The Role of Islamic Religious Education Management in Promoting Religious Moderation in Indonesia

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This study aims to conceptually examine the management of educational facilities and infrastructure and its role in improving educational quality. The research adopts a qualitative approach using a library research design. Data were collected through a systematic review of relevant literature, including academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and educational regulations. The collected data were analyzed using a descriptive-analytical technique with an interpretative approach. The findings indicate that effective and efficient management of educational facilities and infrastructure—encompassing planning, procurement, utilization, maintenance, and disposal—significantly contributes to the creation of a conducive learning environment and the enhancement of instructional quality. Furthermore, school and madrasah leadership plays a strategic role in optimizing the management of educational facilities and infrastructure through professional decision-making and sustainable resource management. This study implies that achieving sustainable educational quality requires synergy between adequate facilities, professional management practices, and effective educational leadership. Strengthening managerial capacity and leadership commitment is therefore essential for improving institutional performance in educational settings. |

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is widely recognized as one of the most pluralistic countries in the world, characterized by its extensive diversity in terms of religion, ethnicity, culture, and social background. This diversity represents a significant form of social capital that can strengthen national unity and support sustainable development. However, when diversity is not managed wisely through effective educational and institutional governance, it may also become a source of social

tension and conflict (Soehadha, 2021). In recent years, Indonesia has faced serious challenges related to religious life, particularly the growing manifestations of intolerance, exclusivism, and religious extremism. These tendencies are increasingly visible among younger generations, raising concerns about the future of social cohesion. Such phenomena are not confined to political or social arenas but have gradually penetrated educational settings, where rigid and narrow religious narratives often dominate learning spaces. This condition highlights the urgent need for systematic educational management that promotes inclusive, moderate, and peaceful religious understanding within a plural society.

The rapid development of digital technology and social media has further intensified these challenges. Students are now exposed to a vast amount of religious information that is often unverified, provocative, and ideologically biased, enabling radical interpretations to spread widely and rapidly (Bauto, 2016). Digital platforms frequently present religious discourse in simplistic and binary terms, shaping a black-and-white worldview that undermines critical thinking and tolerance. From an educational management perspective, this situation demands adaptive curriculum planning, strengthened instructional supervision, and strategic integration of digital religious literacy within learning management systems. Consequently, education can no longer function solely as a medium for knowledge transmission but must also serve as a managed institutional space for shaping attitudes, values, and religious character (Hefniy Hefniy & Alwahedi, 2025). In this context, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) holds a particularly crucial position, as it directly engages with students' religious understanding and moral development.

Recognizing these challenges, the Indonesian government, through the Ministry of Religious Affairs, officially designated religious moderation as a national priority program in 2019. Religious moderation is conceptualized as a balanced approach to religious belief and practice that emphasizes justice, tolerance, equilibrium, and commitment to national unity. This framework aligns closely with Islamic teachings on ummatan wasathan as articulated in the Qur'an, which advocate a middle path that avoids both extremism and liberal excess (Fahri & Zainuri, 2019). Within this policy framework, Islamic Religious Education—as an integral component of the national education system—requires effective educational management to translate policy goals into operational curricula, pedagogical strategies, and institutional cultures that support moderation values.

Normatively, Islamic Religious Education is designed not only to cultivate ritual obedience but also to shape individuals with noble character, social empathy, and the capacity to coexist peacefully within a pluralistic society (Jayadi et al., 2024). Ideally, IRE should integrate cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of learning through coherent planning, implementation,

and evaluation processes (Arifin & Zaini, 2024). However, in practice, IRE instruction often remains dominated by cognitive-oriented and normative-dogmatic approaches that prioritize memorization of religious doctrines. This condition reflects weaknesses in instructional management, teacher professional development, and learning evaluation systems, resulting in limited internalization of moderate attitudes and ethical sensitivity (Zaini, 2024).

Previous studies have examined religious moderation in Islamic education from perspectives such as curriculum content, teacher roles, and government policy initiatives (Arif, 2021; Ikhwan et al., 2023; Jurnal et al., 2025). Nevertheless, most studies treat these components separately and rarely analyze how curriculum design, teacher competence, leadership, and institutional governance interact as an integrated educational management system. This fragmentation reveals a research gap concerning the strategic management of Islamic Religious Education as a holistic mechanism for cultivating religious moderation within Indonesia's pluralistic context.

Based on these limitations, this study offers a comprehensive and integrative perspective by positioning Islamic Religious Education within an educational management framework. The novelty of this research lies in conceptualizing IRE as an educational ecosystem shaped by policy direction, curriculum management, teacher leadership, and socio-religious context. Employing a qualitative descriptive literature-based approach, this study critically analyzes scholarly works, policy documents, and relevant publications to explore strategic models for strengthening religious moderation through effective management of Islamic education. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically to Islamic education studies and practically to educators, institutional leaders, and policymakers in designing systematic, inclusive, and moderation-oriented IRE models suitable for plural and digital societies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design, as proposed by Sugiyono (2015). The qualitative approach was selected because the research aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of the concepts, roles, and management strategies of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in fostering religious moderation. Through this approach, the study examined religious moderation both conceptually and contextually by analyzing how educational management processes—such as curriculum planning, instructional implementation, leadership roles, and evaluation mechanisms—are discussed within scholarly literature. This design enabled the exploration of meanings, patterns, and relationships embedded in academic discussions on Islamic education, moderation values, and educational management without manipulating variables.

The research method applied was library research, which focused on the systematic exploration, analysis, and synthesis of previously published scientific works. Data sources consisted of academic books, national and international peer-reviewed journal articles, government policy documents, and official publications issued by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs related to Islamic Religious Education, religious moderation, and educational management. The selected literature was carefully screened based on its relevance to the research focus, the credibility of the sources, and their contribution to understanding how moderation values are managed, implemented, and evaluated within Islamic education systems (Albi Anggito & Johan, 2018). Data collection was conducted through documentation techniques, including reviewing, recording, and classifying relevant materials in a structured manner.

Data analysis was carried out using qualitative thematic analysis, following the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis specifically focused on identifying themes related to educational management dimensions, including curriculum management, teacher professional development, institutional leadership, and evaluation of learning outcomes related to religious moderation. Relevant information was categorized and organized into descriptive–thematic narratives that revealed conceptual linkages between Islamic Religious Education, educational management practices, and religious moderation. To ensure data trustworthiness, source triangulation was applied by comparing and cross-validating findings from multiple scholarly and policy sources. This process aimed to minimize interpretive bias and enhance the validity and credibility of the study's conclusions (Hardani, 2020).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Fostering Religious Moderation in Indonesia

The results of the literature review indicate that Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a strategic role in fostering religious moderation in Indonesia through the internalization of Islamic values that are universal, inclusive, and contextual. Various sources emphasize that IRE functions not only as a medium for transferring religious knowledge (transfer of knowledge) but also as an instrument for shaping students' attitudes, character, and religious thinking (transfer of values) in line with the pluralistic realities of Indonesian society (Saputra et al., 2025). From an educational management perspective, the effectiveness of IRE depends on structured planning, curriculum design, instructional supervision, teacher leadership, and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that moderation values are consistently integrated across learning processes.

The findings show that IRE contributes to instilling a moderate religious perspective by integrating normative Islamic teachings and national values. Through structured and continuous learning processes, supported by effective management strategies such as instructional monitoring, teacher coordination, and performance evaluation, IRE encourages students to understand religion not only textually but also contextually, considering social, cultural, and human aspects (Ikhwan et al., 2023). This strengthens the position of IRE as a vehicle for cultivating peaceful and civilized religious attitudes in a plural society.

Based on the literature review, the values of religious moderation consistently internalized through IRE include *tawasuth* (middle way), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), and *i'tidal* (justice). These values are fundamental principles of religious moderation formulated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia and have a strong theological foundation in Islam, particularly the concept of *ummatan wasathan* as mentioned in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]:143.

يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُوْلَ مِمَّنْ يَّنْقَلِبُ عَلٰى عَقِبَيْهِۗ وَاِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيْرَةً اِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ هَدَى اللّٰهُۗ وَمَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيُضِيْعَ اِيْمَانَكُمْ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوْفٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ١٤٣

Meaning: *"Thus We have made you a (just) nation so that you will be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger will be a witness over you. And We did not make the Qiblah which you used to face except that We might know who follows the Messenger from those who turn on their heels. And it was indeed difficult except for those whom Allah has guided. And Allah would not let your faith go to waste. Indeed, Allah is ever Kind and Merciful to mankind."* (QS. Al-Baqarah:143)

The results indicate that the internalization of *tawasuth* through IRE encourages students to avoid extreme attitudes, whether in the form of radicalism or religious liberalism. The value of *tasamuh* helps develop an attitude of respecting differences in beliefs and religious views, while *tawazun* fosters awareness of the importance of balancing spiritual, social, and national interests. Meanwhile, *i'tidal* contributes to shaping just, proportional, and non-discriminatory behavior in society (Fadhilah & Zulkarnaini, 2025). Effective management of learning objectives, instructional design, and assessment ensures that these moderation values are systematically instilled across classrooms.

Conceptually and empirically, the study shows that internalizing religious moderation values through IRE leads to the development of students' religious attitudes that are non-exclusive, open to differences, and committed to national unity. Students are positioned not only as individuals who understand religious teachings normatively but also as citizens capable of actualizing Islamic values within the framework of diversity and democratic life (Rama et al., 2024).

Table 1. Religious Moderation Values in Islamic Religious Education and Their Implications

Religious Moderation Value	Conceptual Meaning	Implications for Students' Attitudes	Management Aspect
Tawasuth (middle way)	Taking a moderate position and avoiding extremism	Not being radical or exclusive in religion	Curriculum planning and learning evaluation
Tasamuh (tolerance)	Respecting differences in beliefs and views	Able to live peacefully together	Teacher guidance and classroom climate management
Tawazun (balance)	Maintaining balance between religious and social aspects	Religious while socially caring	Integrated learning strategies and activity management
I'tidal (justice)	Being fair and proportional	Rejecting discrimination and violence	Policy alignment and monitoring of learning outcomes

Source: processed 2025

Internalization of Religious Moderation Values through IRE Learning

The study indicates that the internalization of religious moderation values in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) occurs systematically through a value-oriented learning approach. This approach positions IRE not merely as a medium for transferring religious knowledge, but as a process for instilling fundamental Islamic values that foster moderate, inclusive, and contextual religious attitudes. From a management perspective, this requires careful planning, organization, and supervision of learning processes, including curriculum alignment, instructional design, and assessment planning. Literature confirms that the internalization of moderation values in IRE is carried out through the integration of tolerance, justice, and balance into learning objectives, content, methods, and assessment (Ihsan et al., 2025).

IRE teachers play a central role in this internalization process. The review shows that teachers function as facilitators and role models in instilling tawasuth (middle way), tasamuh (tolerance), and tawazun (balance) through dialogical and reflective learning approaches. Effective management of teaching activities, including lesson planning, classroom supervision, and performance evaluation, ensures that teachers consistently model and reinforce moderation values. Learning that allows open discussion on religious and social issues enables students to understand Islamic teachings more comprehensively, not only textually. Dialogical approaches have proven effective in training students to think critically, respect differing opinions, and avoid exclusive or extreme religious attitudes (Wahid, 2024).

In addition to learning methods, the substance of IRE materials significantly contributes to shaping moderate attitudes. Subjects like Aqidah Akhlak instill universal moral values such as honesty, justice, empathy, and social responsibility. Meanwhile, Fiqh can foster moderation when taught by presenting the diversity of scholars' opinions (ikhtilaf) and principles of maslahah, helping students understand that differences in Islamic interpretations must be approached wisely (Mardiah, 2025). From a management perspective, the development and selection of teaching materials require systematic oversight, content evaluation, and coordination with institutional objectives to ensure alignment with moderation goals. Islamic Cultural History (Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam - SKI) is also a strategic medium for internalizing moderation values. Presenting moderate Islamic figures such as Wali Songo and Nusantara scholars provides concrete examples of Islam that is tolerant, culturally adaptive, and peace-oriented, strengthening students' awareness of religious values aligned with national values (Millah & Nasution, 2024).

Overall, IRE learning serves as a strategic space to connect normative Islamic teachings with plural social realities. The internalization of religious moderation values occurs not only cognitively but also affectively and behaviorally. Effective management practices, including monitoring learning implementation, evaluating outcomes, and coordinating with institutional programs, ensure that these values are consistently reinforced and sustainable. With an appropriate learning approach, inclusive content, and robust management, IRE contributes significantly to shaping students' character to be religious, tolerant, and socially harmonious.

Table 2. Forms of Internalization of Religious Moderation Values in IRE Learning

IRE Learning Aspect	Form of Moderation Internalization	Moderation Values Developed	Management Aspect
Learning Objectives	Emphasis on tolerant and inclusive attitudes	Tawasuth, Tasamuh	Curriculum planning
Learning Methods	Dialogical and reflective discussion	Tawazun, I'tidal	Lesson implementation and classroom management
Aqidah Akhlak Content	Instilling universal moral values	Justice, Empathy	Curriculum and content management
Fiqh Content	Introducing scholars' *ikhtilaf*	Tolerance, Balance	Instructional guidance and supervision
SKI Content	Examples of moderate Islamic figures	Cultural and religious moderation	Institutional culture and program planning

The Role of IRE Teachers as Agents of Religious Moderation

IRE teachers occupy a central position as agents of religious moderation, serving as the primary mediators between curricular intentions and students' actualization of moderation values. Their professional competencies, pedagogical skills, and ethical exemplarity determine whether moderation values—*tawasuth*, *tasamuh*, *tawazun*, and *i'tidal*—can be effectively internalized. Teachers who integrate dialogical and reflective learning approaches provide opportunities for students to critically engage with religious texts while contextualizing these teachings in pluralistic social realities (Hadirman, 2023; Muhyidin et al., 2025; Nurlaili et al., 2022). Without teacher mediation, even a well-designed curriculum may fail to produce meaningful internalization.

Teachers' pedagogical approaches are closely tied to classroom climate management. When teachers model inclusive, tolerant, and just behaviors (*uswah hasanah*), they cultivate environments conducive to collaborative learning and ethical reasoning. Conversely, textual, dogmatic, or memorization-oriented teaching without supportive management structures limits students' ability to translate knowledge into attitudes and behaviors (Heryana, 2024). The alignment of teacher practices with instructional supervision, mentoring, and professional development ensures consistency in moderation education.

From a management perspective, the strategic role of teachers encompasses not only content delivery but also the orchestration of learning processes. Instructional planning, classroom supervision, and formative evaluation allow teachers to monitor students' comprehension and moral development, adjusting approaches when needed. Teachers act as both implementers and evaluators of the moderation-based curriculum, bridging institutional policies with students' lived experiences.

Finally, challenges such as uneven teacher understanding of religious moderation highlight the need for systematic capacity building. Professional development programs, mentoring initiatives, and structured evaluation processes strengthen teachers' ability to implement dialogical learning, contextualize content, and maintain a tolerant classroom climate. This integrated management approach ensures that teacher performance directly contributes to the sustainable internalization of religious moderation values.

Table 3. Role and Challenges of IRE Teachers in Strengthening Religious Moderation

Aspect	Research Findings	Management Aspect
Strategic Role	Teachers as role models (*uswah hasanah*) and moderators of values	Teacher leadership and mentoring
Effective Approach	Dialogical, reflective, and contextual learning	Instructional planning and supervision
Positive Impact	Formation of tolerant and inclusive classroom climate	Classroom climate and learning monitoring
Main Challenge	Uneven understanding of religious moderation	Professional development and evaluation
Less Effective Approach	Textual and dogmatic learning	Curriculum and teaching method management
Need for Strengthening	Training in religious moderation and literacy	Human resource and professional development management

Moderation-Based IRE Curriculum

The IRE curriculum functions as a core instrument in shaping students' moderate character by systematically embedding values of *tawasuth*, *tasamuh*, *tawazun*, and *i'tidal* into objectives, content, strategies, and assessments. Effective curriculum management ensures that these values are not treated as peripheral but central to learning outcomes, creating a coherent and purposeful educational framework (Messakh et al., 2023; Nurlaili et al., 2022; Wahid, 2024; Ikhwan et al., 2023; Jurnal et al., 2025).

Curricular integration requires meticulous planning and coordination across subjects and educational levels. Management practices such as cross-subject alignment, instructional supervision, and evaluation of learning outcomes ensure consistency in delivering moderation values. By combining active, project-based learning with character-oriented assessment, students not only gain cognitive mastery but also develop affective and psychomotor dimensions that reinforce ethical and social competencies.

Teachers' instructional strategies interact with curriculum design to produce measurable outcomes in moderation. By adopting dialogical, reflective, and experiential approaches, teachers operationalize curriculum intentions in daily classroom practice. This alignment of curriculum and teacher management reinforces value internalization while ensuring that learning objectives translate into real-world behavioral and social competencies.

Finally, policy and institutional management play a crucial role in sustaining moderation-based curricula. Policies such as the Ministry of Religious Affairs' Roadmap on Religious Moderation provide guidance, standardization, and accountability mechanisms, ensuring that schools consistently implement curricula that nurture students' religious tolerance, national commitment, and social responsibility.

Table 4. Characteristics of a Moderation-Based IRE Curriculum

Curriculum Aspect	Main Characteristics	Management Aspect
Learning Objectives	Forming students who are religious, tolerant, and nationally committed	Curriculum planning and learning management
Teaching Materials	Embedding tolerance, social justice, and Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin*	Content management and instructional design
Learning Strategies	Active, dialogical, and project-based learning	Lesson implementation and classroom supervision
Evaluation	Balanced assessment of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor	Assessment planning and monitoring
Policy Reference	Ministry of Religious Affairs Roadmap on Religious Moderation	Policy alignment and institutional governance

Islamic Educational Institutions as Agents of Moderation

Islamic educational institutions—including pesantren, madrasahs, and universities—serve as pivotal agents in strengthening religious moderation. Their leadership, organizational culture, and program management determine how moderation values are embedded institutionally. By integrating curricula, institutional traditions, and community engagement, these institutions cultivate students' religious and social competencies in alignment with national and ethical values (Fadhilah & Zulkarnaini, 2025; Heryana, 2024; Messakh et al., 2023; Hadirman, 2023).

Pesantren leverage traditional scholarship and collective life to instill tolerance and contextualized religious understanding. Through kitab kuning studies, communal practices, and culturally adaptive preaching, they operationalize *tasamuh* and *i'tidal* in students' daily lives. Effective governance and organizational management ensure that these values are consistently reinforced, creating an environment where moderation becomes a lived practice.

Madrasahs integrate national and Islamic curricula, balancing cognitive learning with character education. Management practices such as curricular oversight, teacher supervision, and program evaluation guarantee that moderation objectives are systematically achieved. This structured management approach strengthens the internalization of tolerance, justice, and national commitment across different learning contexts.

Universities contribute through research, community service, and public discourse. Program management, leadership, and assessment structures ensure that students engage critically with Islamic values while serving as advocates of moderation. By coordinating institutional policies, extracurricular activities, and social programs, universities extend the influence of moderation beyond classrooms into the broader society.

Table 5. Role of Islamic Educational Institutions in Strengthening Religious Moderation

Institution Type	Main Role	Contribution to Religious Moderation	Management Aspect
Pesantren	Education based on tradition and collective life	Instilling peaceful, tolerant, and contextual Islam	Institutional governance and cultural management
Madrasah	Integration of national and Islamic curriculum	Forming religious and nationalist attitudes	Curriculum management and supervision
Islamic Universities	Research, community service, and discourse	Producing intellectual and moderation advocates	Program management, leadership, and evaluation

Challenges in Implementing Religious Moderation through IRE

The implementation of religious moderation faces multiple interconnected challenges. Radical ideologies and digital misinformation expose students to exclusive and extreme religious narratives, undermining moderation internalization. Management strategies, such as digital literacy programs and structured instructional supervision, are essential to mitigate these risks (Hadirman, 2023).

Teacher competence remains uneven across institutions, with some educators relying on dogmatic, memorization-focused methods. Addressing this requires systematic professional development, mentoring programs, and performance evaluation mechanisms to ensure that teachers can implement dialogical and reflective learning approaches (Ikhwan et al., 2023).

Curriculum integration is another challenge, as moderation values are inconsistently embedded in learning objectives and instructional materials. Robust planning, monitoring, and evaluation processes within the management framework are required to align curricular content with institutional goals and national moderation policies (Jurnal et al., 2025).

Finally, the social environment—including families and communities—can conflict with school-based moderation initiatives. Management approaches such as community engagement, institutional collaboration, and parental involvement are critical to ensuring that moderation values taught in schools are reinforced outside the classroom, promoting coherent internalization and sustainable behavioral change (Harianto, 2024).

Table 6. Challenges in Implementing Religious Moderation through IRE

No	Challenge Aspect	Impact Description	Management Aspect
1	Radicalism and intolerance	Leads to exclusive attitudes and rejection of diversity	Digital literacy and instructional supervision
2	IRE teacher competence	Learning tends to be dogmatic and less dialogical	Professional development and mentoring
3	Curriculum integration	Moderation values are not explicit learning objectives	Curriculum planning and evaluation
4	Digital media and misinformation	Students are exposed to extreme religious narratives	Learning management and media monitoring
5	Family and community environment	Discontinuity between school and social values	Community engagement and institutional collaboration

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the literature review and analysis, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a fundamental role in fostering religious moderation in Indonesia by instilling values such as *tawasuth* (the middle way), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), and *i'tidal* (justice). Through structured and continuous learning, these values are internalized not only as knowledge but also as attitudes and behaviors that manifest in students' daily lives. From a management perspective, the effectiveness of IRE depends on careful planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation of educational programs. The integration of moderation values into the IRE curriculum strengthens students' inclusive and tolerant character through instructional materials featuring moderate Islamic figures, project-based learning, and character-oriented assessment strategies. Management practices such as curriculum alignment, instructional supervision, teacher professional development, classroom management, and outcome evaluation are essential to ensure the systematic internalization of moderation values. Teachers serve as role models (*uswah hasanah*) and facilitators, while Islamic educational institutions—including madrasahs, pesantren, and universities—act as strategic agents promoting moderation through academic programs, social activities, institutional governance, and religious literacy initiatives.

Despite its critical role, the implementation of religious moderation faces challenges such as radical ideologies, uneven teacher competence, incomplete curriculum integration, and digital misinformation. Management-oriented strategies to address these challenges include enhancing teacher capacity through professional development programs, systematically integrating moderation values into curricula, coordinating collaboration with families and communities, and utilizing digital platforms for structured religious literacy

initiatives. When applied comprehensively within an effective educational management framework, IRE can cultivate a generation of Muslims who are religious, tolerant, inclusive, and nationally conscious, thereby strengthening social cohesion and positioning Islamic education as an effective instrument for preventing radicalism and promoting a harmonious, just society.

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