaborative approach and long-term commitment, although it still requires support from external factors such as the government, Islamic organizations, and the media. Thus, the insertion of religious moderation values is not only a matter of curriculum content or excellent programs, but also lies in the ability of pesantren to build an ecosystem that supports the transformation of values as a whole. Resilience to social pressure, readiness of human resources, and flexibility in communication strategies are the keys to realizing peaceful, contextual, and down-to-earth Islamic education.

The study of the insertion process of religious moderation values carried out at *Pesantren* Ngalah, Pasuruan, makes a major contribution to contextual Islamic education and the development of theoretical discourse in Islamic education. This research shows that religious moderation is not just a slogan or normative call, but can be used as a pedagogical approach that is systematic, structured, and has a real impact on the formation of santri's *tawassut* attitude. Therefore, the findings of this study have two main implications, namely from the theoretical and practical sides, and produce strategic recommendations for the sustainability and expansion of the implementation of moderation in the world of *pesantren*.

Theoretically, this finding strengthens the argument that dialog-based educational approaches - especially those that are interactive, interfaith, and based on direct experience - play a crucial role in shaping inclusive, tolerant, and open-minded attitudes. The learning process that places santri as active subjects enriches their understanding of religious and cultural plurality and emphasizes that moderate Islamic education is not sufficiently developed through a textual approach alone. Moderation demands a reflective and relational way of thinking. As explained in the book, the experience of dialog becomes a catalyst in changing the santri's perspective towards those with different beliefs" (Cahyani & Rohmah, 2022). Thus, in terms of theory, this model contributes to enriching contemporary Islamic pedagogical approaches based on *wasathiyah*, *ta'ayush silmi* (living peacefully together), and *ta'aruf* (getting to know each other actively and empathetically).

Practically, the moderation approach carried out by Pesantren Ngalah offers an applicable model that can be adopted by other pesantren in various regions. Methods such as the *Dawuh Kiai* forum, live-in with other religious leaders, and plural discussions in the foyer of the mosque have proven to be effective media in building national awareness,



tolerance, and social skills. This method not only broadens the horizons of santri thinking but also hones their sensitivity to the complexities of a pluralistic society. Yaqin (2019) asserts that pesantren that only focus on the transmission of classical knowledge without social interaction tend to produce exclusive alumni who are not ready to face the complexity of the outside world (Yaqin, 2019). Therefore, the practical approach applied at Ngalah is a clear example of Islamic education that is able to adapt to reality without losing its identity.

In terms of strategic recommendations, the study outlines three important steps:

1. Strengthening the moderation-based curriculum includes religious studies, conflict resolution, and global peace materials. These materials need to be included in the main structure of learning, not just a supplement.
2. Intensive training for educators is needed to be competent in managing classes based on dialogue, moderation, and social engagement. This is crucial because not all teachers are ready to become dialogue facilitators and are not used to participatory and transformative teaching patterns (Muhsi & Nadlif, 2021).
3. Strengthening the network between moderate pesantren, to build an exchange of best practices, program collaboration, and synergy in promoting the narrative of Islam *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. This network is important as an intellectual and cultural fortress in the face of extreme or exclusive ideological influences.

Considering these three dimensions, it can be concluded that this study's results are important for the development of Pesantren Ngalah itself and relevant for the renewal of the Islamic education system nationally. The moderation-based Islamic education model not only talks about curriculum content but also touches aspects of methods, social networks, and forming an open mentality. In the context of pluralistic Indonesia, this kind of approach is urgent to create a peaceful, just, and harmonious society within the framework of the pluralistic Republic of Indonesia. As emphasized by Umam (2020), moderate pesantren not only produce religious experts, but also care for the nation's integrity through a wise and peaceful generation (Umam, 2020). In summary, the model of inserting religious moderation values into the pesantren curriculum in shaping the tawassut attitude of santri can be described in the flow model below;

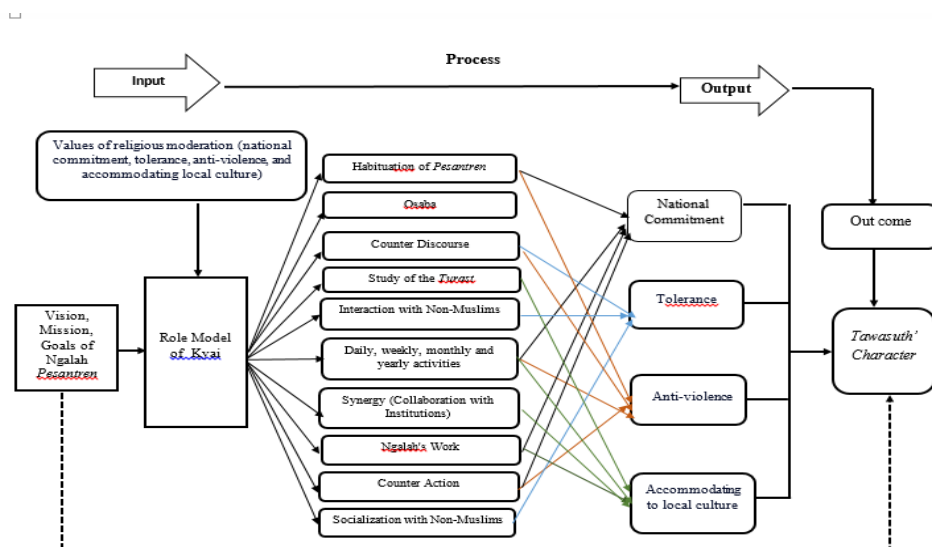


Figure 01: Model of the Insertion of Religious Moderation Values into the Pesantren Curriculum in Forming the Tawassuth Attitude of Santri



CONCLUSION

Pesantren, the oldest Islamic educational institution in Indonesia, has a strategic role in shaping the peaceful and tolerant religious character of santri. However, in contemporary socio-religious developments, pesantren also face serious challenges in the form of the spread of radicalism, intolerance, and violence in the name of religion. This condition requires a transformation of curriculum and educational approaches that are able to systematically instill religious moderation values. One model that has been successfully implemented is the insertion of moderation values into the curriculum of Pesantren Ngalah, Pasuruan. This model does not only talk about curriculum documents, but also touches aspects of teaching methods, kiai exemplary, and inclusive social experiences.

The insertion process and design are carried out in four main frameworks, namely the concept of moderation value insertion, inclusive curriculum design, dialogical learning process, and transformative socio-cultural implementation. Values such as tawazun (balance), tasamuh (tolerance), and i'tidal (proportionality) are taught not only in theory, but through real practices in pesantren activities, such as Dawuh Kiai discussions, interfaith live-in programs, and plural forums in mosques. The learning process is carried out with a participatory and reflective approach that allows santri to become active subjects in processing their religious experiences contextually.

The effectiveness of this program can be seen in changes in the attitude of santri who are more open, critical, and aware of the importance of coexistence in a pluralistic society. In addition to increased tolerance, there is also a rejection of extremism and strengthening of national values among santri. This education model is considered more impactful than the normative-conventional approach because it simultaneously combines spiritual values and social strengthening. However, the implementation of this model is not free from challenges, such as conservative resistance, limited human resources and facilities, and pressure from political and social dynamics outside the pesantren. Therefore, a long-term strategy is needed in the form of educator training, curriculum strengthening, and networking between pesantren to strengthen the moderate Islamic narrative. The implications of this study enrich the Islamic pedagogy approach and can be a reference in developing a more contextual and peaceful pesantren curriculum in Indonesia.

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