

Implementation of Moderate Islamic Values as a Foundation for Inclusive Religious Character

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Abstract

This study examines the integration of moderate Islamic values in the basic education curriculum in Indonesia, focusing on SDN 1 Gending in Probolinggo. The primary purpose of this research is to explore how moderate Islamic values are applied in the learning process, both through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) lessons and other subjects such as PPKn and Social Studies. Given the importance of education that prioritizes tolerance and inclusivity in a pluralistic society, this study seeks to understand the application of these values in the daily life of schools and their impact on students' character. A qualitative approach collects data through teacher interviews, direct observation, and document analysis. The study results show that SDN 1 Gending has successfully integrated moderate Islamic values into the curriculum, focusing on respect for differences, equality, and peaceful coexistence. Nonetheless, challenges remain in implementing a moderate curriculum, especially in addressing differences in understanding between teachers and limited resources. These findings provide important insights for the development of moderation-based character education in primary schools and strengthen education's role in creating a more tolerant and inclusive society.

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INTRODUCTION

Religious education plays a vital role in shaping students' character and preparing them to live in a diverse society. In Indonesia, with a majority Muslim population inhabited by ethnic and religious groups, moderate religious education is urgently needed (Bisri et al., 2024; Dasopang et al., 2023; Nasir & Rijal, 2021). Previously, several studies showed that religious education in many schools in Indonesia tended to focus on teaching religious teachings without paying enough attention to the importance of the values of tolerance and inclusivity (Aderibigbe et al., 2023; Rahmat & Yahya, 2022; Sijamhodžić-Nadarević, 2023). On the other hand, moderate religious education emphasizes respect for differences, equality, and coexistence in peace (Hasan & Juhannis, 2024; Mulyana, 2023; Saepudin et al., 2023). With the increasing social plurality in Indonesia, it is important to dig deeper into how schools can integrate moderate values into their curriculum. This research focuses on SDN 1 Gending, which has implemented the moderate education approach in various subjects, both PAI and other social subjects, to create an inclusive and harmonious learning environment.

Some previous research provides a strong foundation for integrating moderate values in religious education. These studies reveal that moderate religious education can be important in reducing extremism with a more inclusive approach (Beaujouan & Rasheed, 2022; Esmailzadeh, 2023; Muhaemin et al., 2023). In addition, several studies also report that religious education that prioritizes the value of tolerance positively impacts building a more harmonious and inclusive society (Gomez, 2024; Tanyel & Kıralp, 2021, 2021). Other research emphasizes the importance of character education in the context of religious education, which not only focuses on knowledge but also plays a role in shaping positive social attitudes in students (Mujahid, 2021; Taja et al., 2021; Unstad & Fjørtoft, 2021). Although many studies have highlighted the importance of moderation in religious education, few have specifically addressed how to apply these values of moderation in basic education practices in Indonesia. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by focusing on how moderate Islamic values are applied in the curriculum at SDN 1 Gending, Probolinggo, and their impact on students' character.

Although many studies emphasize the importance of integrating moderate Islamic values in education, there is still a lack of studies that specifically explore how these values are applied in the context of basic education in Indonesia. This study identified gaps in the existing literature on applying moderate values in daily school life, especially at the elementary school level. SDN 1 Gending, with its integrative approach to religious education, offers an opportunity to delve deeper into how moderate Islamic values are taught, not only through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) lessons, but also through other lessons such as PPKn and Social Studies. The primary focus of this study is how moderate Islamic values can be applied comprehensively in the elementary school curriculum, as well as their impact on the formation of students' character. In addition, this study also aims to identify the obstacles and challenges faced in implementing these moderate values in daily educational practices in schools.

This research contributes significantly by providing a deeper understanding of implementing moderate Islamic values in primary education. In contrast to previous research that focused more on religious education's theoretical and policy aspects, this study explored real practices in the field by observing how these values were applied at SDN 1 Gending, Probolinggo. This research also introduces a cross-subject approach, where moderate values are taught in PAI lessons and through PPKn and social studies. Thus, this research opens up space to further understand how religious education can impact students' attitudes and behaviors in a pluralistic society. This provides new insights into developing a more applicable and holistic model of moderate religious education.

This study aims to explore how moderate Islamic values are integrated into the basic education curriculum at SDN 1 Gending, Probolinggo, and how implementing these values affects students' character. Through a case study approach, this study will analyze the practices carried out by teachers in teaching moderate values, both in Islamic Religious Education subjects and other social subjects. The primary focus of this study is to understand the impact of the application of moderate values on the formation of students' character, as well as the challenges teachers face in integrating these values. Thus, this study provides insight into how moderate Islamic values can be applied in primary education and recommendations for developing a more inclusive and tolerant educational curriculum in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was carried out at SDN 1 Gending, Probolinggo, which is the context of basic education in Indonesia, focusing on integrating moderate Islamic values in the educational curriculum. This location is particularly relevant because the school has a reputation for implementing an inclusive and moderate approach to religious education, essential for understanding how religious values can be effectively taught in diverse social and cultural contexts. This research uses a qualitative approach with a type of case study research, which allows for an in-depth exploration of the specific phenomena that occur in this school (Bazen et al., 2021; Bouncken et al., 2021; Chong & Plonsky, 2021). This type and approach were chosen because they allow exploring meanings and experiences that cannot be quantitatively explained and provide a more holistic understanding of applied educational practices. Case studies as a method allow researchers to investigate how theories about moderate religious education are applied in real-world practice in the field, as well as how they affect students in their daily lives (Bastrygina et al., 2024; Farquhar et al., 2020; D. R. Singh et al., 2021).

The data collection methods used in this study were in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with school principals, PAI teachers, and other subject teachers involved in the integration of moderate Islamic values. This interview method was chosen because it allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of individual perspectives and experiences in implementing these values in the curriculum. Direct observations are made in the classroom to observe how the teaching of moderate values is applied in the daily interactions between teachers and students. Documentation, such as lesson plans and teaching materials, is also analyzed to provide a complete picture of the implemented curriculum. This combined method strengthens the data obtained, provides more valid triangulation of information, and creates a more complete picture of the application of moderate values in education (Alinsky et al., 2022; Busetto et al., 2020; Mwita, 2024).

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques involving identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns. This technique was chosen because it is suitable for qualitative research focusing on understanding individual experiences and perspectives related to specific phenomena. The data from the interviews and observations are categorized into main themes related to applying moderate Islamic values in education. The analysis measures used follow the model of Miles and Huberman (Karimi-Ghartemani et al., 2022; Saldaña, 2020; Yusriadi & Cahaya, 2022), which includes data reduction, data presentation, and a conclusion drawn. In addition, data triangulation is used to ensure the validity of research results by comparing findings from interviews, observations, and documentation (Bingham, 2023; Gill, 2020; Singh et al., 2021). This technique supports stronger conclusions regarding how moderate values are applied in education and their impact on students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Integration of Moderate Islamic Values in School Curriculum

Integrating moderate Islamic values in the school curriculum refers to incorporating Islamic principles that prioritize tolerance, balance, and inclusivity in every aspect of learning taught in schools. This includes instilling values such as respect for different religions, cultures, and outlooks on life, as well as accepting the diversity in society. In the context of basic education, integrating moderate values aims to form students who are not only academically intelligent but also have a religious character capable of respecting plurality and building harmonious relationships in a diverse society. Based on interviews with school principals and teachers, it was found that the integration of moderate values is taught in religious subjects and pursued in various other subjects through an approach that prioritizes diversity, mutual respect, and tolerance.

Interviews conducted with principals and teachers at SDN 1 Gending show that integrating moderate Islamic values in the school curriculum is not limited only to classroom teaching but also includes efforts to build students' understanding of the importance of living together in diversity. This process involves teaching about tolerance, mutual respect, and respect for differences.

"At SDN 1 Gending, the integration of moderate Islamic values is carried out by connecting each lesson with the themes of diversity and tolerance. For example, in the PPKn lessons, we teach how to appreciate religious and cultural differences and the importance of peaceful coexistence." (W.02, 10/06/2023)

As one of the teachers put it, "We strive to integrate moderate Islamic values into every subject, not only in Islamic Religious Education, but also in other subjects such as PPKn and Social Studies, to form an inclusive and respectful student character." (W.01, 05/06/2023)

Based on the interviews conducted, it was revealed that SDN 1 Gending comprehensively integrates moderate Islamic values in all aspects of the curriculum applied. This approach is not only limited to teaching religious theory, but also includes forming students' character through broader social subjects. This process is believed to be key in instilling tolerance and understanding of diversity and preparing students to play an active role in a pluralistic and inclusive society. Thus, the integration of moderate Islamic values at SDN 1 Gending aims to strengthen the religious aspect and form individuals who can adapt and contribute positively in a diverse social life.

The findings in the field show that the integration of moderate Islamic values at SDN 1 Gending is carried out with an active and structured approach, not only in Islamic Religious Education lessons but also in PPKn and social studies subjects, which consistently raise the theme of diversity and tolerance. In this context, students are given a deep understanding of the importance of accepting and appreciating existing differences in religion, culture, or outlook on life. This is reflected in various learning activities involving class discussions and group projects, where topics around coexistence in a multicultural society are the primary focus. Thus, the school seeks to inculcate moderate religious values and equips students with the ability to live in harmony in a diverse environment.

Departing from some of the findings presented above, it shows that SDN 1 Gending Probolinggo has succeeded in integrating moderate Islamic values into its curriculum systematically and thoroughly. These values are taught through Islamic Religious Education and PPKn and social studies subjects, which focus on diversity and tolerance. This approach illustrates the school's commitment to educating students academically and in forming a character that values differences. Through a curriculum based on moderate values, students are guided to coexist peacefully and play an active role in a pluralistic society. Thus, SDN 1 Gending plays a role in developing knowledge and forming a generation ready to face social challenges with an inclusive and tolerant attitude.

Integration of Moderate Islamic Values in Islamic Religious Education Materials

Integrating moderate Islamic values in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials is an effort to incorporate the principles of Islamic teachings that emphasize tolerance, balance, and respect for differences in the religious curriculum. This includes teaching about the importance of respecting differences between religions, cultures, and views of life and avoiding extreme or fanatical attitudes in understanding and practicing religion. Islamic Religious Education based on moderate values aims to form students who not only understand religion deeply, but are also able to coexist with various community groups in a peaceful state.

The results of interviews with the principal and teachers of Islamic Religious Education at SDN 1 Gending show that the integration of moderate Islamic values in PAI materials in schools aims to provide a broader understanding of how religion should be applied in social life. Islamic Religious Education at SDN 1 Gending focuses on teaching religious texts and developing tolerance and moderate religious attitudes.

"We teach students about the importance of respecting and understanding other religions, and how the principles of moderate Islam can be applied in daily life. The material we teach also contains examples from the life of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH that show tolerance towards people of other religions." (W.02, 12/06/2023)

"In the PAI lessons, we convey that Islam is a religion that teaches balance and harmony, not only in relationships with Allah but also in relationships between mankind, with an emphasis on moderate values that uphold tolerance." (W.01, 15/06/2023)

Based on the interviews, SDN 1 Gending has successfully integrated moderate Islamic values in teaching Islamic Religious Education with a very applicable approach. In addition to providing a theoretical understanding of religious teachings, the school also actively teaches students to implement moderate Islamic principles in daily life. By emphasizing the importance of mutual respect and tolerance between religious communities, students are taught about religious theory and prepared to play a role in a society full of diversity. This approach shows that teaching at SDN 1 Gending is limited to religious knowledge and character development relevant to existing social challenges. The summary of the above research findings is as follows: 1.

Table 1. Key Findings on the Integration of Islamic Values in Islamic Religious Education

Key Theme	Description
Islamic Values in PAI	Represents the overarching theme of integrating Islamic principles into the educational curriculum.
Moderation in Islam	Focuses on applying moderate principles, emphasizing tolerance, balance, and respect for differences.
Tolerance	Encourages the acceptance of diversity and promotes harmonious interaction among different faiths and cultures.
Balance	Promotes a balanced approach to understanding and practicing Islam, avoiding extreme views or practices.
Respect for Differences	Stresses the importance of respecting differences in religion, culture, and perspective as a key value in Islam.

Table 1 presents key findings on integrating Islamic values in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). This table generally illustrates some key themes, including moderation, tolerance, balance, and respect for differences, that are implemented in the PAI curriculum. One of the key findings is the emphasis on the importance of moderation in Islam, which can be seen as an attempt to avoid extreme views and promote balance in religious understanding. In addition, the theme "Harmony between Religions" emerged as an important sub-theme that shows the relevance of religious education in creating tolerance and respect between religious and cultural groups. Although not all of the data in this table is significant, the highlighted themes reflect PAI's main direction in shaping students' balanced and moderate religious character. While showing a general trend, these findings may require further research to explore the concrete impact of applying those values.

These findings indicate that teaching Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has effectively integrated moderate Islamic values into their curriculum. Through a holistic approach, the school focuses on delivering comprehensive religious knowledge and on forming student character that prioritizes tolerance, mutual respect, and inclusivity. The application of these values is seen through practical examples and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH which are used as examples in daily interactions. Thus, religious education at SDN 1 Gending aims to provide a theoretical understanding of religion and to form students who can coexist with the religious and cultural differences around them. This reflects that religious education in the school plays an important role in shaping moderate individuals who can adapt to plurality.

Religious Habituation in Schools

Religious habituation in schools refers to activities that regularly and consistently introduce and practice religious values in daily life in the school environment. This activity includes worship routines, joint prayer, and habituation of other religious attitudes that aim to strengthen the religious character of students. Through this habituation, students are expected to internalize religious values naturally and form good habits based on moderate religious teachings. Religious habituation includes a daily routine involving students in religious activities, prioritizing values such as tolerance, balance, and compassion. The results of interviews with teachers and principals show that religious habituation is carried out as part of an effort to create a religious environment, where students are taught to practice moderate Islamic values in their daily lives. Religious habituation includes not only religious lessons in theory but also the formation of positive habits that reflect religious values in daily actions.

"We teach religious theory and ensure that students are familiar with religious activities, such as group prayer before lessons start and congregational prayers. This helps them to familiarize themselves with moderate religious values in everyday life." (W.02, 10/06/2023)

This is also supported by a statement made by another informant, who stated, "In this school, we always make sure that every activity begins with a joint prayer, and students are also used to congregational prayer activities at school. This is our way of getting them accustomed to moderate religious teachings." (W.01, 05/06/2023)

These findings reveal that SDN 1 Gending has successfully utilized religious habituation as an effective strategy to internalize moderate Islamic values in students. Routine activities such as joint prayer and congregational prayers not only function as a means of forming religious habits, but also as a medium to instill the values of tolerance and balance in religion. This habituation shows that the approach used in this school is holistic, with the primary goal of forming the character of students who are not only religious but also inclusive and able to appreciate differences. Thus, the religious habituation that is applied is not only a ritual activity, but also plays an important role in building the personality of students who are moderate and ready to live harmoniously amid social and cultural diversity.

Findings in the field show that religious habituation at SDN 1 Gending is carried out with a routine and systematic approach. Every day, students must participate in a joint prayer activity before the lesson starts, which is then followed by congregational prayer. In addition, the school also provides special time for Istituto activities and religious lectures, which serve as a means to strengthen the cultivation of moderate religious values among students. This habituation practice is not only limited to the ritual aspect, but also plays an important role in creating an atmosphere conducive to forming students' religious character. Thus, these activities provide space for students to absorb and practice moderate Islamic values, shaping them into religious individuals who can live in harmony amid differences. Departing from the above findings, the habituation carried out at SDN 1 Gending is as follows.

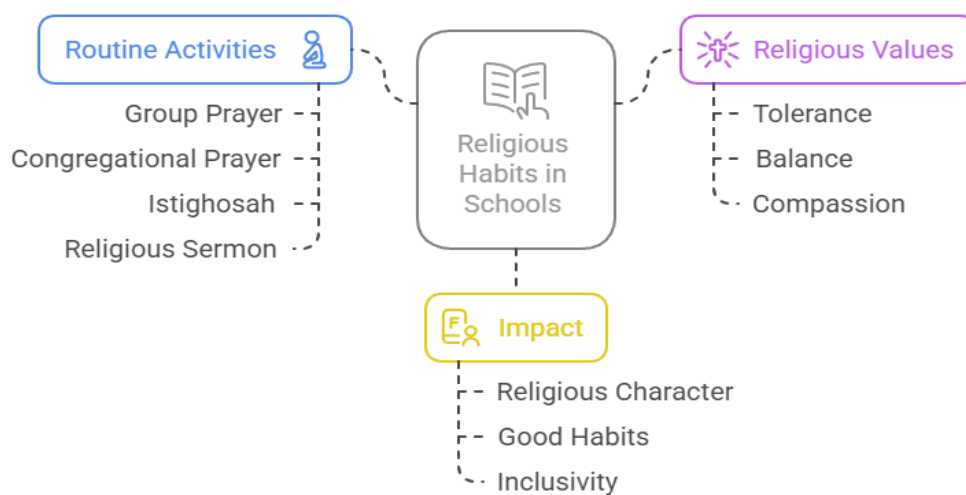


Figure 1. Habituation Carried Out at SDN 1 Gending

Figure 1: This diagram illustrates the routine religious activities carried out at SDN 1 Gending, which play an important role in shaping the religious character of students. This image highlights routine activities such as joint prayer, congregational prayers, istighosah, and religious lectures. These activities are laid down as basic practices that contribute to forming students' religious habits. In addition, these religious customs are strongly linked to core religious values, including tolerance, balance, and compassion, which are crucial in shaping students' moderate views and actions.

Religious habituation at SDN 1 Gending Probolinggo has proven to be an effective means in shaping the religious character of students. The school has succeeded in integrating moderate Islamic values into students' daily lives through regular activities such as joint prayer, congregational prayers, and religious lectures. This illustrates that religious habituation in the school focuses on teaching religious theory and forming moderate, inclusive, and tolerant religious habits and attitudes. Thus, this habituation process significantly impacts forming students who are more open to differences and can live with balanced and moderate religious principles. This success shows that the approach based on religious habits at SDN 1 Gending can create an environment conducive to developing a more harmonious religious character in diversity.

Discussion

This study examines how moderate Islamic values are integrated into the SDN 1 Gending Probolinggo educational curriculum and contributes to the existing literature. The findings obtained show that the integration of moderate Islamic values is not only carried out through Islamic Religious Education (PAI), but also various other subjects such as Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn) and Social Sciences (IPS), with a more holistic approach. These findings fill a gap in the literature that discusses how moderate values are integrated into the curriculum in schools in Indonesia, especially in the context of religious education.

This study found that SDN 1 Gending integrates moderate Islamic values in various subjects, including PAI, PPKn, and social studies. This is in line with the theory that religious education should not only emphasize the understanding of religious texts, but also on the development of students' character, as explained by Aderibigbe et al. (2023) who reveals that religious education should not only teach religious knowledge, but also form attitudes of tolerance and inclusivity in social life. These findings also show that the integration of these moderate values is carried out through learning that emphasizes the appreciation of diversity, which is in line with the theory of social integration put forward by Hasan (2024), which emphasizes the importance of social awareness of diversity in building a harmonious society.

SDN 1 Gending implements religious habits that include daily worship routines such as joint prayer, congregational prayers, and religious lectures that support the formation of students' religious character. This habituation aims to internalize moderate Islamic values in the daily lives of students, which is also expressed by the theory of character education (Beaujouan & Rasheed, 2022; Gomez, 2024; Muhaemin et al., 2023). Lickona emphasized the importance of daily habituating moral and ethical values to form good character. In this case, religious habituation at SDN 1 Gending is important in strengthening the values of tolerance, balance, and compassion in students' lives. This is also in line with the theory of religious literacy, which states that religious education must focus on developing the understanding and practice of religious teachings in real life (Mulyana, 2023; Saepudin et al., 2023; Sijamhodžić-Nadarević, 2023).

These findings provide a significant difference compared to previous studies. Most existing research focuses more on teaching religious theory in the classroom. At the same time, this study shows that SDN 1 Gending integrates moderate Islamic values in non-religious subjects, such as PPKn and social studies. This shows that a more holistic and integrated approach to religious education can make a greater contribution in shaping the character of inclusive and tolerant students, in contrast to the more segmented approach that existed in previous research (Dasopang et al., 2023; Mujahid, 2021; Unstad & Fjørtoft, 2021).

This research shows that SDN 1 Gending has successfully integrated moderate Islamic values into its curriculum in a more holistic and structured way. These findings enrich the existing literature by showing that religious education in Indonesia is not only limited to religious lessons but also includes cross-subject learning that prioritizes the values of tolerance and inclusivity. This approach contributes to understanding how schools can play an important role in shaping the character of moderate students, respecting differences, and living in harmony in a pluralistic society. These findings also provide the basis for further research on applying moderate Islamic education at the primary education level.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the integration of moderate Islamic values in the educational curriculum at SDN 1 Gending, focusing on how these values are applied in various subjects. The study's findings show that the integration of moderate values is carried out through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) lessons and other subjects such as PPKn and Social Studies. This process shows the importance of value-based education, which can shape the character of inclusive and tolerant students. These findings significantly contribute to developing religious and character education theory, highlighting the importance of a cross-subject approach in teaching moderation. In addition, this study opens up opportunities for further research on the long-term impact of integrating moderate values in primary education. This practice can be a model for other schools to build a more inclusive generation ready to face social diversity in the future.

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