

A MULTICULTURAL-BASED MODEL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM TO PROMOTE RELIGIOUS MODERATION: A CASE STUDY AT PADAMARA STATE HIGH SCHOOL 1

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze and conceptualize a multicultural-based Islamic Education (PAI) curriculum development model in strengthening religious moderation within pluralistic school settings. This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study design conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Padamara, Purbalingga, which represents a religiously diverse student population. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis involving school principals, teachers, and students. Data analysis was carried out through data reduction, coding, thematic categorization, and source triangulation to ensure validity. The findings reveal that the strengthening of religious moderation is not limited to formal instruction but is implemented through an integrative model consisting of three main dimensions: intracurricular, co-curricular, and school culture. These dimensions interact to create a holistic learning experience that fosters tolerance, balance, and respect for diversity. However, the implementation also faces challenges, including varying levels of teacher understanding of religious moderation and uneven student engagement. This study contributes by proposing a contextual and applicable conceptual model of multicultural-based Islamic education curriculum development in pluralistic school environments. The findings highlight the importance of a whole-school approach in fostering sustainable religious moderation.

Keywords: Islamic Education Curriculum, Multiculturalism, Religious Moderation.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dan merumuskan model pengembangan kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) berbasis multikultural dalam penguatan moderasi beragama di sekolah plural. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus di SMA Negeri 1 Padamara, Purbalingga, yang memiliki keragaman latar belakang agama siswa. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan studi dokumentasi terhadap kepala sekolah, guru, dan siswa. Analisis data dilakukan melalui proses reduksi data, pengkodean, kategorisasi tema, serta triangulasi sumber untuk memastikan validitas temuan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penguatan moderasi beragama tidak hanya dilakukan melalui pembelajaran formal, tetapi melalui model integratif yang mencakup tiga dimensi utama, yaitu intrakurikuler, kokurikuler, dan budaya sekolah. Ketiga dimensi tersebut saling berinteraksi dalam membentuk pengalaman belajar yang mendorong internalisasi nilai

toleransi, keseimbangan, dan penghargaan terhadap perbedaan. Namun demikian, implementasi model ini juga menghadapi sejumlah tantangan, seperti variasi pemahaman guru terkait konsep moderasi beragama dan keterlibatan siswa yang belum merata. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi dalam bentuk konseptualisasi model pengembangan kurikulum PAI berbasis multikultural yang bersifat kontekstual dan aplikatif dalam lingkungan sekolah plural. Temuan ini juga menegaskan pentingnya pendekatan menyeluruh berbasis budaya sekolah dalam membangun moderasi beragama di lembaga pendidikan.

Kata kunci: Kurikulum PAI, Multikultural, Moderasi Beragama.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the issues of religious moderation and multicultural education have become a major focus in the study of Islamic education, particularly in the context of pluralistic societies such as Indonesia. Various studies indicate that Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a strategic role in instilling the values of tolerance, balance, and respect for diversity as a means of preventing the growth of intolerant attitudes among the younger generation (Adib, 2024). However, most of these studies remain largely normative and emphasize conceptual aspects, thus failing to examine how the PAI curriculum is developed and implemented concretely within the context of pluralistic schools.

On the other hand, the implementation of multicultural education within the PAI curriculum still faces various challenges. Existing curricula often do not explicitly accommodate the diversity of students' backgrounds, whether in terms of religion, culture, or religious practices. Furthermore, there is a gap between the normative educational goals emphasizing the value of tolerance and classroom learning practices that have not yet fully internalized this value in a contextual manner (Lestari, 2024). This situation indicates that the development of a multicultural-based PAI curriculum is not sufficient at the conceptual level alone but must be formulated into a systematic and contextual implementation model.

A research gap is also evident in the limited number of empirical studies specifically examining the development of a multicultural-based PAI curriculum in public schools with high levels of religious diversity. Most research still focuses on religious schools or theoretical approaches without directly linking them to real-world practices in the field (Hermawan & Nurbayani, 2024). Yet, pluralistic public schools present their own complexities, whether in terms of social interaction, intergroup dynamics, or the challenges of managing differences inclusively.

Furthermore, studies on multicultural education emphasize the importance of integrating values of diversity not only into the formal curriculum but also into school culture and daily social interactions. Banks and Banks (2019) argue that multicultural education encompasses dimensions of content integration, knowledge construction, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and school cultural empowerment. In this context, a whole-school approach is essential to ensure that the values of religious moderation are not only taught but also lived out in daily practice (Giri et al., 2025).

Based on this background, this study aims to conduct an in-depth examination of the development of a multicultural-based Islamic Religious Education curriculum at SMA Negeri 1 Padamara, Purbalingga, as a representative school with a level of religious diversity encompassing Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism. This study not only describes existing practices but also seeks to formulate an integrative curriculum development model to strengthen religious moderation within the school environment. Thus, this study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of a multicultural-based Islamic Religious Education (IRE) curriculum model, as well as practical contributions to schools in managing inclusive religious education that is responsive to diversity.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to conduct an in-depth examination of the development of a multicultural-based Islamic Religious Education (IRE) curriculum in strengthening religious moderation within a pluralistic school environment. The case study approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to understand the phenomenon contextually and holistically within a real-world setting. The research location was set at SMA Negeri 1 Padamara, Purbalingga Regency, which was selected purposively based on the consideration that it has a diverse student background in terms of religion (Islam, Catholic, and Protestant) as well as the practice of integrating the values of religious moderation into school activities. Research informants were selected purposively based on their involvement in curriculum planning and implementation, including: the principal, the vice principal for curriculum, 2 Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, 2 teachers of other subjects (Civic Education and Indonesian Language), and 6 students representing grades 10, 11, and 12 with different religious backgrounds.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An Integrative Model of Religious Moderation Based on a Multicultural Curriculum

Based on the results of data analysis, this study found that the promotion of religious moderation at Padamara State High School 1 is not implemented in a piecemeal manner solely through the Islamic Religious Education (IRE) subject, but rather through an integrative approach that involves formal learning, students' social experiences, and the school culture as a whole. These findings were subsequently formulated as the Multicultural Curriculum-Based Integrative Model of Religious Moderation. This model demonstrates that religious moderation cannot be sufficiently implemented merely by adding tolerance-related content to the curriculum; rather, it must be internalized through the entirety of students' educational experiences. In this context, the school functions not only as an academic institution but also as a social space that shapes students' perspectives, attitudes, and religious practices in their daily lives.

Unlike previous studies that have emphasized religious moderation education primarily on normative aspects or the reinforcement of instructional materials alone, this study

demonstrates that the internalization of moderation occurs through the interaction of three main dimensions: the intracurricular dimension, the cocurricular dimension, and the dimension of an inclusive school culture. These three dimensions are interrelated and form a holistic educational process.

Intracurricular Dimension

a. Implementation of Religious Moderation Values in School Policies and Curriculum

The research findings indicate that the implementation of religious moderation at SMA Negeri 1 Padamara is integrated through school policies and curriculum development. The principal explained that the school's vision is focused on developing students who excel academically, are religiously grounded, and possess a multicultural perspective. This orientation is then translated into learning programs, school culture, and student social activities. The principal stated:

“The school does not only focus on academic achievement, but also on how students can live alongside differences without conflict” (Principal Interview, November 14, 2025).

This statement indicates that religious moderation is positioned as part of character education and social integration within the school environment. In practice, values of tolerance, non-violence, balance, and respect for diversity are integrated into the subjects of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), Pancasila Education, history, and Indonesian Language. Observations of classroom instruction reveal that PAI teachers link instructional content to the social realities of diversity faced by students. During an 11th-grade fiqh lesson, the teacher discussed differences in worship practices among Islamic organizations and emphasized that such differences are part of the Islamic tradition. The PAI teacher stated:

“I want students to understand that differences are natural and have a scholarly basis, so they do not easily blame other groups” (Interview with PAI Teacher, November 14, 2025)

In addition to formal instruction, the school also integrates religious moderation through curriculum documents, the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) activities, and diversity-based character-building programs. These findings indicate that religious moderation is not merely viewed as supplementary material but as a value internalized throughout the entire educational process. From Tyler's perspective, this implementation demonstrates the interconnection between educational goals, learning experiences, and the formation of students' social behavior (Tyler & Hlebowitsh, 2013). The curriculum is not only directed toward academic achievement but also toward the development of social character capable of thriving in a pluralistic society. These findings also demonstrate that curriculum development in schools is contextual and adaptive to students' social conditions. This aligns with Taba's view that the curriculum should be developed based on students' social needs and real-life experiences, not merely on the administrative structure of education (Taba, 1962).

b. Challenges in Integrating Religious Moderation into Learning

Although religious moderation has been integrated into learning, this study identified several challenges in its implementation. The first challenge relates to differences in teachers' understanding of the concept of religious moderation. Some teachers perceive moderation as a tolerant and open attitude toward diversity, while others still interpret it normatively as an attitude of "not being extreme." These differing understandings have led to the implementation of moderation in the classroom not proceeding uniformly. In some lessons, moderation is conveyed only as moral advice without being followed by critical dialogue regarding social conflict, digital intolerance, or the relationship between the majority and minority in society. One Civic Education teacher stated:

"Sometimes teachers are still confused about distinguishing between teaching tolerance and respecting students' religious beliefs" (Interview with Civic Education Teacher, November 14, 2025)

These findings indicate that religious moderation still faces conceptual challenges in educational practice. In academic studies, the concept of moderation is indeed often debated because it is considered to have a fine line with religious relativism if not explained proportionally (Muaz & Ruswandi, 2022). The next challenge stems from the social environment and the concerns of some parents. Some teachers acknowledge that lessons discussing pluralism and tolerance are sometimes considered sensitive by some parents. A Religious Education teacher stated:

"Some parents worry that if we talk too much about tolerance, the children will become confused about their faith." (Interview with a Religious Education Teacher, November 14, 2025).

Additionally, limitations in teachers' capacity to develop multicultural-based learning also pose implementation barriers. Not all teachers have experience or training in multicultural education and religious moderation. Consequently, the integration of moderation values into learning remains heavily dependent on individual teachers' initiatives. These findings indicate that the success of implementing religious moderation in learning is not solely determined by school policies but is also influenced by teachers' competencies, social support, and the school's ability to foster critical and inclusive dialogue spaces.

Co-curricular Dimensions

a. Strengthening Moderation through Social Experiences

This study found that the reinforcement of religious moderation at SMA Negeri 1 Padamara is not only carried out through formal learning but also through social experience-based co-curricular activities. Programs such as the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), community service, national dialogue, and interfaith activities serve as avenues for students to engage in direct social interaction with diverse groups. Observation results indicate that the P5 activity themed *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* provides

space for students to collaborate in heterogeneous groups. During this activity, students discuss cultural diversity, practices of tolerance, and social conflicts emerging in society. One 10th-grade student stated:

“If we only learned in class, it might be just ordinary, but when working in groups with friends of different religions, I came to better understand how they think” (Interview with a 10th-grade student, November 14, 2025).

These findings indicate that social experiences play a significant role in shaping students’ moderate attitudes. Direct interaction allows students to learn to understand diversity more tangibly than through mere theoretical instruction. This approach aligns with the theory of *intergroup contact*, which explains that social interaction between groups in cooperative situations can reduce prejudice and increase acceptance of other groups (Habibah et al., 2022). Thus, co-curricular activities serve as a space for social praxis in fostering an inclusive awareness of religious diversity. Additionally, the school involves students in community social activities such as interfaith community service and environmental cleanup efforts. These activities aim to build social empathy and strengthen the value of mutual cooperation amidst diversity.

b. Barriers to Interfaith Interaction

Although co-curricular activities provide a space for interfaith interaction, this study found that the process of internalizing moderation through social experiences has not yet fully unfolded ideally. In some group activities, students still tend to form groups based on social proximity and shared religious backgrounds. A Grade 10 student stated:

“During group activities, we usually stick closer to friends from the same neighborhood or those we’re already familiar with” (Interview with a Grade 10 student, November 18, 2025).

This finding indicates that social interaction between groups remains influenced by pre-existing informal relational patterns. This situation demonstrates that social diversity in schools does not automatically lead to deep social integration. Additionally, some teachers acknowledge that some students participate in moderation activities merely due to school program requirements, rather than out of personal awareness regarding the importance of tolerance and respect for diversity.

Another obstacle arises from the influence of social media, which often reinforces religious polarization and stereotypes among adolescents. Guidance counselors noted that some students remain easily influenced by intolerant narratives they encounter on digital media. This indicates that religious moderation education in schools faces external challenges that cannot be resolved solely through formal school activities. Therefore, strengthening moderation requires the involvement of families, the social environment, and adequate digital literacy.

Dimensions of an Inclusive School Culture

a. Hidden Curriculum

This study found that school culture has a very strong influence on the process of internalizing religious moderation. Values of tolerance, respect for diversity, and an inclusive attitude are not only taught through formal instruction but are also shaped through the *hidden curriculum*, student interactions, and the daily practices of the school community. In this context, the *hidden curriculum* refers to the values, norms, customs, and patterns of social interaction that students learn outside the formal curriculum (Moh. Afiful Hair & Nur Syam, 2023). Teachers' attitudes toward students, daily communication patterns, how the school resolves minor conflicts, and social conditioning play a crucial role in shaping students' moderate character. Observation results indicate that Muslim and non-Muslim students interact relatively openly in school activities. In student organization activities, sports, and group work, students interact without formal religious-based segregation. A non-Muslim 12th-grade student stated:

"I have never felt discriminated against at this school. "My friends still invite us to join activities together even though we have different religions" (Interview with a 12th-grade student, November 18, 2025).

These findings indicate that the school's social culture plays a vital role in fostering an inclusive religious experience. Daily social interactions allow students to naturally learn to understand differences through direct experience. Additionally, the school's daily practices demonstrate the cultivation of moderation through the use of polite language, respect for differing opinions, and providing space for non-Muslim students to practice their religious activities independently

b. Dominance of Majority Symbols and Social Exclusivity

Although the school strives to foster an inclusive culture, this study found the symbolic dominance of the majority group within the school's social spaces. Islamic identity as the majority religion appears quite dominant in the use of formal greetings, religious symbols within the school environment, and the schedule of religious activities. Some non-Muslim students admitted they still feel the need to adapt to this majority culture. One non-Muslim student in grade 11 stated:

"We are well-received, but the school atmosphere does have a predominantly Islamic tone" (Interview with a Grade 11 Student, November 18, 2025).

These findings indicate that school symbols influence the social experiences of minority groups. From the perspective of the *hidden curriculum*, school symbols, customs, and routines can shape specific social experiences that educational institutions do not always recognize. In addition to the dominance of majority symbols, this study also identified a tendency toward informal social exclusivity among some students. In certain situations, students still feel more comfortable interacting with groups sharing the same social and religious backgrounds. These conditions indicate that an inclusive school culture is a dynamic process and is not entirely free from majority-minority dynamics. Thus, the implementation of religious moderation is not sufficient through formal school policies

alone but also requires critical reflection on the social culture, symbols, and daily practices that develop within the school environment (Albana, 2023).

Critical Analysis of the Concept of Religious Moderation in Education

The concept of religious moderation has become a central issue in educational discourse in Indonesia in recent years, particularly following growing concerns about intolerance, social polarization, and the spread of extremist religious ideologies among the younger generation. In the educational context, religious moderation is positioned as an approach to fostering a balanced, tolerant, and respectful attitude toward religious diversity within a pluralistic society. However, this study finds that the implementation of religious moderation in schools cannot be simply understood as the teaching of tolerance alone; rather, it involves conceptual debates, ideological challenges, and complex social dynamics. Conceptually, religious moderation is often understood as a worldview, attitude, and religious practice that adopts a middle ground (*wasathiyah*), is non-extremist, and is capable of placing religious values proportionally within social life (Subiantoro, 2023). This concept emphasizes a balance between religious commitment and respect for social diversity. From an educational perspective, religious moderation aims to shape students who maintain strong religious convictions but do not easily fall into intolerant or exclusive attitudes toward other groups.

Research findings indicate that some teachers at Padamara State High School 1 understand religious moderation as an attitude of respecting differences without having to abandon one's own religious beliefs. A PAI teacher explained:

“Moderation does not mean that all religions are considered equal, but rather how students can respect others without losing their own beliefs” (Interview with PAI Teacher, November 14, 2025).

This statement indicates that religious moderation is understood as a balanced approach to addressing social pluralism. This finding aligns with Sulton's perspective, which explains that religious moderation is not an attempt to dilute religious identity but rather an effort to establish a balance between religious commitment and a harmonious social life (Sulton, 2023). Nevertheless, this study found that the concept of religious moderation still faces conceptual challenges in educational practice. One of the main debates concerns the boundary between moderation and religious relativism. Some teachers and parents still express concerns that overly open tolerance education could blur the boundaries of students' religious beliefs. One Civic Education teacher stated:

“Sometimes there's a concern that if we talk too much about pluralism, students might end up thinking all religions are the same.” (Interview with Civic Education Teacher, November 14, 2025).

This concern indicates that the concept of religious moderation is often perceived as ambiguous at the level of educational practice. In academic studies, criticism of religious moderation arises because the concept is considered to have the potential to be interpreted

in a liberal manner if it is not accompanied by clear epistemological boundaries regarding religious identity and beliefs (Romli, 2023). In the context of a pluralistic school, the challenges of implementing religious moderation become even more complex because schools are not only spaces for formal education but also arenas for the interaction of social and religious identities. This study found that although the school succeeded in creating relatively harmonious social relationships, majority-minority dynamics still influenced students' social experiences. Some non-Muslim students reported feeling socially accepted but still sensing the dominance of the majority culture in daily school practices. One 11th-grade student stated:

“We are well-received, but the school atmosphere does have a stronger Islamic tone” (Interview with an 11th-grade student, November 18, 2025).

These findings indicate that religious moderation in the context of a pluralistic school is not merely about formal tolerance but also concerns how the school's social space is managed inclusively without creating specific symbolic dominance. From a multicultural education perspective, inclusive social relations require recognition of minority group identities, not merely the creation of symbolic harmony (Banks & Banks, 2019). Furthermore, this study also found that the influence of digital media poses a new challenge in the implementation of religious moderation in schools. Guidance counselors explained that some students remain easily influenced by intolerant narratives circulating on social media, particularly religious content that is provocative and exclusive. This phenomenon indicates that religious moderation education in schools faces external challenges that cannot be resolved solely through formal classroom instruction. The development of digital media has expanded the reach of intolerant ideologies and intensified social polarization among adolescents.

From a critical perspective, this study argues that religious moderation should not be understood merely as a normative project of social harmonization. An overly normative approach risks overlooking the reality of conflict, majority-minority power dynamics, and social inequalities that occur in the practice of religious life at school. The study's findings indicate that schools tend to emphasize narratives of harmony rather than opening space for critical dialogue regarding discrimination, social stereotypes, and group exclusivity. Consequently, religious moderation is sometimes understood merely as a moral slogan without critical reflection on the actual social dynamics occurring within the school environment. In this context, religious moderation should be understood as a reflective educational process that encourages students to: critically understand diversity, respect the rights of other groups, engage in open dialogue, and develop social awareness regarding practices of intolerance and discrimination.

Thus, religious moderation is not sufficient to be positioned merely as instructional material or an educational policy slogan; rather, it must become a pedagogical practice that fosters the development of students' social awareness, empathy, and reflective abilities in confronting the realities of a pluralistic society.

Relevance of Findings to Curriculum Theory

Research findings regarding the implementation of religious moderation based on a multicultural curriculum at SMA Negeri 1 Padamara indicate that the curriculum development process does not merely occur as an administrative activity but also as a social and pedagogical practice influenced by the school's context of diversity. From this perspective, the curriculum is not understood merely as a learning document but as a process of shaping students' social experiences in their daily school life.

The research results indicate that the promotion of religious moderation in schools is achieved through the integration of educational goals, learning experiences, school culture, and student social interactions. These findings have strong relevance to the curriculum theories of Tyler and Taba, as well as the *curriculum as praxis* approach by Ornstein and Hunkins.

1. Relevance of Findings to Tyler's Curriculum Theory

According to Tyler, the curriculum must be structured based on four main components, namely:

- a. educational objectives;
- b. learning experiences;
- c. organization of learning experiences;
- d. and assessment of learning (Tyler & Hlebowitsh, 2013).

In this study, the implementation of religious moderation demonstrates a connection between the school's educational objectives and the learning experiences designed for both academic instruction and students' social activities. The school aims not only for academic achievement but also for the development of religious character and the ability to live in a pluralistic society. The principal stated:

“The educational goals of this school are not merely to make students academically intelligent, but also to enable them to respect differences and live peacefully with others.” (Principal Interview, November 14, 2025).

This statement indicates that the school's educational goals are directed toward fostering students' social competencies and moderate character. From Tyler's perspective, educational goals serve as the primary foundation for determining the learning experiences provided to students (Sari et al., 2024). Research findings indicate that learning experiences in religious moderation are not limited to classroom instruction but also involve discussions on diversity, interfaith group work, social projects, and an inclusive school culture. Thus, learning experiences are designed to shape students' social behavior in facing the pluralism of real life. However, this study also found that the evaluation of religious moderation learning has not been conducted systematically. Assessment remains more dominant in general affective aspects such as tolerant attitudes and the ability to cooperate, but lacks measurable evaluative indicators regarding the

development of students' awareness of moderation. These findings indicate that the implementation of religious moderation in schools has only reached the stage of integrating learning objectives and experiences, while the evaluative aspects of the curriculum still require further development.

2. Relevance of Findings to Taba's Curriculum Theory

The research results also demonstrate relevance to Hilda Taba's curriculum development theory, which emphasizes a *grassroots curriculum development* approach. According to Taba, the curriculum should be developed based on students' social needs and involve teachers as the primary actors in the curriculum development process (Taba, 1962). In the context of this study, the integration of religious moderation into learning does not entirely stem from central policies but evolves through teachers' adaptation to the social conditions and student diversity within the school. Teachers are given the space to develop contextual teaching methods aligned with students' social realities. A PAI teacher stated:

“Sometimes the textbook material isn't enough, so we relate it to current social conditions so students can understand better.” (Interview with PAI Teacher, November 14, 2025).

These findings indicate that teachers function not only as implementers of the formal curriculum but also as curriculum developers at the practical level. This approach is evident when teachers link fiqh material to issues of digital intolerance, differences in worship practices, or social ethics within a pluralistic society. Additionally, the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) activities also demonstrate curriculum development grounded in students' social experiences. This program enables students to learn about diversity through direct collaborative practices and social reflection. From Taba's perspective, such an approach demonstrates that an effective curriculum is one that emerges from the real needs of students and the social context of the educational environment (Taba, 1962). Thus, the implementation of religious moderation at SMA Negeri 1 Padamara reflects a curriculum characterized by contextuality and adaptability to the social realities of a pluralistic school environment.

3. Relevance of Findings to Ornstein & Hunkins

The research findings are also relevant to the views of Ornstein and Hunkins, who view the curriculum as a social process that is not only related to instructional documents but also to students' lived experiences within the school environment (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2017). In this study, religious moderation is internalized not only through formal learning but also through school culture, student relationships, school symbols, and the daily practices of the school community. These findings indicate that the educational process unfolds through social interactions that shape students' perspectives and social identities. For example, observation results show that students learn about tolerance not only through instructional materials but also through experiences of collaborating with peers of different religions, interactions within school organizations, and daily social routines. One student stated:

“I actually learn to respect differences more through my daily interactions at school.” (Interview with a 10th-grade student, November 18, 2025).

These findings demonstrate that the curriculum, in practice, is not limited to formal instructional content but also encompasses the culture and social experiences that develop within the school environment. Additionally, this study identified the dominance of majority symbols within school culture. This dominance suggests that the social curriculum in schools is not always neutral and can indirectly reproduce majority-minority relations. From the perspective of Ornstein and Hunkins, this condition indicates that the curriculum is always intertwined with social relations, cultural values, and power dynamics within the educational environment (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2017).

4. Findings from the Perspective of Curriculum as Praxis

The findings of this study are most strongly relevant to the *curriculum as praxis* approach. This approach views the curriculum not merely as a learning plan (*curriculum as plan*) or an administrative product (*curriculum as product*), but as a reflective practice involving real-world experiences, social dialogue, and the formation of students’ consciousness (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2017). In the context of this study, religious moderation is not merely understood as instructional content on tolerance but as a social praxis process experienced by students through their daily interactions at school. Experiences of interfaith collaboration, navigating social differences, and resolving minor conflicts within the school environment constitute part of the process of fostering students’ moderate consciousness.

However, this study also found that the practice of religious moderation in schools still faces challenges in the form of:

- a. the dominance of the majority culture;
- b. the tendency toward informal social exclusivity;
- c. the influence of digital intolerance;
- d. and the limited space for critical dialogue among students.

These findings indicate that the implementation of religious moderation is not a fully harmonious process, but rather a space for social negotiation that continues to evolve within the pluralistic school environment. Thus, this study demonstrates that the religious moderation curriculum at SMA Negeri 1 Padamara is more appropriately understood as a *curriculum as praxis*—that is, a curriculum that comes to life through students’ social experiences, critical reflection, and daily practices as they confront the reality of diversity.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the promotion of religious moderation at Padamara State High School 1 does not occur solely through Islamic Religious Education (IRE) instruction, but rather through an integrative model based on a multicultural curriculum that incorporates intracurricular, cocurricular, and inclusive school culture dimensions.

Religious moderation is implemented not only as normative teaching material but as a living social and pedagogical process through learning experiences, student social interactions, school culture, and the daily practices of the school community. Research findings indicate that the development of students' moderate attitudes occurs through three main mechanisms, namely:

- a. the integration of moderation values into instruction and curriculum documents;
- b. interfaith social experiences through collaborative and co-curricular activities;
- c. the internalization of values through the hidden curriculum and everyday school culture.

Thus, this study posits that the curriculum for religious moderation in pluralistic schools is more effectively understood as *curriculum as praxis*—that is, a curriculum that functions not merely as an administrative document but as a reflective social practice that shapes students' religious experiences contextually.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of the concept of a multicultural-based Islamic Religious Education curriculum by demonstrating that the success of religious moderation is determined not only by the content of learning materials but also by the quality of students' social experiences, school culture, and intergroup relations within the educational environment. This study also reinforces the perspectives of Tyler, Taba, as well as Ornstein and Hunkins that the curriculum is a social process that is always influenced by cultural context, power relations, and students' life experiences. Furthermore, this study found that indicators of the success of religious moderation in pluralistic schools cannot be adequately measured solely through students' cognitive understanding of tolerance, but also through:

- a. students' ability to collaborate across religions;
- b. openness in social interactions;
- c. the ability to resolve differences through dialogue;
- d. low levels of social discrimination within the school environment;
- e. and the development of an inclusive and non-discriminatory school culture.

However, this study also indicates that the implementation of religious moderation still faces various challenges, such as the dominance of majority culture, informal social exclusivity among students, limited teacher understanding of religious moderation, and the influence of digital intolerance among adolescents. These findings suggest that religious moderation is not a fully harmonious process but rather an evolving space for social negotiation within the life of a pluralistic school. Based on these findings, this study recommends several practical implications. First, schools need to develop more measurable and contextual evaluation indicators for religious moderation, not merely based on general affective assessments. Second, teacher training is needed on multicultural education, dialogic pedagogy, and digital literacy so that the integration of

religious moderation does not stop at a purely normative approach. Third, schools need to expand spaces for critical interfaith dialogue through more participatory and reflective collaborative activities. Fourth, strengthening religious moderation requires synergy between schools, families, and the social environment to address the growing influence of digital intolerance among students. Thus, this study emphasizes that the development of a multicultural-based Islamic Education (PAI) curriculum in pluralistic schools should not be directed solely at strengthening tolerance-related content, but must build an educational ecosystem that enables students to experience, reflect on, and practice the values of religious moderation in their daily social lives.

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