

## **2028- THE PROMOTION OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION AS A PART OF AN EFFORT TO COUNTER RISING RADICALISM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The objective of this study is to assess the effectiveness of incorporating literature into educational practices as a means to promote religious moderation among the Indonesian population. Specifically, it aims to explore the potential of utilizing literary-based learning to mitigate radicalism through the implementation of religious moderation strategies within contemporary society. Providing access to foster tolerance and interfaith harmony as a means of mitigating the proliferation of extreme ideologies. This study examines the significance of promoting religious moderation in Indonesia and its importance. The data for this study was collected from reliable sources through a qualitative analytical approach, focusing on the issue of countering increasing radicalism. The results underscore the importance of implementing a religious moderation plan as a means to mitigate radicalism in Indonesia. The significance of promoting religious moderation in Indonesia and addressing radicalism through such moderation are two primary focal points. This study further elucidated that the presence of religious moderation is intricately intertwined with features of relativism and humanism, wherein the term "human" and its accompanying elements play a pivotal role in fostering tolerance. This study is anticipated to make a valuable contribution towards the advancement of religious moderation while also fostering the development of moderate religious attitudes and actions. The primary objective of the occupation is to mitigate the escalation of radicalism. In order to safeguard the youth generation.*

**Keyword:** Religious Moderation, Moderate Muslim, Radicalism, Humanism, Relativism

### **INTRODUCTION**

The world's major religions are confronted with significant challenges in the form of extremism, radicalism, intolerance, and exclusivism. The issue of extremism poses a significant challenge for religious communities, as it not only erodes the internal teachings of a religion but also contributes to the formation of an unfavorable perception of faith (Manshur and Husni, 2020). According to Kaldybay *et al* (2018), certain scholars argue that the swift emergence of religious extremism poses a significant risk to the continued existence of well-established religious traditions. The emergence of religious radicalism has engendered a pressing national security predicament that necessitates the attention and action of the Indonesian government. The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia has released a publication entitled "Religious Moderation." The contents of the book provide a description of four indicators that can be used to identify paradigms and attitudes within moderate Islamic diversity in Indonesia that demonstrate a tolerance towards local culture (Agama, 2019).

However, there is evidence indicating that a significant portion of the Indonesian population does not support the increased acceptance of religious moderation.

According to Nurkhoiron (2020), certain adherents of the Islamic faith hold the belief that this phenomenon can be attributed to its embodiment of radicalism and revivalism. These two factors contribute to the divergence of religious institutions' principles from those upheld by society and the state. The regrettable aspect of this negative assumption lies in its failure to acknowledge the social, cultural, and religious values of the Indonesian nation, which demonstrate a commitment to embracing moderate social attitudes and diversity, thereby avoiding extreme positions on the left or right of the ideological spectrum (Dodego and Witro, 2020).

This study aims to examine the perspectives and viewpoints of religious moderates in Indonesia regarding the growing phenomenon of radicalism. The research seeks to gain insights into the ways in which these individuals perceive and address the issue of radicalization within the country. The primary objective of this perspective is to enhance the capacity for resilience and sustainability in contemporary times, with the aim of fostering religious moderation in Indonesia. This study examines the method the Indonesian government uses to encourage the spread of tolerance. The anticipated outcomes of this research are poised to make a valuable contribution to the advancement of resilience practices by bolstering the strategy of promoting religious moderation in Indonesia. This endeavor is undertaken as a means to effectively address the escalating issue of radicalism.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Toward promoting religious moderation**

Moderation can be defined as a pattern of conduct that avoids extremes and partiality. Religious moderation encompasses a balanced approach to religious beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, ethics, and interpersonal relationships. The Arabic word "wasatiyyah," which includes terms like "wasat," "al-wusta," "awsat," "awsatuhum," and "fawasatna," denotes the concept of "moderate" (Mashur and Husni, 2020). In the Arabic language, the term moderation, referred to as wasatiyyah or tawassut, is synonymous with itidâl, tawâzun, and iqtîâd. According to Sumarto (2021), the etymological definition of wasathiyah pertains to a characteristic that serves as a deterrent against individuals or collectives engaging in actions of an extreme nature. Yusuf Qardhawi (2009) posits that wasathiyah encompasses a disposition that epitomizes the concept of equity and results in testimony of commendable caliber. Yaakub and Othman (2016) asserts that the term "wasatiyyah," derived from the Qur'an, delineates Muslims as individuals possessing harmonious attributes (al-Baqarah, 2:143).

“And thus we have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you. And we did not make the qiblah which you used to face except the We might make evident who would follow the messenger from who would turn back on his heels. And indeed, it is difficult except for those whom

Allah has guided. And never would Allah have caused you to lose your faith. Indeed Allah is, to the people, kind and Merciful”.

Textual analysis reveals the presence of a multitude of Arabic word forms. According to Yaakub and Othman (2016), there are various terms used to describe the concepts of centrality, neutrality, and intermediacy in different contexts. These terms include *wast* (central), *wasatiyyah* (neutral socio-cultural attitude and behavior), *wustâ* (middle time period), *awsat* (most central), *wâsit* (intervention), *wasît* (intermediary), *wâsitah/wasâtah* (intermediate/medium), *tawassut* (central position), and *mutawassit* (central position) (mediator). According to scholarly perspectives, religious moderation is considered by intellectuals as a potential counterbalance to the coexistence of two diametrically opposed factions, namely radicals and liberals (Asher, 2021; Sheikhzadegan, 2020). Figure 1 depicts an outline of the principles of religious moderation as delineated by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia.

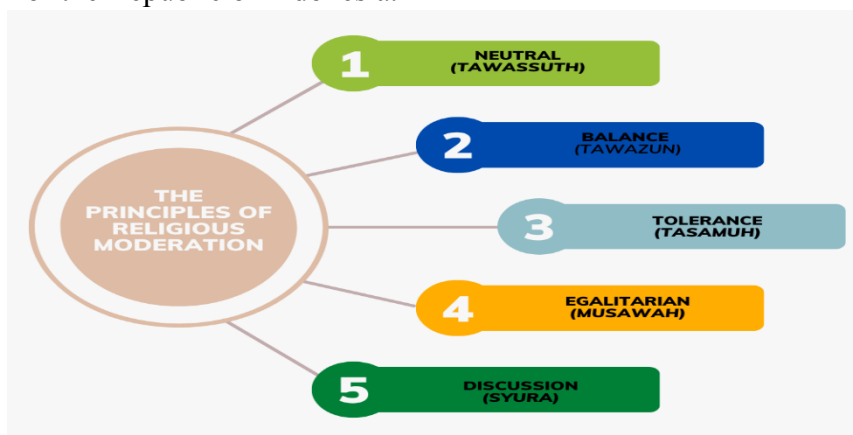


Figure 1 The Principle of religious moderation (Saifuddin, 2019)

The basis for religious moderation consists of several principles, such as *at-tawazun* (balance) and *syumuliyah* (universal compassion) (Al-Qardhawi, 2009). Religious moderation presents itself as a potential alternative to the presence of two diametrically opposed extremes within religious discourse, or the extreme left on the opposing end (Abdillah, 2019). According to Arif (2020), the religious text and the practice of *ijtihad* necessitate the establishment of equilibrium between divergent elements, namely reason and revelation, the material and the metaphysical, individual rights and societal obligations, as well as personal interests and communal welfare. According to Saifuddin (2019), the principle of religious moderation holds significant foundational importance. However, it is imperative for the community to maintain a balanced position while curbing detrimental factors such as excessive opulence and radical ideologies.

The preceding discourse illustrates that the notion of moderate Islam can be likened to the concept of the middle way, denoting a religious disposition that avoids inclinations towards extremism and radicalism. Empirical evidence supports the idea that moderate Islam is similar to the idea of the middle path.

Their resemblance demonstrated the similarity between the middle way concept and the concept of moderate Islam. The embodiment of Islam as a rahmatan lil'alamin is most effectively demonstrated through the adoption of a moderate approach.

### **Moderate Muslims**

According to Schwedler (2011), the origins of the notions of radical and moderate can be attributed to modernization theory. This theoretical framework often employs binary terms, such as technocrats and theocrats, hard-liners and soft-liners, reformers and standpatters, as well as reformers and conservatives. This phenomenon has been observed in previous research, wherein radical and moderate Muslims are frequently juxtaposed as opposing categories, akin to the dichotomy of liberal and fundamentalist (Achilov & Sen, 2017; Hamdi, 2013), among other scholarly works. The concept of moderation encompasses various mechanisms, including but not limited to participation, autonomy, socioeconomic factors, inclusion, organizational interest, and social learning (Islam and Khatun, 2015). It is a complex and multifaceted concept that requires careful consideration.

In the current context, the term "Moderation" is often associated with nonviolent and progressive ideals. However, it is important to note that this concept lacks specific and clearly defined characteristics. The use of this label serves as a means for different parties to form alliances, convey political messages to their respective supporters, and connect political and normative actions. Nevertheless, it is worth acknowledging that these actions can be problematic in nature (Gutkowski, 2015). According to Kassam (2015), the concept of moderation can be understood as a means of transcending conventional limits in order to achieve a balanced approach that incorporates liberal ideals while upholding the fundamental tenets of Islam. Gutkowski (2015) posits that within the Middle East, the concept of moderation encompasses various elements such as political pragmatism, nonviolent approaches, adherence to democratic procedures, promotion of social progress, embracement of pluralistic norms, heightened levels of tolerance, and alignment with Western nations. According to Islamic perspective, the concept of moderation, or *wasatiyyah*, can be understood as a manifestation of justice or balance, merit or excellence, and a preferable or median approach (Islam & Khatun, 2015). From an Islamic perspective, the concept of moderation is understood as a system of ethical principles rooted in the values of patience, humility, and tolerance. These values are integral to the teachings of the Qur'an, the sacred scripture of Islam. Consequently, it is important to recognize that the notion of moderation should not be limited solely to Muslims, as it holds relevance beyond this religious community (Mokhtar, 2018).

There exists a prevailing perception that Middle Eastern Islam exhibits a greater degree of conservatism and rigidity when compared to Indonesian Islam, which is commonly regarded as being more inclined towards tolerance and moderation.

Moreover, it can be observed that Islam in Indonesia exhibits a distinctive attribute that aligns with contemporary notions of modernity, democracy, and diversity (Katsambekis, 2022). However, the diverse nature of the Islamic community and its multifaceted endeavors pose a significant challenge in delineating their extent.

Within the Islamic community in Indonesia, various ideological factions can be identified, including radicals, moderates, modernists, and traditionalists. The differentiation of these subgroups has been predicated on their distinct ideologies. In light of the escalation of extremist interpretations of Muslim and the emergence of terrorist organizations in recent years, the concept of moderate Muslims has garnered significant attention in public discussions. Conversely, the interpretation of the term "moderate" remains a subject of debate, particularly with respect to the individuals that ought to be classified as such. Hussain (2010) asserts that the term "normal" is most aptly employed to characterize a moderate level of activity. John L. Esposito cautions that the determination of moderate Islam will be contingent upon the political and religious affiliation of the individual responsible for making such a determination. Within the Islamic faith, akin to other religious traditions, there exists a segment of followers who align themselves with progressive, modernist, and liberal ideologies, alongside those who adhere to traditionalist and conservative viewpoints.

Hence, individuals who identify as moderate Muslims are characterized by their integration into societies, their pursuit of societal transformation through grassroots efforts, their rejection of religious extremism, and their unequivocal condemnation of violence and terrorism. Various interpretations and reinterpretations of Islam are frequently employed by individuals to better address the religious, social, and political circumstances within their respective societies, as well as in the context of global affairs (Esposito, 2005). Expressions of a Muslim in a Moderate Disposition Based on the criteria delineated in this study, individuals classified as moderate Muslims are those who demonstrate adherence to the core principles of democratic culture. The aforementioned principles encompass the values of valuing diversity, embracing nonsectarian legal frameworks, condemning unjustifiable acts of terrorism and violence, and advocating for democracy and universally acknowledged human rights, such as gender equality and freedom of religion (Rabasa, 2007).

### **Radicalism**

Etymologically, it can be observed that the term "radical" possesses a neutral connotation. The term "radical" originates from the Latin word "radix" or "radici." As per Kennedy (2004), the term radical, as defined in The Concise Oxford Dictionary (2004), denotes the concept of 'root','source', or 'origin'. In a more expansive context, the term "radical" pertains to fundamental elements, principles, matters, and necessities associated with diverse phenomena, or it denotes phenomena that are considered "unconventional" (Rahman and Saebani, 2018). Radicalism can be characterized as a conceptual framework or notion that evolves

into an ideology that exhibits an unwillingness to effect social and political transformation through the utilization of extreme or violent methods, often justified by religious motivations. These methods encompass various forms of aggression, such as verbal, physical, and psychological violence (Saifuddin, 2019).

According to Thooyib (2018), radical Muslims can be defined as a religious phenomenon associated with the Islamic faith, wherein individuals and groups seek significant transformations through adopting a stringent approach to achieve specific objectives. Radical Muslim movements emerge as a result of a multitude of factors encompassing social, economic, cultural, and political dimensions. This phenomenon can be characterized as a form of resistance movement that arises in response to prevailing social, economic, and political disparities, seeking to effect drastic transformations rooted in the principles of Islam. The maintenance of moral excellence and the prevention of wrongdoing (Ahyar, 2015) The core of radical action pertains to the attitudes and behaviors exhibited by an individual or collective entity, which employs forceful methods in order to achieve the intended transformation.

As posited by Mursi *et al.* (2022), the central concern pertaining to Muslim radicalism does not stem from the religion itself rather from the fundamental ideologies and methodologies employed in the interpretation and application of Shariah. The aforementioned conclusion has been derived by the researchers following an extensive examination of numerous studies pertaining to the topic at hand. Upon reviewing a multitude of studies conducted on the subject matter, the researchers arrived at this realization. Jihadist entities, such as al-Qaeda and the global Muslim Brotherhood, exploit the presence of sizable Muslim congregations to advance their political objectives by leveraging the heightened religious sentiments prevalent among Muslims. The application of crowdsourcing is what enables this feasibility.

The comprehension of radicalism often commences by embracing a closed mindset, and it is distinguished by a steadfast dedication to what is perceived as indisputable veracity. An additional defining attribute of radicalism is its frequent association with extremism. Consequently, differing perspectives tend to consistently foster radicalism. Instances of such occurrences are commonplace in contemporary society, particularly in relation to matters of profound religious significance. Upon closer examination, the subject under scrutiny exhibits a proclivity for multiple interpretations due to the impact of diverse factors such as educational institutions, religious establishments, levels of education, and the immediate surroundings (Pilkington, 2022).

### **Humanism**

The term "humanism" is etymologically derived from the noun "human," as explicated in the Popular Scientific Dictionary. The term "anthropocentric" refers to the perspective or approach that focuses on humans or the characteristics and

behaviors associated with humans. It can be understood as pertaining to the study or consideration of human beings. The inherent nature of humanity is characterized by acts of compassion and kindness. The disciplines of philosophy, moral philosophy, art, history, and languages are collectively classified as humanities. Humanists are individuals who subscribe to this particular ideology, while humanism is a philosophical doctrine that places significant emphasis on the interests and welfare of human beings. The humanism movement during the Renaissance was deeply influenced by the ancient Greek civilization, whereas modern humanism primarily centers its attention on the concerns and needs of individuals. Humanism can be defined as a philosophical stance that encompasses a belief in and concern for the well-being and significance of humanity (Pena, 2006). The concept of humanism refers to the notion that humans occupy a central position in the realm of existence.

The emergence of this educational institution in Italy between the 14th and 16th centuries can be understood as a response to the speculative theological philosophy prevalent during the Scholastic Age. However, its roots can be traced back to classical Greece through the concept of Paidea, as noted by Zagorin (2013), Sulasmi *et al.* (2019), and Hammersley (2022). Paidea is an educational system that emerged during the Classical Greek period, aiming to cultivate individuals who embody physical and spiritual harmony in order to attain happiness (Richard, 2021).

According to Nurjannah's (2018) study, humanism can be defined as a philosophical standpoint that emphasizes the importance of human values and dignity. It asserts that individuals should serve as the benchmark for evaluating all decisions, events, and phenomena that take place on Earth. Humanism, in its perspective, regards individuals as the benchmark against which all decisions, events, and phenomena on the planet are to be evaluated. In philosophical discourse, humanism refers to the conviction in the inherent value and significance of each person, along with the endeavor to employ all available methods to cultivate the innate abilities possessed by individuals, encompassing both physical and non-physical aspects.

Based on the preceding elucidation, humanism can be understood as a philosophical doctrine that acknowledges the intrinsic importance of individuals and endows them with the freedom to actualize their complete potential, standing, and obligations within the societal framework.

### **Relativism**

The term relativism originates from the Latin word "relativus," denoting the concept of being relative. According to Lorens (2000), relativism posits that variations in human behavior, including customs, ethics, morals, and religion, are not inherent disparities but rather stem from external factors (Mangunhardjana, 1997). According to Baghrmain (2004; 2019), relativism posits that the norms and values pertaining to moral or aesthetic cognition are contingent upon the

social or conceptual framework that supports them. Moreover, as stated by Zilioli (2016), relativism should be understood as a compilation of perspectives rather than a singular doctrine. The overarching notion posits that the primary constituents of experience, cognition, assessment, and even ontological existence are inherently subjective and context-dependent.

Within the domain of epistemology, the philosophical stance of relativism, commonly referred to as cognitive relativism, posits that the existence of an absolute and universally applicable truth within human knowledge is nonexistent. The prevailing conditions were such that all elements aligned flawlessly at the opportune moment. As posited by Richter (2023), it is argued that all truths are subject to deviation from subjective measurements of individuals, as the determination of what is right or wrong in the world rests solely upon human agency.

The concept of "reality" that is commonly employed, often associated with the notion of God, encompasses a diverse array of ideas. This diversity gives rise to various epistemic practices that are founded on assertions of correctness and incorrectness. According to numerous philosophers of religion, religion is founded upon assertions concerning the characteristics of God, many of which arise due to our absence of an impartial foundation concerning Him. It is widely acknowledged that comprehending reality holds significant importance. However, our societal frameworks, cultural backgrounds, and methods of knowledge acquisition constantly shape how we perceive the world. Consequently, the comprehension of relativism emerges as a pivotal factor in fostering pluralism (Hammersley, 2022).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The study employs a descriptive qualitative methodology to conduct the research, and a particular data collection method is employed. Arikunto (2013) introduced the idea of "library research," which he defines as a type of research that aims to provide a theoretical description and interpretation of a phenomenon through the examination of literature."

The act of acquiring information through the consultation of various sources, including books, archives, documents, and other materials relevant to research, is commonly known as documentation and data sources. Furthermore, the researcher conducted an extensive review of pertinent literature sources, including books, papers, journals, and articles, to generate insights and identify potential discoveries related to the research topic. The process of objectively referencing the reality inherent in the problem being investigated is commonly referred to as the descriptive method. The interpretation of this approach can be viewed as a strategic method for the comprehensive categorization, monitoring, and organization of all elements pertaining to the given subject matter.





Figure 2 Research design

## DISCUSSION

### Religious Moderation in the Face of Radicalism

Anticipating the deployment of radicalism within the educational context is of utmost importance, necessitating the implementation of targeted measures to prevent and mitigate its impact. Tsoraya *et al.* (2022) propose that a peaceful invitation, which assumes the structure of an indictment, aims to elucidate the proper methods of religious adherence and the correct practice of Islam. The proposed measure aims to curtail the proliferation of radical ideologies and foster a climate of religious moderation within the Indonesian populace. The occurrence of violence perpetrated in the context of religious beliefs often leads to the loss of life. The occurrence of multiple threats and acts of terrorism in Indonesia exemplifies instances of radicalism or violence perpetrated under the guise of religious motivations (Pomalingo *et al.*, 2022).

Heresy is the term used to describe the act of participating in religious practices that involve engaging in anarchic actions against adherents of different faiths, including those within the same religious tradition. The occurrence of heresy is not limited to inter-religious contexts, as it can also manifest within the confines of a single religious tradition (Aminah *et al.*, 2022). The occurrence of religious radicalism becomes evident in instances where acts of violence are perpetrated in the name of faith, alongside the imposition of particular viewpoints on others. The sense of self of an individual is significantly influenced by their engagement with the surrounding community. Notwithstanding an individual's disconnection from the broader community, they retain the capacity to engage in online communication, thereby facilitating the establishment of virtual friendships within specific identity groups (Kopetz and Steiner, 2022).

To address radicalism and foster religious moderation among Indonesian citizens, it is imperative for all sectors of society and institutions to consistently emphasize the significance of cultivating patriotism. The responsibility for this obligation is not exclusively assigned to the government of a single nation. The Qur'an elucidates the diverse range of perspectives presented in QS al Hujurat 49:13, offering guidance for human existence and concurrently fostering a sense of cohesion.

“O mankind, indeed we have created you from male and female and made you people and tribes that you may know one

another. Indeed, the most noble of you in sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is knowing and acquainted”

According to Kurnaz (2022), the Islamic faith advocates for the cultivation of mutual respect and love for one's country as a means of fostering a sense of devotion to and reverence for the divine entity while also nurturing individuals with virtuous qualities. This perspective offers a genuine understanding of the concept of residing in a state of affluence and tranquility. According to Knott (2022), it is imperative for individuals, irrespective of their political ideologies, ethnic backgrounds, or religious associations, to demonstrate a willingness to attentively consider the perspectives expressed by others. Religious moderation plays a crucial role in reinstating a religion's fundamental purpose of upholding human dignity. Consequently, adherents of various religious beliefs should engage in mutual learning to effectively address and bridge gaps in their comprehension of their respective faiths. Furthermore, it is imperative for adherents of different religious traditions to engage in mutual learning in order to effectively navigate and bridge gaps in their comprehension of religious concepts. The central emphasis of our approach to facilitating the multicultural advancement of Indonesia should be the promotion of moderation in religious observance (Sulaiman *et al*, 2022).

The initial step in mitigating significant issues is prevention, as every religious act has the potential to foster intolerant or anarchic behavior. This encompasses teachings related to ethics, Islamic jurisprudence, Islamic law, and elements of religious belief. Islam is a religious belief system that provides guidance on attaining excellence in various domains and facets of human existence. The attainment of perfection is not achieved through a solitary action but rather by means of a sequential progression of steps. Religious moderation not only facilitates a comprehensive understanding of religion among individuals but also serves as a means to discourage the propagation of divisive ideologies within and across religious communities. Islamic values prioritize the establishment of moral principles. Beliefs concerning philosophical truths often manifest in manners that advocate for ideal values, such as "humanity" or "relativism," accompanied by an affective disposition and a conviction in the exclusivity of their own beliefs (Sholeh *et al*, 2022).

The phenomenon of fostering moderation within the context of religious belief, the presence of moderation in society is indicated by the absence of violence and extreme behaviors. Religious moderation engenders tolerance through the provision of a perspective that promotes tolerance within the realm of religion. Government initiatives should function as platforms for citizens to cultivate and implement religious moderation in a comprehensive manner. Government systems ought to prioritize the promotion of suitable behavior in the development of curricula and the facilitation of education. According to Barmania and Reiss (2021), it is imperative for every religious tradition to provide viable solutions and adopt a moderate way of life.

Sulaiman *et al.* (2022) observed that individuals who adhere to religious beliefs occasionally express dissent towards certain local cultural practices, such as festivals or customs, due to their active participation within the community. Although the terms and conditions do not present any issues, there are instances where we are preoccupied with the act of declining the construction of a place of worship in a specific locality. Conflict arose due to the prevailing dissent among the local populace. To effectively pursue the objective of fostering religious moderation and cultivating a tolerant, harmonious, and peaceful society in Indonesia, it is imperative to elevate the level of scientific knowledge, consistently safeguard rationality and intellectual faculties, uphold principles of fairness, and sustain equilibrium in religious tolerance.

Due to the complex choices faced by the populace of Indonesia during the contemporary period characterized by the prevalence of misinformation, coupled with the prevailing social obstacles, a significant number of individuals have come to depend on information technology. This reliance on technology carries the inherent risk of eroding established societal norms and fundamental human values (Heidari *et al.*, 2022). According to Yanti and Witro (2020), implementing moderation in religious observance is one potential strategy for addressing the aforementioned issues. The establishment of institutions that are contemporary and capable of preserving Islamic roots and traditions is essential to fostering a productive relationship with a government that adheres to moderate principles. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the government to cultivate a generation of youth who possess the necessary skills, competitiveness, and expertise in the fields of science and technology, all while upholding Islamic principles. This objective can be achieved through the educational institutions in the country. However, it is important to note that the younger generation will inevitably assume positions of leadership in due course.

The pluralistic nature of our nation often causes social discord due to the varying viewpoints held by its citizens regarding religious matters. It is undeniable that such a phenomenon has the potential to erode the conducive atmosphere of tranquility and concord that is diligently fostered by the collective efforts of individuals within the Ummah (Ummah, 2022).

**A comprehensive understanding of religion in contemporary society necessitates a firm grasp of the foundational principles underlying religious tolerance.**

In accordance with Islamic teachings, it is believed that each person enters the world devoid of subjugation, sin, inherited inferiority, and ancestral hindrance, existing in a state of purity (Abdalati, 1975). Although individuals are initially born with inherent freedom, it is important to acknowledge that absolute freedom is exclusive to Allah, as humans do not retain complete freedom throughout their lives. Islam effectively reconciles the interests of both individuals and the state by providing individuals with the autonomy to cultivate their capabilities while simultaneously safeguarding the rights of others from infringement. Adequate

powers are granted to both the community and the state in order to regulate and control the socio-economic relationship, thereby ensuring the preservation and safeguarding of this harmonious state.

Upon examination of Islamic law, commonly referred to as *Shari'ah*, it becomes evident that one of its fundamental objectives is the safeguarding and preservation of *din*, which pertains to the religious aspects of life. This entails the safeguarding, conservation, and advancement of Islamic principles and customs, as well as the preservation of religious freedom for all individuals within the state, encompassing the liberty to embrace Islam or pursue alternative religious trajectories. According to Yousif (2011), Within the Islamic faith, it is acknowledged that each individual possesses the inherent right to exercise freedom of belief, conscience, and worship. Islam asserts its claim as the ultimate truth, yet it acknowledges the inherent human capacity to exercise free will in discerning between truth and falsehood. This includes the freedom to embrace or reject the existence of a divine entity. According to the Quran, it is stated that "the truth originates from your Lord. Allow those who choose to do so to believe, and allow those who choose to do so to reject it. The user provided a timestamp of 18:29. Allah also grants mankind the freedom of choice through explicit declarations.

“Say: “O ye men! Now Truth hath reached you from your Lord!  
Those who receive guidance, do so for the good of their own souls;  
those who stray, do so to their own loss...”  
(Quran 39:41)

Religious moderation can be regarded as a moderate stance that lies between extreme right-wing extremism characterized by highly violent radicalism and a comprehensive comprehension and application of religious principles. Individuals often exhibit a proclivity for engaging in religious practices that surpass conventional limits, thereby frequently espousing truth assertions that are limited to their own viewpoint. Consequently, they develop a conviction in their own infallibility while perceiving others as being in a state of erroneousness. Religious moderation is deemed imperative as a result of this phenomenon (Aziz *et al.*, 2021).

The preservation of the nation's living conditions and overall quality of life is achieved through the implementation of religious moderation, which serves to maintain internal harmony among individuals who adhere to different religious beliefs. This contributes to the preservation of the nation's overall quality of life. It is imperative to promote the active engagement of all individuals in Indonesia in fostering religious moderation by means of literacy, cultural appreciation, and the utilization of indigenous knowledge, with the ultimate goal of advancing the development and reputation of the nation (Dini, 2022). The concept of religious moderation is characterized by various indicators, as depicted in Figure 2.

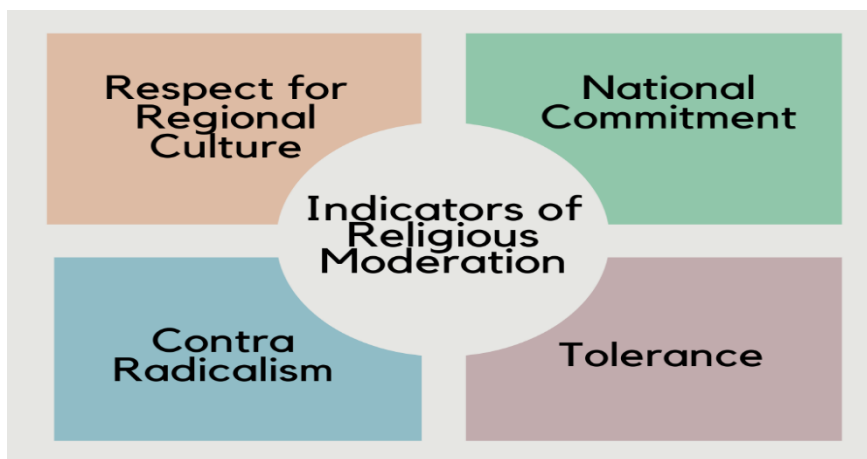


Figure 3 Indicators of religious moderation (Destriani, 2022).

The level of public responsibility, particularly the acknowledgment of Pancasila as the fundamental basis of the state, serves as a significant determinant in assessing an individual or collective dedication to public philosophy. The issue of public responsibility holds significant importance and warrants attention, particularly when it intersects with the emergence of novel ideas that exhibit inflexibility and conflict with established cultural and societal values, which have traditionally been regarded as commendable attributes of public figures. There seems to be a tendency to separate religious understanding from cultural context (Subchi *et al.*, 2022). This may be partly due to the fact that strict agreements that go against a country's natural qualities and cultural values are often used to support this trend. The cultivation of a sense of love for one's motherland through religious understanding leads to a reduction in impulsiveness and increased inflexibility in this particular structured arrangement, as it encompasses a spiritual essence within itself.

Another way to put it is that the existence of Islam represents a favor from God extended to all of creation, as the phrase "rahmatan lil'alam" suggests. However, it can be argued that additional irregularities persist due to the influence of conservative religious beliefs that discourage individuals from engaging in the apostolic mission. Dollahite *et al.* (2019) found that in some Muslim communities, where religious adaptability and choice are limited, there are still a lot of strong opinions, even though there are signs that these people aren't as smart as they used to be. As a result of this phenomenon, individuals who do not identify as Muslims hold a predominantly unfavorable perception of the fundamental tenets and principles of Islam. The claim made in this statement is evidently inaccurate as it fails to acknowledge that authentic Islam is characterized by an abundance of compassion, which serves as a means to disseminate mercy across the entirety of the universe (Azhar *et al.*, 2022).

The resolution of this conflict should aim to illustrate the adaptability and flexibility of Islamic regulations. The ultimate objective should be to achieve this outcome. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the religion of Islam will continue to

hold significance in specific contexts and geographical areas (Syakhrani and Zaini, 2022). The presence of Islamic community groups in Indonesia is evidenced by the modifications in rigid doctrines, societal customs, and non-Sharia-related perspectives within Indonesian society. The Islamic community groups in Indonesia are commonly known as Indigenous Islam, as documented in multiple dialects of the language (Aziz *et al*, 2019).

### **Choosing and Determining One's Own Religion is a Fundamental Human Right**

Every individual, irrespective of their personal background or contextual conditions, possesses the inherent entitlement to all fundamental liberties, irrespective of variables such as their racial identity, gender, sexual orientation, linguistic abilities, religious beliefs, political affiliations, birthplace, national or social heritage, and other comparable factors (Cole, 2022). Verse 25 of Surah al-Baqarah in the Quran presents a compelling argument emphasizing the significance of religious freedom, progressively reinforcing the notion that this principle should be upheld.

“There is no compulsion to embrace religion (Islam). Indeed, the path is clearer than the perverse path. Therefore, whoever disbelieves in “Thaghut” and believes in Allah, then surely he has clung to a strong rope that will never break. Allah is hearer, the knower”.

According to Ibnu Katsir (2005), the concept of "no compulsion in religion (Islam)" signifies that Allah does not impose any obligation on individuals to adopt or embrace the Islamic faith. Consequently, Allah strictly prohibits any form of coercion or reprimand aimed at compelling others to convert to Islam. Given that Allah *Subhanu Wata'ala* has already presented the arguments and corroborating evidence of truth in a lucid and persuasive manner, there is no necessity to coerce individuals into accepting it.

The guarantee of the peaceful coexistence of populations with different religious beliefs is widely regarded as the pinnacle achievement of secular-liberal democracies, manifested through the right to freedom of religion. According to Mahmood (2012), the demonstration of tolerance necessitates maintaining a receptive mindset and exhibiting respectful behavior towards individuals in all circumstances, particularly those pertaining directly to their religious beliefs. Unstad and Fjørtoft (2021) conducted a study on the topic. According to Quraish Shihab, the sole matter that warrants deliberation in relation to religious freedom pertains to the liberty to make a choice between adhering to Islam and embracing an alternative religious belief. Nevertheless, once an individual has reached a definitive decision, such as embracing Islam, their capacity to make subsequent choices becomes limited. In contrast, individuals are obligated to observe and comply with the entirety of Islam's teachings, a concept referred to as *Islam kaffah*. Alternatively, they may exercise the option to selectively adhere to specific teachings while disregarding others (Shihab, 2007).

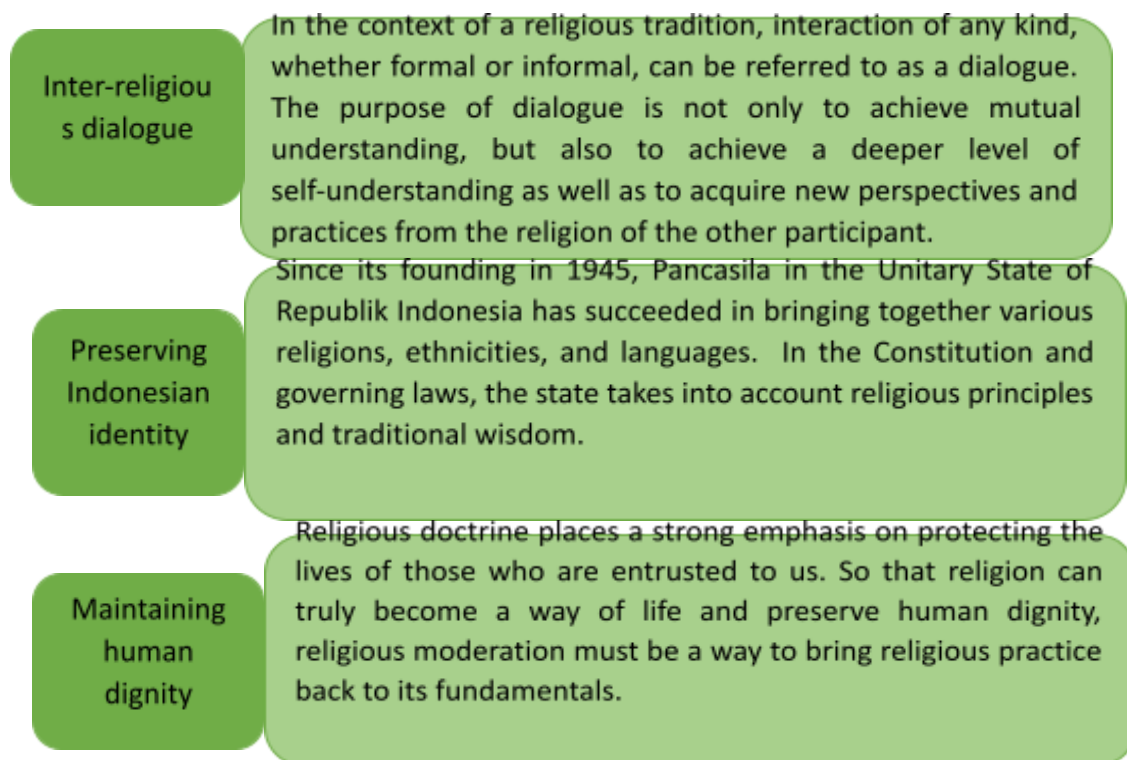
The Islamic presentation of the concept of tolerance is characterized by its logical, practical, and straightforward nature. In the realm of belief and worship, Muslims, in contrast, do not possess a comprehensive understanding of the notion of compromise. This suggests that Muslims possess a unique belief in God, which differs from the beliefs held by followers of other religions concerning their own deities as well as the observance of religious rituals. According to legal statutes, individuals who adhere to the Islamic faith are prohibited from engaging in derogatory speech or expressing disrespect towards the deities worshiped in other religious traditions.

### **Moderation for Religious Harmony**

In light of the nation's cultural and religious diversity, it is imperative to uphold an environment that fosters religious freedom as a means to attain prosperity, safety, and peace within the country. Despite the importance of upholding religious freedom, this remains the situation. To achieve these objectives successfully, meticulous planning is necessary. The underlying motivation for employing this strategy is the practice of moderation within religious contexts. The cultivation of moderation plays a pivotal role in fostering religious harmony among individuals who subscribe to diverse religious traditions and belief systems. The inclusion of religious moderation is imperative to the implementation of this strategy.

The population of Indonesia is characterized by its diverse ethnic and religious composition. As a consequence of these circumstances, there is a need for a comprehensive strategy and resolution that can effectively foster tranquility and cohesion within religious communities. This objective can be achieved through the cultivation of religious moderation, which involves embracing divergent perspectives and refraining from exhibiting intolerance, radicalism, and extremism. The objective of religious moderation is to seek a harmonious middle position between the divergent extremes inherent in religious beliefs and practices. In contrast, proponents of religious fundamentalism maintain the perspective that religious scripture possesses a singular interpretation that ought to be adhered to, thereby categorizing individuals who dissent from their interpretation as heretical (Daheri *et al*, 2023).

Moreover, there are individuals who elevate reason to such an extent that they disregard the sanctity of religion or for sake their religious underpinnings in an effort to foster greater tolerance toward adherents of different faiths, a course of action that could potentially yield perilous consequences. Both individuals exhibit strong liberal ideologies, and it is advisable to exercise caution in their action. Religion in Indonesia is an inherent and inescapable facet of societal existence. Hence, religious moderation fosters societal cohesion instead of engendering division. The significance of religious moderation is underscored by various factors originating from the Indonesian context, as illustrated in figure 3.



The consensus within the global community is that individuals should be granted unhindered access to their preferred spiritual and religious practices; this belief either functions as foundation for the establishment of religious harmony or is indispensable in attaining such harmony. By defending people's fundamental right to exercise their chosen religion freely, we can foster religious harmony and lessen hostility and conflict among various religious groups. The attainment of religious harmony entails a progression beyond mere freedom, offering a fresh outlook on resolution of religious disagreements and conflicts. The attainment of religious harmony necessitates the extension of freedom to a greater extent.

## CONCLUSION

The aforementioned points lend support to the proposition that the proposed model of religious moderation is suggested as a potential solution for the prevailing anxiety generated by the present circumstances. The concept of *Wasatiyah* entails the adoption of moderate and fair approach, aiming to achieve a harmonious balance in different aspects of life rather than engaging in excessive extremes in all pursuits. Engagement in the practice of religious moderation, in its diverse manifestations, can facilitate the development of comprehension, beliefs, and behaviors. The notion of religious moderation fulfills the objective of upholding concordance amidst diverse dichotomies, encompassing reason and revelation, the corporeal and metaphysical, legal and ethical obligations,



individual interest, and communal well being, as well as the *ijtihad* (autonomous reasoning) of religious figure. Furthermore, its objective is to cultivate a sense of coherence between preceding events and forthcoming developments. The fundamental principle of religious moderation involves adopting a fair and impartial approach towards the scrutiny, reaction, and application of diverse concept in one's individual existence, to address the potential consequences of religious intolerance and radicalization, it is imperative to instill the principles of religious moderation among the upcoming generation, who will comprise the future citizenry of the country.

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