



Strengthening Religious Moderation in Madrasahs: An In-Depth Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the implementation and outcomes of religious moderation education in three madrasahs—MIS Bokin, MIS Rantepao, and MTs Rantepao—located in North Toraja Regency. Employing the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model and a qualitative approach, the research explores how religious moderation principles are integrated into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) lessons and extracurricular activities. Data were gathered through observations, interviews, and document analysis, involving principals, teachers, and students as key informants. The findings indicate that religious moderation education is embedded effectively into both curricular and extracurricular activities. Through PAI lessons, teachers integrate values such as tolerance, harmony, and critical thinking using innovative methods like Active Debate and Everyone Is a Teacher Here. These approaches enable students to internalize moderation values naturally. Extracurricular activities, such as interfaith collaborations during religious holidays, provide practical applications of these principles, fostering mutual respect and inclusivity among students. The outcomes reveal enhanced national commitment, tolerance, and critical thinking skills among students. The programs address contemporary challenges, such as the spread of radical ideologies, by creating a positive and inclusive school environment. A systematic implementation process, supported by continuous evaluation, ensures the programs' effectiveness and adaptability to the needs of students. This study concludes that religious moderation education at these madrasahs serves as an exemplary model for fostering harmony and coexistence in diverse educational contexts. Recommendations include consistent program evaluation, leveraging technology for broader outreach, and expanding these practices to other educational institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation has become a cornerstone of Indonesia's national agenda, reflecting its commitment to fostering tolerance and peaceful coexistence in a diverse society (Mala & Hunaida, 2023; Mariyono, 2024; Nashihin et al., 2024). As a country characterized by its multireligious, multiethnic, and multicultural composition, Indonesia faces the challenge of maintaining harmony amidst diversity. The Ministry of Religious Affairs has identified religious moderation as a strategic priority in the National

Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2020–2024, aiming to strengthen social cohesion and prevent conflicts stemming from religious differences ([Kurniawan & Hidayat, 2024](#); [Noptario et al., 2024](#); [Rusyana et al., 2023](#)). This initiative is particularly significant in educational institutions, where foundational values of tolerance, mutual respect, and inclusivity are nurtured.

Madrasahs, as Islamic educational institutions, play a pivotal role in advancing the values of religious moderation ([Huda, 2024](#); [Mala & Hunaida, 2023](#); [Musyahid & Kolis, 2023](#)). While traditionally perceived as homogenous environments, madrasahs increasingly reflect the pluralistic nature of Indonesian society ([Mariyono, 2024](#); [Noptario et al., 2024](#)). This diversity underscores the need for proactive efforts to embed the principles of *washatiyah* (moderation) in the madrasah ecosystem, equipping students to navigate differences with empathy and understanding ([Dewi, 2023](#); [Wibowo & Kurniawan, 2023](#); [Yasin & Khasbulloh, 2022](#)). Religious moderation in this context emphasizes harmony, mutual respect, and the cultivation of balanced perspectives that align with the principles of national unity.

North Toraja Regency offers a unique setting for exploring the implementation of religious moderation ([Bachrong & Ansar, 2021](#); [Welem, 2023](#)). Known for its rich cultural heritage and traditions, such as the Tongkonan philosophy of communal living, the region has long upheld values of tolerance and interfaith harmony ([Bachrong & Ansar, 2021](#); [Nurhakki et al., 2021](#); [Sumiaty et al., 2023](#)). Despite being home to various religious groups, including Muslims, Christians, and Catholics, the people of North Toraja have demonstrated the ability to coexist peacefully while preserving their cultural identity. However, the integration of religious moderation principles within madrasah environments requires systematic evaluation to ensure these values are effectively instilled and sustained.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs in North Toraja, through the Directorate General of Islamic Education, has implemented programs designed to strengthen religious moderation in madrasahs. These initiatives seek to foster interfaith understanding, create inclusive learning environments, and address potential challenges associated with religious diversity. However, the effectiveness of these programs remains underexplored, particularly in terms of their processes, outcomes, and sustainability.

This study, therefore, seeks to provide an in-depth evaluation of the religious moderation programs implemented in madrasahs within North Toraja Regency. By focusing on the processes involved, the research aims to assess the extent to which these programs align with their intended objectives and address the needs of a pluralistic society. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of strategies that enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of religious moderation initiatives in educational settings.

METHODS

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative approach using the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model ([Stufflebeam & Zhang, 2017](#)). The CIPP model provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating programs by assessing their contextual alignment, resource allocation, implementation processes, and outcomes. This approach facilitates a systematic evaluation, ensuring that each stage of the program is examined thoroughly. For this research, the focus is on the *Process* component to analyze the implementation of religious moderation programs in madrasahs located in North Toraja Regency. By employing qualitative methods, this study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the program's effectiveness and identify areas for improvement based on real-world practices and stakeholder experiences.

Participants

Participants in this study include students, teachers, and members of the religious moderation teams from three selected madrasahs in North Toraja Regency: Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Swasta (MIS) Bokin, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Swasta (MIS) Rantepao, and Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) Rantepao. These participants were selected using purposive sampling based on specific criteria. First, the madrasahs must actively implement religious moderation programs. Second, these institutions must conduct regular activities aimed at promoting religious moderation, with at least one major activity annually. Finally, the participants, including students and teachers, were chosen based on their involvement in

and contribution to the programs. These criteria ensured the inclusion of relevant stakeholders who could provide meaningful insights into the program's implementation.

Research Instruments

The research instruments were developed based on the *Process* component of the CIPP model to evaluate the program's management and execution comprehensively. Key indicators include organizational management, infrastructure adequacy, program activities, recognition and rewards, competition achievements, integration of science and technology, and media support. For instance, organizational management focuses on the presence of a structured system, coordination mechanisms, and evaluation practices, while infrastructure adequacy assesses the availability of resources required for program execution. Other indicators, such as competition achievements and media support, measure the broader impact and visibility of the program within and beyond the madrasah environment. Data were collected using observations, interviews, and documentation methods to ensure triangulation and data validity.

Data Collection

Data collection involved three primary methods. First, observations were conducted to capture real-time dynamics and practices of the religious moderation programs in the madrasahs. This method provided direct insights into the actual implementation process. Second, semi-structured interviews were carried out with teachers, students, and program coordinators to understand their perceptions, experiences, and challenges in implementing the programs. These interviews allowed for flexibility in exploring topics while ensuring comprehensive coverage of key themes. Third, document analysis was employed to gather secondary data, such as program reports, activity logs, and archival records, which complemented and validated the primary data collected through observations and interviews.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana. This model includes three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014). Data reduction involved filtering and summarizing relevant information from raw data, focusing on themes aligned with the research objectives. The reduced data were then displayed in narrative and visual formats to highlight the findings systematically. Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified by identifying patterns, relationships, and emerging themes, with further validation achieved through triangulation of data sources. This iterative analysis process ensured the accuracy and reliability of the study's findings.

RESULTS

Religious Moderation Education in MIS Bokin, MIS Rantepao, and MTs Rantepao

Religious moderation education at MIS Bokin, MIS Rantepao, and MTs Rantepao emphasizes cultivating moral character and fostering values of tolerance, harmony, and mutual respect among students. Observations and interviews revealed that these programs aim to prevent radical ideologies, religious violence, and intolerance. According to Farida La'te, S.Ag., Head of MIS Bokin:

"The goal of religious moderation education at MIS Bokin is to prevent students from being influenced by radical ideologies, religious violence, and intolerance. Students must understand and practice tolerance, harmony, and equality in their daily lives."

This statement underscores the importance of proactive efforts to instill moderate religious attitudes among students, ensuring they can coexist harmoniously with others in a diverse society.

Observations showed that religious moderation education at MIS Bokin has been implemented formally since 2019, but the values were embedded in teaching practices long before that. Ratna Rahman, S.Pd.I, a PAI teacher at MIS Bokin, stated:

"We have been implementing religious moderation education for nearly three years, starting in 2019. However, before that, these values were already being integrated into teaching practices."

This dialogue highlights that religious moderation education was an organic part of the teaching process even before the formal program began, reflecting the school's commitment to promoting harmony and tolerance. At MIS Rantepao, the program integrates curricular and extracurricular activities to nurture tolerance and prevent radical influences. Nasriadi Pakata, S.Pd., Head of MIS Rantepao, explained:

"In this era of globalization, radical and intolerant ideologies spread quickly, especially through social media. Religious moderation education aims to shield students from these influences while promoting positive learning environments."

This explanation emphasizes the urgency of implementing religious moderation education to counteract the risks posed by radical ideologies in the digital age. Similarly, at MTs Rantepao, the curriculum is designed to promote inclusivity and ensure equal opportunities for students of all faiths. Sri Salti Jayus, S.Pd., Head of MTs Rantepao, shared:

"We integrate religious moderation into the curriculum to foster respect and inclusivity. Students are encouraged to appreciate differences and collaborate, regardless of their religious or cultural background."

This dialogue illustrates the integration of religious moderation principles into the school's broader mission of inclusivity and mutual respect.

Evaluation of Religious Moderation Programs through PAI Lessons

Religious moderation education was found to be a core component of PAI lessons. Teachers embedded values of moderation in their lesson plans, teaching materials, and classroom activities. For example, teachers used nationalistic songs, such as *Indonesia Raya*, to instill patriotism. According to Yulianti, S.Pd., a PAI teacher at MIS Rantepao:

"Before every lesson, we sing Indonesia Raya. This instills a sense of national commitment among students, which aligns with the principles of religious moderation."

This approach not only reinforces national unity but also ties patriotism to the broader goals of fostering tolerance and coexistence. Teachers also integrated values like tolerance and harmony through subtle moral messages. Fitriani Benggo, S.Pd.I., M.Pd., a PAI teacher at MTs Rantepao, explained:

"During lessons, I include examples and moral messages about respecting others and embracing diversity. These values are embedded naturally, so students don't feel overwhelmed."

This illustrates how embedding moderation values in lesson delivery helps students internalize these principles without added pressure. Extracurricular activities further supported religious moderation education. At MTs Rantepao, students participated in interfaith collaborations during religious holidays. Fitriani Syahrir, S.Pd., the curriculum coordinator at MTs Rantepao, shared:

"During Christmas, Muslim students helped their Christian peers set up decorations. Similarly, during Eid al-Adha, non-Muslim students participated in the celebrations. These activities foster mutual respect and understanding."

These activities serve as practical applications of religious moderation, demonstrating how values taught in the classroom translate into real-world interactions.

Implementation and Evaluation Stages of Religious Moderation Programs

The implementation of religious moderation programs followed five stages: stimulus, problem identification, data collection, validation, and conclusion. During the stimulus stage, teachers introduced relevant materials to spark student interest. Rosmiati, S.Pd., a PAI teacher at MTs Rantepao, described:

"I provide books and materials to help students engage with the subject matter. This initial stage sets the foundation for deeper discussions."

This shows the importance of preparing students with foundational knowledge to engage meaningfully in discussions on religious moderation. In the validation stage, students presented their findings and participated in group discussions. Ratna Rahman, S.Pd.I, a PAI teacher at MIS Bokin, noted:

"Group discussions allow students to share ideas and learn from one another. This interactive process reinforces critical thinking and collaboration."

The validation process not only deepens understanding but also fosters essential skills like critical thinking and teamwork. Evaluation was a continuous process, focusing on students' behavior and understanding of moderation principles. Rosmiati, S.Pd., explained:

"If a student shows signs of intolerance, I work closely with the guidance counselor to provide targeted support through counseling and observation."

This emphasizes the proactive measures taken by educators to address and rectify any signs of intolerance among students.

Outcomes of Religious Moderation Education

The findings highlighted that religious moderation education successfully enhanced students' national commitment, tolerance, and critical thinking skills. Activities such as singing *Indonesia Raya* promoted patriotism, while group discussions encouraged respect for differing opinions. According to Fitriani Benggo, S.Pd.I., M.Pd.:

"When students engage in discussions, they learn to respect others' viewpoints. This nurtures tolerance and openness, which are core values of religious moderation."

This statement illustrates how structured classroom interactions contribute to the cultivation of mutual respect among students. The integration of innovative teaching methods, such as *Active Debate* and *Everyone Is a Teacher Here*, further supported these goals. Fitriani Benggo, S.Pd.I., M.Pd., added:

"These methods allow students to explore topics critically and collaboratively, fostering respect and responsibility."

These teaching strategies encourage active participation and responsibility, ensuring students internalize moderation values effectively. Teachers also tailored lesson plans to embed moderation values seamlessly. Yulianti, S.Pd., shared:

"I include moderation values in my lesson plans and deliver them subtly through examples and moral stories. This approach helps students internalize these values naturally."

This explanation reinforces the importance of integrating moderation principles into regular lesson plans, ensuring they become an integral part of students' learning experiences.

DISCUSSION

Religious Moderation Education in MIS Bokin, MIS Rantepao, and MTs Rantepao

The implementation of religious moderation education at MIS Bokin, MIS Rantepao, and MTs Rantepao illustrates a thoughtful and strategic integration of these values into both curricular and extracurricular activities. Each madrasah has developed approaches tailored to align with national objectives of fostering tolerance, harmony, and inclusivity while addressing specific challenges in their respective communities.

Religious moderation education in these madrasahs is designed to address the pressing issues of radicalism and intolerance. By instilling values such as tolerance, harmony, and mutual respect, the programs aim to equip students with the ability to navigate the complexities of a pluralistic society. These objectives align with Indonesia's broader educational agenda to promote social cohesion and ensure that students develop a balanced perspective toward religious diversity ([Hasan & Juhannis, 2024](#); [Mala & Hunaida, 2023](#); [Muhsin & Kususiyannah, 2024](#)). This proactive approach highlights the essential role of education in countering the influence of radical ideologies and fostering peaceful coexistence ([Kanu et al., 2024](#)).

Although the formal implementation of religious moderation programs began in 2019, these values have been embedded in teaching practices for much longer. The findings reveal that religious moderation was naturally integrated into the schools' educational culture even before the structured programs were launched. This longstanding tradition reflects the alignment of moderation values with the historical ethos of these institutions ([Gunawan & Khairunnisa, 2024](#); [Musyarrofah & Zulhannan, 2023](#)). By formalizing these practices, the madrasahs ensure that the values are consistently reinforced, creating a measurable impact on students' behavior and attitudes ([Nawas et al., 2024](#); [Yusuf et al., 2024](#)).

The programs also respond effectively to contemporary challenges, such as the rapid spread of radical ideologies and misinformation through digital platforms. By fostering critical thinking and a positive learning environment, religious moderation education equips students to engage constructively in the digital age ([Alabdulhadi & Alkandari, 2024](#); [Firnando, 2024](#); [Musyahid & Kolis, 2023](#); [Pahrudin et al., 2023](#)). This approach not only counters potential threats but also prepares students to appreciate diverse viewpoints and make informed decisions in a rapidly changing world ([Aderibigbe et al., 2023](#); [Golden, 2023](#); [Musyahid & Kolis, 2023](#)).

Inclusivity forms the cornerstone of religious moderation education in these madrasahs, particularly at MTs Rantepao, where students of all faiths are accommodated and given equal opportunities. By designing curricula and activities that celebrate diversity, the madrasah creates an environment where students feel valued regardless of their religious or cultural backgrounds. Activities such as interfaith collaborations during religious holidays further reinforce these values, demonstrating that religious moderation is not only a theoretical concept but also a practical and actionable principle in daily life ([Mashuri et al., 2024](#); [Shemer, 2022](#)).

The practical application of religious moderation values is evident in the teaching methods employed by the madrasahs. Teachers embed these values subtly within lesson plans and classroom activities, ensuring that students internalize them naturally without feeling pressured. Extracurricular activities provide additional opportunities for students to practice tolerance, harmony, and mutual respect. These real-world applications help students develop a deeper understanding of religious moderation and its significance in fostering unity and coexistence ([Mala & Hunaida, 2023](#); [Musyahid & Kolis, 2023](#); [Noptario et al., 2024](#); [Sahri & Suudin Aziz, 2023](#)).

The findings from MIS Bokin, MIS Rantepao, and MTs Rantepao demonstrate that religious moderation education plays a critical role in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors. By integrating these values into formal education and school culture, the madrasahs contribute to the broader goal of creating a harmonious and inclusive society. The emphasis on inclusivity and the proactive measures taken to address modern challenges underscore the relevance and adaptability of these programs. To enhance their impact, future efforts should focus on consistent evaluation and leveraging technology to expand the reach and effectiveness of religious moderation education.

Evaluation of Religious Moderation Programs through PAI Lessons

The evaluation of religious moderation programs through PAI (Islamic Religious Education) lessons at MIS Bokin, MIS Rantepao, and MTs Rantepao reveals a thoughtful integration of moderation values into both the curriculum and the broader teaching strategies. These programs aim to cultivate students' understanding of religious moderation and their ability to practice it in their daily lives. By embedding values such as tolerance, harmony, and mutual respect into the lessons, teachers ensure that these principles are not only theoretical concepts but also practical and actionable within the school environment and beyond ([Eriksson et al., 2022](#); [Gunawan & Khairunnisa, 2024](#); [Ilham et al., 2023](#)).

The findings show that religious moderation is seamlessly integrated into PAI lessons through structured lesson plans, selected teaching materials, and contextual activities. Teachers embed values

such as national unity, tolerance, and critical thinking into the content of their lessons. For example, starting lessons with nationalistic songs like *Indonesia Raya* fosters a sense of national commitment among students, aligning religious moderation with a sense of patriotism. This approach highlights the importance of linking religious moderation with broader civic values, ensuring that students understand their role as contributors to a cohesive and harmonious society ([Alabdulhadi & Alkandari, 2024](#); [Eriksson et al., 2022](#); [Yasmadi et al., 2024](#)).

Teachers also play a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes by delivering moral messages and embedding examples of moderation into their lessons. These strategies ensure that students internalize the principles of moderation naturally without feeling overwhelmed or burdened. For instance, lessons on Islamic theological concepts, such as the belief in angels, are linked to values like balance (*tawazun*) and moral responsibility ([Ridwan et al., 2022](#)). This connection between religious doctrine and practical values makes the principles of moderation relatable and easier to implement in daily life ([N. Jamaludin et al., 2024](#); [Nazilah et al., 2024](#); [Sukri, 2024](#)).

Extracurricular activities further reinforce the values taught in PAI lessons. At MTs Rantepao, interfaith collaborations during religious holidays provide opportunities for students to practice religious moderation in real-life contexts. These activities, such as Muslim students assisting their Christian peers during Christmas and vice versa during Islamic holidays, demonstrate how theoretical principles translate into actions that promote mutual respect and harmony. Such activities not only strengthen interfaith relationships but also deepen students' understanding of tolerance and inclusivity ([Abidin et al., 2025](#); [Aruman et al., 2024](#); [Zubaidi, 2024](#)).

The methods used by teachers to embed religious moderation into their lessons are innovative and adaptive. Approaches such as *Active Debate* and *Everyone Is a Teacher Here* foster critical thinking and encourage students to engage with diverse perspectives. These methods help students develop respect for differing opinions and a sense of responsibility toward their peers ([Aderibigbe et al., 2023](#); [Bassachs et al., 2020](#); [Lombardi et al., 2024](#)). By creating an interactive learning environment, teachers enable students to practice the principles of moderation in a safe and supportive setting ([Idris & Putra, 2021](#); [A. N. Jamaludin, 2022](#); [Kamaludin et al., 2021](#)).

The evaluation also highlights the importance of subtlety in teaching moderation values. Teachers avoid explicitly labeling activities as "religious moderation," instead embedding these principles naturally into the curriculum and teaching methods. This strategy ensures that students do not feel pressured and can internalize the values more effectively ([Mala & Hunaida, 2023](#); [Syahril et al., 2024](#)). This approach aligns with the goal of fostering long-term behavioral and attitudinal changes that reflect the essence of religious moderation ([Daffa, 2023](#); [Sofyan et al., 2022](#)).

Implementation and Evaluation Stages of Religious Moderation Programs

The implementation and evaluation stages of religious moderation programs at MIS Bokin, MIS Rantepao, and MTs Rantepao reveal a structured and comprehensive approach to fostering moderation values among students. The programs are designed to guide students through an interactive learning process while continuously monitoring and improving their effectiveness. The five stages of implementation—stimulus, problem identification, data collection, validation, and conclusion—illustrate a systematic methodology to achieve the desired educational outcomes.

The stimulus stage serves as the foundation for engaging students in the learning process. Teachers introduce relevant materials, such as textbooks and case studies, to spark students' interest and set the stage for deeper exploration. By providing a clear context and purpose for the lessons, this stage ensures that students are motivated to participate actively in the program ([Chen et al., 2024](#); [Hanisah et al., 2024](#)). This approach reflects the importance of establishing a strong baseline to foster engagement and curiosity about the principles of religious moderation ([Huck et al., 2020](#); [Jati & Yilmaz, 2023](#)).

The problem identification stage involves group discussions and interactive questioning, encouraging students to think critically about issues related to religious moderation. This stage emphasizes the role of inquiry in education, enabling students to identify and articulate key challenges in promoting tolerance and harmony ([Aderibigbe et al., 2023](#); [Atsani & Hadisaputra, 2024](#)). The process not only deepens students' understanding but also cultivates their ability to analyze complex social and religious issues from a balanced perspective ([Elbes & Oktaviani, 2022](#); [Erduran et al., 2022](#)).

The data collection and validation stages are pivotal in reinforcing collaborative learning. Students are tasked with gathering information and presenting their findings, while teachers provide feedback and clarification. These stages emphasize the importance of teamwork and critical evaluation, as students are encouraged to listen to diverse viewpoints and refine their understanding through discussion ([Hussein et al., 2024](#); [Yan et al., 2024](#)). This iterative process fosters respect for differing opinions and reinforces the principles of inclusivity and mutual respect.

The conclusion stage involves summarizing and consolidating the lessons learned. Teachers guide students in drawing key takeaways and applying them to real-world contexts. This stage ensures that students not only grasp the theoretical aspects of religious moderation but also understand its practical applications ([Aderibigbe et al., 2023](#); [Pohan & Wisda, 2024](#)). By highlighting the relevance of moderation in daily life, this stage bridges the gap between classroom learning and social practice ([Musyahid & Kolis, 2023](#); [Nazilah et al., 2024](#)).

The findings highlight the importance of managing the program effectively to achieve its objectives. Teachers play a crucial role in maintaining the integrity of the program by addressing challenges, such as students exhibiting discriminatory behaviors or struggling to internalize moderation values. Collaborative efforts between teachers and counselors ensure that such challenges are addressed promptly and effectively, minimizing their impact on the overall learning environment.

Outcomes of Religious Moderation Education

The outcomes of religious moderation education in MIS Bokin, MIS Rantepao, and MTs Rantepao demonstrate the significant impact of these programs on students' attitudes, behaviors, and skills. By integrating moderation values into both curricular and extracurricular activities, the programs have successfully cultivated students' national commitment, tolerance, and critical thinking, essential attributes for navigating Indonesia's pluralistic society ([Aruman et al., 2024](#); [Mala & Hunaida, 2023](#); [Sumiarti & Azizah, 2024](#)).

One of the key outcomes is the strengthening of national commitment among students. Activities such as singing *Indonesia Raya* before lessons foster a sense of patriotism and unity, linking religious moderation to broader civic values. This alignment underscores the role of education in not only addressing religious issues but also promoting a sense of belonging and shared responsibility as citizens of a diverse nation ([Harell et al., 2022](#); [Shaw, 2023](#)). The integration of national commitment with religious moderation equips students to contribute to both local and national harmony ([Khalilurrahman et al., 2023](#); [Sahri & Suudin Aziz, 2023](#)).

Tolerance and inclusivity are among the most prominent outcomes observed in these madrasahs. By embedding values such as mutual respect and acceptance into the curriculum, the programs enable students to appreciate differences and engage constructively with peers from diverse backgrounds ([Hudson, 2022](#); [Winarsih et al., 2024](#)). For example, interfaith collaborations during religious holidays, where Muslim and non-Muslim students assist one another, serve as practical applications of these principles. Such activities go beyond theoretical understanding, allowing students to practice tolerance and inclusivity in real-life contexts ([Djamaluddin et al., 2024](#); [Nugroho et al., 2024](#)).

The development of critical thinking skills is another notable outcome of religious moderation education. Through interactive teaching methods, such as *Active Debate* and *Everyone Is a Teacher Here*, students are encouraged to analyze information, engage in discussions, and respect differing perspectives. These skills are essential in helping students discern and reject radical ideologies, misinformation, and biases ([Aderibigbe et al., 2023](#); [Bassachs et al., 2020](#); [Lombardi et al., 2024](#)). The ability to think critically ensures that students are better prepared to navigate the complexities of a digital age where conflicting viewpoints and ideologies are prevalent ([Golden, 2023](#); [Lombardi et al., 2024](#)).

The outcomes also extend to the broader school environment, where a culture of moderation and mutual respect has become ingrained. Teachers play a pivotal role in modeling these values, creating an atmosphere that encourages dialogue and collaboration. Students internalize these principles through their interactions, both within and beyond the classroom, demonstrating the program's success in fostering a harmonious and inclusive school community ([Aruman et al., 2024](#); [OK et al., 2023](#); [Pradana et al., 2023](#)).

Furthermore, the integration of religious moderation values into lesson content and teaching strategies ensures that students learn to practice these principles subtly and naturally. This approach prevents students from feeling burdened by explicit expectations, instead allowing them to internalize the values over time (Muizzuddin et al., 2024; Sapdi et al., 2022). As a result, students demonstrate a deeper and more authentic commitment to moderation, tolerance, and respect.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of religious moderation education at MIS Bokin, MIS Rantepao, and MTs Rantepao is well-structured and impactful, integrating core values of tolerance, harmony, and inclusivity into both curricular and extracurricular activities. The programs have been strategically developed to address contemporary challenges, such as the spread of radical ideologies and social intolerance, while fostering critical thinking, mutual respect, and a strong sense of national identity among students.

Through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) lessons, teachers effectively embed moderation values into the curriculum, utilizing innovative teaching methods and contextual examples to ensure students internalize these principles naturally. Extracurricular activities, such as interfaith collaborations during religious celebrations, provide practical applications of moderation values, reinforcing the lessons learned in the classroom. These approaches collectively create an inclusive and harmonious school environment that reflects the broader goals of religious moderation.

The outcomes of these programs are significant, highlighting their success in fostering national commitment, promoting tolerance, and equipping students with critical thinking skills necessary to navigate a pluralistic society. The structured evaluation stages—ranging from stimulus to conclusion—ensure that the programs are implemented effectively and continuously improved based on student needs and societal contexts.

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