

Contents lists available at ojs.aeducia.org**Jurnal Indonesia Studi Moderasi Beragama**

Volume 2, Issue 1 (2025), 10.64420/jismb.v2i1

Journal homepage: <https://ojs.aeducia.org/index.php/jismb>**JISMB**

E-ISSN 3063-5020

P-ISSN 3063-6418

Research Article

Read Online: <https://doi.org/10.64420/jismb.v2i1.213>

Open Access

Religious Moderation as a Bridge to Peace: Fostering Tolerance, Mutual Understanding, and Interfaith Dialogue

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ABSTRACT

Background: Indonesia's diversity has made it vulnerable to rising extremism and radicalism, prompting the Ministry of Religious Affairs to promote religious moderation as a strategic effort to preserve unity and tolerance. **Objective:** This study aims to explore the implementation of religious moderation by the Ministry of Religious Affairs as a strategy to combat extremism and radicalism in Indonesia. **Method:** The research uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method conducted in 2022. Data collection techniques include documentation, and data analysis follows the Miles & Huberman model. **Result:** The findings indicate that religious moderation acts as a meeting point between religious extremism and the path to peace, providing a solution to reconcile religious communities. It is crucial in fostering peaceful and prosperous life, as well as promoting cultural strategies for building peace in Indonesia. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that religious moderation is essential for maintaining human dignity and addressing the diverse challenges of modern development. It plays a key role in mitigating radical ideologies and contributing to social harmony in Indonesia. **Originality/Value:** This study offers novel conceptual and policy insights to the fields of peace studies and religious public policy by uncovering the operational mechanisms of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in operationalizing theological moderation into a cultural conflict-resolution framework for de-escalating radicalism and fostering interfaith dialogue within pluralistic Indonesia a policy nexus often fragmented in previous theoretical literature. These findings enrich conceptual frameworks on faith-based peacebuilding and provide a strategic blueprint for refining the national religious moderation roadmap, structuring institutional interfaith dialogue programs, and developing cohesive state-level deradicalization policies.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: May 20, 2025

Revised: June 3, 2025

Accepted: July 25, 2025

Published: July 28, 2025

KEYWORDS

Religious moderation;
Tolerance;
Mutual understanding;
Interfaith dialogue

1. INTRODUCTION

In this increasingly advanced era of globalization, religious moderation is a very relevant and important theme. Religious moderation is a bridge that can connect different religions and beliefs, to create peace and harmony among human beings (Burga & Damopolii, 2022). Religious moderation is a concept that encourages individuals to respect differences and accept religious plurality (Ummah, 2022). Through religious moderation, one can understand that different religions share values that teach peace, compassion, and justice.

Recently, research conducted by Saingo (2022) revealed that religion is not good if it is forced. Because in religion, it must be due to the pure motivation and awareness of each person. Because every Indonesian citizen realizes that embracing a religion by force or pressure will not have a positive impact on one's faith. This means that a person's faith in religion can only be realized according to its purpose positively if a person lives his religious life according to the choice of his conscience. In religious pluralism, every Indonesian citizen has been trained to respect each other.

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How to Cite this Article:

Mulyanti, V., & Muhajarah, K. (2025). Religious Moderation as a Bridge to Peace: Fostering Tolerance, Mutual Understanding, and Interfaith Dialogue. *Jurnal Indonesia Studi Moderasi Beragama*, 2(1), 35-45. <https://doi.org/10.64420/jismb.v2i1.213>



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Every Indonesian citizen is strictly prohibited from rejecting religions that are different from his or her own. Because religious people who are anti-compassionate towards other religions tend to disbelieve people who embrace religions that are different from them.

Through religious moderation, we can see religion as a source of wisdom and inspiration to realize world peace. In this context, religious moderation serves as a tool to promote interfaith dialog, respect differences, and maintain interfaith harmony. The importance of religious moderation as a bridge to peace cannot be overlooked. In this increasingly complex and diverse world, religious moderation provides a solid foundation for building greater awareness and tolerance among humanity (Wahidin et al., 2023).

In addition, religious moderation also includes the protection of minority and lesser-known religions (Carrington et al., 2023). Governments and societies are expected to provide sufficient space for such groups to practice their faith and beliefs without discrimination. Education and awareness about the diversity of religions and beliefs are also important to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts (Rissanen et al., 2020). Interfaith cooperation can be a powerful force to find sustainable solutions to problems such as poverty, climate change, and organized crime. Religious moderation is the key to building peace and harmony among religious diversity. By practicing the values of tolerance, understanding, and mutual respect, we can create an inclusive and tolerant society where every individual has the right to express their religious beliefs without fear or discrimination.

Efforts to encourage religious moderation are at the core of the Ministry of Religious Affairs' policy. Various strategies are carried out rationally and systematically to ensure that moderate religious attitudes and behaviors become the character and spirit of the nations (Khasanah et al., 2023). On the other hand, the discourse of moderation has also existed for a long time and developed into a general implementation, albeit on a personal scale, which became the initial basis for the application of religious moderation in a wider environment. The Ministry of Religious Affairs implements a policy of instilling noble values in various family development programs. Specifically, starting from the counseling and guidance of the Ministry of Religious Affairs to the service level of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Branch at the district level. Various efforts are made to anticipate and minimize the increase in religious conflict, radicalism, and extremism. The Ministry of Religious Affairs also consistently strives to encourage moderate attitudes in society. In fact, in 2019, the Ministry of Religious Affairs also held a national training for the generation of 'Mubalights' (people who convey Islamic teachings either orally or in writing), and this event included a training program to provide reasonable religious understanding to people. This is done to produce religious leaders who can practice the values of unity and integrity.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs' implementation of the concept of religious moderation is an important strategy in the effort to overcome extremism and radicalism in Indonesia. Religious moderation is no longer just a program but can be applied according to the framework and rules that have been set. Therefore, the religious temperance movement is one of the alternatives and solutions to overcome these problems. All elements of society must contribute, promote, and practice moderate attitudes toward religion. Therefore, the impact of religious moderation will have an impact on the life of the nation and state, especially related to terrorism and religious conflict in Indonesia. Religious moderation is also a set of values and practices that are suitable to be realized in daily life (Marpudin et al., 2023). To build peace and diversity in Indonesia, it is important to spread a moderate, calm, and balanced attitude. We as citizens must be based on noble values to achieve unity and integrity. If we can do all that well, then life will go well in the broadest sense, without conflicts and events that lead to radical and extreme actions. The Ministry of Religious Affairs has diverse implementations in various sectors, especially at the provincial level.

In this article, the research examines the theme of religious moderation as a bridge to peace. Through a deeper understanding of religious moderation, it is hoped that we can build a more inclusive, harmonious, and peaceful society. Thus, let us begin to explore this interesting theme and see how religious moderation can be a bridge of peace for humanity. The purpose of this research is to know the urgency of religious moderation as a bridge to peace in religious life. the focus of this research discussion examines the role of religious moderation as an approach that emphasizes tolerance, mutual understanding, and interfaith dialogue.

2. METHOD

2.1 Type of Research

This research uses a qualitative approach, the research method uses a literature study. Literature or literature study can be defined as a series of activities related to library data collection methods, reading and recording, and processing research materials (Connaway & Radford, 2021). Literature studies can also study various reference books and the results of previous similar studies which are useful for obtaining a theoretical basis for the problem to be studied (Galvan & Galvan, 2017).

Judging from its nature, this research includes descriptive research, descriptive research focuses on a systematic explanation of the facts obtained when the research was conducted. Descriptive research is research that describes the social symptoms studied by describing the value of variables based on the indicators studied without making relationships and comparisons with several other variables.

2.2 Research Procedure

This literature research method is used to develop concepts about religious moderation as a bridge to peace: An approach that emphasizes tolerance, mutual understanding, and interfaith dialogue includes (1) topic selection; (2) exploration of information; (3) determining the focus of research; (4) collection of data sources; (5) preparation of data presentation; (6) preparation of reports.

2.3 Data Source

This literature research was conducted in 2023. The data sources that researchers use to become materials (data sources) of this research are books and scientific journals related to the topic that has been chosen.

2.4 Data Collection

Data collection techniques in this study through documentation. The research instruments in this research are a checklist of classification of research materials, writing schemes/maps, and research note formats.

2.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis uses the Miles & Huberman model analysis, the stages of this analysis include (1) Data collection, the grouped data is then arranged in the form of narratives, so that it is in the form of a meaningful series of information by the research problem; (2) data reduction, categorization, and data reduction, namely collecting important information related to the research problem, then the data is grouped according to the topic of the problem; (3) data display, interpreting data, namely interpreting what informants have interpreted about the problem under study; (4) conclusion drawing/verification, drawing conclusions based on the narrative structure that has been compiled in the third stage, so that it can provide answers to research problems.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

Based on the literature study that has been conducted, the following are the results of filtering research data that researchers have selected according to the research topic:

Table 1. Literature Study Results

No	Authors	Title	Journal		Conclusion
1.	Ponno et al., (2023)	Cultivating the Values of Religious Moderation in a Pluralistic Society	Jurnal Multidisipliner Keilmuan, 1(5), 356-365	Salome:	By prioritizing the cultivation of religious moderation values, communities can establish a solid foundation to achieve common goals in dynamic and diverse societal settings
2.	Zuhriyandi, (2023)	Religious Harmony and Conflict Prevention: Perspectives on Moderation According to the Qur'an and the Bible.	MODERATIO: Moderasi Beragama, 3(2), 218-232	Jurnal	Religious conflicts arising from differences in beliefs can pose a serious threat to the peace and stability of society.
3.	Patih, (2023)	Efforts to Build an Attitude of Religious Moderation through Islamic Religious Education and Civic Education for Students of Public Universities	Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 12(001)	Jurnal	The integral role of Islamic Religious Education and Civic Education in shaping the attitude of religious moderation in college students, with an emphasis on these values as valuable instruments for positive contributions to community harmony.

No	Authors	Title	Journal	Conclusion
4.	Amri, (2021)	Religious Moderation from the Perspective of Religions in Indonesia	Living Islam: Journal of Islamic Discourses, 4(2), 179-196.	The term of religious moderation is often identified with wasathiyah in Islam, but in fact the principles of religious moderation are stated in every religious teaching of all religions. They all require peace, justice, and maintain human values. This is the important of understanding that the very basic religious teachings are in line with the religious moderation.
5.	Saumantri, (2023)	Construction of Religious Moderation in Seyyed Hossein Nasr's Perennial Philosophy Perspective	Kanz Philosophia: A Journal for Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism, 9(1), 89-112.	The construction of religious moderation from the perspective of Seyyed Hossein Nasr's philosophy can bring peace and harmony to a society that is becoming increasingly pluralistic and complex.
6	Irama & Zamzami, 2021)	A Review of the Ministry of Religious Affairs' Religious Moderation Mainstreaming Formula 2019-2020	KACA (Karunia Cahaya Allah): Jurnal Dialogis Ilmu Ushuluddin, 11(1), 65-89.	Kemenag's religious moderation formula is a strategy carried out by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia through several lines, in an effort to strengthen moderate religious understanding in the midst of pluralistic Indonesian society, including strengthening religious moderation through a pre-marital guidance program for prospective brides who will enter into marriage.
7.	Fuady et al., (2021)	Tolerance of Nasaruddin Umar as a Solution to Overcoming Radicalism in the Name of Religion	Academica: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, 5(1), 1-26.	Tolerance according to Nasaruddin Umar is respecting and respecting the rights of others. In implementing tolerance, he is committed to tackling radicalism in Indonesia. Several efforts were made to establish the Nasaruddin Umar Office and to promote the importance of tolerance in society through social media.
8	Hefni, (2022)	Mainstreaming Religious Moderation of Millennial Generation through Moderate Student Movement in Lumajang District	Smart: Jurnal Studi Masyarakat, Religi dan Tradisi, 8(2), 163-175	although madrasah students are vulnerable to exposure to radicalism and tolerance due to natural factors that are part of the digital age, those who are members of GSM become agents as well as ambassadors for driving religious moderation in three actions at once
9	Sari, et al., (2023)	Religious Moderation in Islamic Education in Indonesia	Journal on Education, 5(2), 2202-2221.	All of the Islamic education materials above are presented in ways and techniques that uphold high values and the principles of moderation in religion so as to foster character and personality that has flexibility, love, pluralism

No	Authors	Title	Journal	Conclusion
10	Aijudin, et al., (2017)	Managing Pluralism Through Interfaith Dialogue (a Theoretical Review)	Jurnal SMART (Studi Masyarakat, Religi, dan Tradisi), 3(1), 119-124.	Interfaith dialogue is understood as a joint effort among followers of religion to understand each other. In the interfaith dialogue, honesty and openness are important requirements for reaching mutual agreement. Political identity based on religion which is a serious threat for religious pluralism can be managed through this interfaith dialogue.

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1 The Concept of Religious Moderation

The word "moderation" comes from the Latin word "moderatio" which means moderate (not too much, not too little) (Widyana et al., 2022). The Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) defines moderation in two senses It is about reducing violence and avoiding extremes. In the English version, the word moderate is often used to mean "average", "core", "standard", or "gap". In connection with some of these words, "moderation" means a balance of moral beliefs and character traits that are essential, both in personal interactions with others and in dealing with the institutions of the state (Craiutu, 2018). In the Arabic version, moderation is known as wasasth or wasathiyyah which is synonymous with the words tawasuth (middle), i'tidal (fair), and tawazun (balanced) (Muizzuddin, 2023). The antonym of the word wasath is tatbaruf (excess), which in English is called extreme, radical, and excessive. Islam as a religion of rahmatan lil 'alamin (mercy for the entire universe) through the revelation of the Qur'an has placed the position of its people (Muslims) as a wasathan people, which can become an arbiter (washith) in addressing problems that occur amid human life (Niam, 2019). As stated in Surah Al-Baqarah: 143:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۚ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعَ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ إِيْمَانَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾

Meaning: “Likewise We have made you (Muslims) a middle nation that you may bear witness to the people and that the Messenger (Prophet Muhammad) may bear witness to you. We have not fixed the Qibla (Baitulmaqdis) to which you used to turn, except that We may know (in reality) who follows the Messenger and who turns back. Verily, it is very hard, except for those to whom Allah has guided. Allah will not waste your faith. Verily, Allah is indeed merciful to mankind.”

The term moderate is considered the most appropriate among other terms. Moderates are often described as modernists, progressives, and reformists, but none of these terms replace the term moderate (Yanti & Witro, 2020). It is based on the legitimacy of the Quran and Prophetic Hadith, and Muslims are expected to be moderate. Moderation is rooted in Islamic tradition, where the term wasathiyyah represents the fundamental identity and character of Islam.

Religious moderation refers to attitudes and behaviors that can mediate between religions in problem-solving (Pandey & Singh, 2019). Religious moderation does not mean moderating the religion itself, but rather moderation religious views, attitudes, and practices according to situations and circumstances, as long as they do not conflict with religious teachings. Although the language of moderation indicates a movement to reduce violence or extremism, its meaning must be understood correctly. If moderation is interpreted as a violent and extreme way of practicing religion, then it must be braked. If it leads to radicalism, then we must avoid it.

The concept of religious moderation has become a long-term policy in the Ministry of Religious Affairs program. According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, religious moderation aims to improve the human development index. The religious aspect is one of the indicators to build a moderate attitude, especially if it is accompanied by noble values and goodness (Subchi et al., 2022). Therefore, religion is the spiritual, moral, and ethical foundation of national and religious life. Furthermore, strengthening the understanding and implementation of religious moderation can be utilized in Indonesia's efforts to become a model and inspiration for religious life on a global scale. Of course, this must be a commitment to practicing moderate religious teachings and spreading peace, so that it also becomes Indonesia's contribution in participating in maintaining world peace.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs' strategy to implement the Religious Moderation Institute will also be implemented by issuing a circular letter to establish a Religious Moderation Institute in each university. The existence of a

religious moderation house aims to strengthen the presence of radical ideology in a large-scale effort. This is evidence that the Ministry of Religious Affairs is deliberately and consistently implementing religious moderation in various fields, especially in Islamic higher education.

Inter-religious harmony can be an endless national and even international challenge. This is understandable because the future of a nation depends to some extent on the harmony of inter-religious relations. If this agenda is not implemented, the nation will experience the trauma of being divided as a nation.

3.2.2 *Promoting Tolerance and Respect for Differences*

Indonesia is a diverse country with many different faiths and ethnic groups. Therefore, it is crucial to promote tolerance and understanding of other religions to prevent extreme religious views from taking hold in society. The challenge is to encourage society to be more tolerant and open, especially in the context of Islam.

Tolerance is the trait or attitude of being tolerant (appreciating, allowing, permitting) of the views (opinions, views, beliefs, actions, and so on) of others or those that conflict with one's own. Examples: Religion (Ideology), race, etc., means getting along with everyone, tolerating other opinions and views, and not wanting to violate other people's freedom of thought and belief.

Amid the complex problems faced by heterogeneous Indonesian society. This shows that creating awareness in a pluralistic society is not easy. Moderation in religion becomes an important focus, building bridges between people and promoting tolerance, as well as a sense of unity along with the strengthening of the Indonesian nation and united with "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika", which means we are different, they are different, but there must be one. Even though we differ in race, ethnicity, culture, and religion, we must be able to find common ground between these differences to build unity. Furthermore, Yakut Cholil Kumas, Minister of Religious Affairs, stated that a cultural strategy is needed to strengthen religious moderation. The Ramadhan Art Festival was held on April 27, 2021, in collaboration with the University of Indonesia's Makara Art Center and the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Depok. This activity is also an effort to build a cultural movement and encourage it through cultural arts so that people can develop inner sensitivity towards their fellow citizens.

Religious moderation is certainly the key to creating a harmony of tolerance and peace both locally, nationally, and globally. Rejecting extremism and liberalism in religion and choosing moderation is the key to maintaining balance, preserving civilization, and building peace. Thus, all religious believers can treat each other with respect, accept differences, and live together in peace and harmony. In a multicultural society like Indonesia, religious moderation may not be an option, but a necessity. Moderate Islam always prioritizes tolerance and mutual respect and believes in the truth of the beliefs of all religions and schools of thought. That way, everyone will be able to calmly accept the decision without acting anarchist.

To create an inter-religious peaceful society, the Ministry of religion can also emphasize the importance of strengthening the character of education as an entry point for improvement. The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia could also develop an idea of religious moderation. Through religious moderation, the Ministry of Religious Affairs can encourage the growth of moderate religious perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors, not extreme or excessive, because any religion prohibits each of its people from being excessive. One indicator of the success of religious moderation is the existence of strong national insight in religious communities.

Pancasila as the basis of the state becomes a guideline in maintaining religious moderation. The first principle, "Belief in One God", reflects the nation's commitment to respecting the diversity of religions and beliefs. Society needs to develop mutual respect and appreciation of other people's beliefs so that no party feels ignored or excluded. The state's commitment to religious moderation includes efforts to create an atmosphere that encourages the development and peaceful coexistence of different religions and beliefs. For example, comprehensive mass education is one way to instill the values of religious moderation from an early age. Through education, the younger generation is taught to respect differences and maintain interfaith harmony.

Although religions and local traditions and cultures provide insights and perspectives on life that are in harmony with the will of God and humanity. Therefore, there is usually a dialectic between religion and tradition. Religion gives color (spirit) to traditional art. On the other hand, traditional art brings richness to religion.

3.2.3 *The Role of Religious Leaders in Promoting Religious Moderation*

Islam is the newest religion in the Abrahamic tradition. Since its birth in the seventh century, Islam's self-image has included the important element of pluralism in its relationship with other religions. To trace the roots of pluralism in Islam is to show that a modern Abrahamic religion can indeed emerge in a pluralistic religious world. Islam recognizes it and assesses it critically, but never rejects it or considers it wrong. From the beginning, Islam has stood

amid other cultures and religions. When the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) preached Islam, he knew many religions, including Jews and Christians.

Islam abolishes religious intolerance, preserves religious freedom, and lays the foundation for the diversity of interfaith life. Freedom of religion is a life value upheld by all Muslims. Islam protects the freedom to worship God according to their religion, either in the mosque or in the church (Husin & Ibrahim, 2016). Islam protects followers of other religions who wish to live peacefully in a Muslim-dominated society and government. They are treated well and fairly, as was the case with the Jews and Christians during the Prophet's reign in Medina. Jews and Christians are given the freedom to practice their religion, similar to the freedom given to Muslims themselves. Your rights are protected and guaranteed by contract. According to intergroup Islamic law, they are called people who receive guarantees and protection from the Islamic community.

The way Islam spread in Indonesia was based on a persuasive and tolerant approach, not violence and coercion. The Islamic Da'wah delivered by Walisongo was adapted to the socio-culture of each region and did not interfere with other religious traditions. The Islamization carried out by the Walisongo as preachers helped Indonesian culture internalize divine values. In his mission of proselytizing, Sunan Bonang combined "gamelan" music with Islamic elements. Sunan Kurajaga established "Wayang Kulit" by teaching ethics and morality. Sunan Derajat created the "Javanese Song" based on cooperation. Similarly for other societies, the teachings of Islam subtly and gently permeated the society of all ethnicities and religions. People can understand that Islam is present as a religion that fundamentally teaches universal values to build a peaceful, harmonious, and humanist social order (Wani et al., 2015). The concept of religious moderation is one of the central teachings of Islam to shape the character and character of Muslims, both individually and collectively. Religious moderation is certainly the key to creating tolerance and harmony both locally, nationally, and globally.

As in the word of Allah calling us as his servants (QS, Al- Hujurat: 10):

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١﴾

Meaning: *Sesungguhnya orang-orang mukmin itu bersaudara, karena itu damaikanlah kedua saudaramu (yang bertikai) dan bertakwalah kepada Allah agar kamu dirahmati (QS, Al-Hujurat: 10).*

Where this verse explains reconciliation between two parties that are different from each other but through cooperation can push to the path of peace, as explained in QS, An-Nisa: 114:

لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنْ نَجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Meaning: *There is no good in much of their secret talk, except (in the secret talk) of those who enjoin charity, (do) good, or make peace among men. Whoever does so seeking the pleasure of Allah, We will grant him a great reward. (QS, An-Nisa: 114).*

The verse provides clear evidence of how important it is to apply the values of kindness and peace among others when communicating in everyday life. Always spreading kindness and doing islah with others is the best form of communication that should be promoted in today's new world conditions marked by the advancement of cyberspace. Through good communication and spreading goodness on this earth, we can uphold the value of peace and harmony in the State (Wei, & Li, 2013). Public Relations is fostering good relations with various organizations to achieve the desired publicity, building a good image of a company or organization, and dealing with rumors, news, and unpleasant events.

There is also a study of religious moderation in Indonesian diversity conducted by Mr. Agus Ahmadi, which is one of the important studies to find out how multicultural life is expressed in Indonesian social life. Therefore, efforts need to be made to spread awareness of multicultural understanding and respect for diversity, as well as kindness and fair treatment of out-groups. Religious moderation is needed to develop a moderate, tolerant attitude and respect for the opinions of others, rather than imposing one's will through violence (Pajariantito et al., 2023). Therefore, all parties must also be involved in developing religious moderation in society. This is done to create harmony and peace amid life. Furthermore, religious tolerance is also an important concern that must continue to be pursued, especially the need for dialogue to prioritize differences between religious communities and an attitude of tolerance that ultimately leads to mutual respect and respect between religious communities and adherents of all religions. No fear of rights and obligations must be reflected in religious life.

Religious moderation is the meeting point between religious extremism and the path to peace. It is also an effort to find solutions to reconcile religious people. Moderation in religion is also needed to realize a peaceful and prosperous life. This concept is also a cultural strategy to build peace in Indonesia. In addition, religion is also an important element in maintaining human dignity. Moreover, modern developments have made humans more diverse. This also has an impact on science which continues to dynamically answer the challenges of the times with various issues surrounding science.

4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Research Implications

The findings of this study hold several important implications for both readers seeking insight and stakeholders concerned with the urgency of religious moderation as a pathway to peaceful religious coexistence. Religious moderation emerges as a fundamental key to fostering tolerance and harmony at the local, national, and global levels. By rejecting both extremism and excessive liberalism in religious practice, and instead embracing a balanced, moderate approach, communities can preserve cultural and spiritual values, maintain social equilibrium, and contribute to long-term peacebuilding efforts. These findings reinforce the critical role of religious moderation in sustaining civilization and promoting mutual respect across diverse societies.

4.2 Research Contributions

This study contributes to the academic and practical discourse on peacebuilding and religious education by emphasizing the strategic role of religious moderation in fostering tolerance, mutual understanding, and interfaith dialogue. Theoretically, it enriches the literature on religious studies, conflict resolution, and social harmony by presenting religious moderation as a key framework for promoting peaceful coexistence in pluralistic societies. Practically, the research offers valuable insights for policymakers, educators, religious leaders, and community organizations in designing programs and strategies that encourage balanced religious perspectives and respectful engagement across different faiths. By highlighting moderation as a middle path between extremism and liberalism, the study underscores its relevance in preserving social cohesion, preventing religious-based conflicts, and promoting global peace.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

4.1 Research Limitation

The limitation of this research lies in its exclusive reliance on literature studies, where all data and information are gathered through the review of scientific journals, books, and other academic sources. As a result, the study lacks empirical data obtained through field research methods such as interviews, observations, or surveys. This limitation implies that the analysis and conclusions regarding the role of religious moderation as an approach that promotes tolerance, mutual understanding, and interfaith dialogue are based entirely on secondary sources. Consequently, while the study provides valuable theoretical insights, it may not fully reflect the practical realities and diverse experiences of communities implementing religious moderation in their daily lives.

4.2 Recommendation for Future Research

For future researchers interested in the topic Religious Moderation as a Bridge to Peace: Fostering Tolerance, Mutual Understanding, and Interfaith Dialogue, it is recommended to conduct more in-depth studies using empirical approaches such as field observations, interviews, or surveys. These methods can provide richer, more grounded insights into how religious moderation is practiced and perceived in diverse communities. Additionally, future studies may explore the effectiveness of specific programs or initiatives aimed at promoting interfaith dialogue and tolerance through religious moderation. Comparative studies across different cultural or religious contexts could also offer a broader perspective and contribute to a more global understanding of how moderation in religion can serve as a powerful tool for peacebuilding and social harmony.

6. CONCLUSION

Religious moderation is an approach that emphasizes the importance of tolerance, mutual understanding, and dialogue between religious communities. By promoting religious moderation, society can create an inclusive and harmonious environment where religious differences are not a source of conflict but a force for enriching life together.

In the context of peace, religious moderation is a bridge that connects different beliefs and mutually beneficial understandings. Understanding and respecting religious diversity enables societies to build strong cooperation and respond to common challenges such as interfaith conflict, extremism, and discrimination. In conclusion, religious moderation as a bridge to peace provides a strong foundation for building a peaceful and tolerant society amid religious diversity. Religious moderation is needed to develop a moderate, tolerant attitude and respect for the opinions of others, rather than imposing one's will through violence.

Religious moderation serves as a vital pathway to peace by promoting tolerance, mutual understanding, and constructive interfaith dialogue. By emphasizing the importance of moderation in religious beliefs and practices, individuals and communities can overcome divisive ideologies and foster an environment of respect and cooperation. This approach encourages open communication and empathy among different faiths, ultimately contributing to a more harmonious and peaceful society. The principles of religious moderation not only help in mitigating religious conflicts but also strengthen social cohesion, making it an essential tool in promoting global peace.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the second author who acts as a supervisor, thank you very much for your advice and input in the preparation of this research.

Author Contribution Statement

All authors discussed the results, contributed to the final manuscript, and approved the final version for publication. Vita Mulyanti: Conceptualization, Writing - Original Draft, Methodology, Formal analysis, Data Curation. Kurnia Muhajarah: Conceptualization, Writing - Review & Editing.

Declaration of Generative AI (GenAI) Usage in Scientific Writing

The authors declare [Claude 3.5 Sonnet](#) was used to assist in developing the initial conceptual framework and organizing the flow of arguments, structuring relationships among concepts, arranging the sequence of ideas, and improving the logical flow of the manuscript. The resulting framework was subsequently reviewed and refined by the authors to ensure alignment with the research objectives and theoretical foundation. All instances of Generative AI usage in this article were conducted by the authors in accordance with the [JISMB GenAI Tool Usage Policy](#), with the authors assuming full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the work.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that this research has no competing political interests, funding (financial) or personal relationships that could affect the results of the research reported in this article.

Funding Statement

The authors declare that this study was conducted without external financial support, sponsorship, or research grants.

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First Publication Right:

Jurnal Indonesia Studi Moderasi Beragama

Article info:

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64420/jismb.v2i1.213>

Word Count: 6525

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