

Internalizing Religious Moderation through Qur'an and Hadith Learning: A Case Study in Indonesian Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

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Abstract: The growing need to strengthen religious moderation in Qur'an and Hadith learning requires contextual strategies that support character formation. This study aims to describe how teachers in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah internalize moderation values and shape students' moderate character. Using a qualitative case study design, data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation, then analyzed thematically with validation ensured through source and technique triangulation. The findings show that teachers integrate values such as tolerance, justice, courtesy, and balanced religious understanding through relevant Qur'anic verses and hadiths, discussion-based activities that build critical thinking, and the use of interactive media. These values are reflected not only in students' cognitive understanding but also in behaviors such as respecting differences, fairness, kindness, discipline, and responsibility. This study addresses gaps in previous research, which has been mainly theoretical, and provides practical implications for developing contextual Qur'an-Hadith learning models grounded in moderation principles.

Keywords: Al-Qur'an and Hadith; Character; Religious Moderation

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INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation is becoming a global concern in Islamic education due to the increasing symptoms of intolerance, social polarization, and misuse of religious teachings in the digital age. Concept *Islamic moderation (wasatiyyah)* in Indonesia is understood as a middle ground that rejects extremism while upholding the values of justice and tolerance, as affirmed by the Jubba dkk, 2022 which suggests that Islamic moderation serves as a framework for balancing conservatism and openness in Muslim society. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah as an Islamic basic education institution plays a strategic role in instilling these values from an early age, especially through the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith which are the main pillars of religious education (Hasan & Juhannis, 2024).

Theoretically, religious moderation is understood as a religious attitude that is proportionate to not ghuluw (exaggeration) and not tafrith (ignoring) as affirmed in the study *Fiqh of Moderation* by Saifi et al., 2022 which emphasizes the importance of an inclusive, flexible, and contextual approach. This theory refers to the principle *wasathiyah* in the Qur'an (Q.S. Al-Baqarah:143) which affirms Muslims as *The People of Wasatthan* (Middle Ummah), where this concept is in semiotic studies *The Active Attitude of the Moderates* by Mustofa & Sofia, 2024. It is understood as an active and dynamic moderate attitude, not just a passive middle position. This perspective provides a conceptual framework for Islamic education to not only emphasize the cognitive aspect, but also inculcate a moderate character that is in harmony with the universal values of humanity (Adiyono et al., 2025). This theoretical framework is an important foundation for research that examines the role of learning the Qur'an and Hadith in instilling religious moderation.

However, the findings of the pre-research at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Palembang where this study is located show that the learning process of the Qur'an and Hadith still focuses on the ability to read and memorize, while strengthening religious moderation attitudes has not been a major concern. The results of initial observations and brief interviews with teachers show that there is still limited integration of tolerance and balance values in learning materials and methods. Students tend to understand the text literally without being directed to contextual meaning, so the potential for learning as a means of building moderate character is not optimal. Therefore, this study aims to describe the strategy of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers in internalizing the values of religious moderation and moderate character formed in students.

This problem shows the need to review how the findings of previous research position religious moderation in the context of religious education at the elementary level. Based on this problem, it is in line with previous research by Alabdulhadi & Alkandari, (2024); Karnadi et al., (2023); Muhtifah et al., (2021) emphasizing the importance of strengthening moderation through religious education. The studies identified the values of tolerance, justice, and social harmony, but did not specifically examine strategies for Qur'an and Hadith teachers at the level of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. It is this gap that confirms research gap: There has been no in-depth study that reveals the concrete practice of

teachers in internalizing the value of moderation in the classroom, especially based on empirical data from elementary level madrasas.

Not only that, based on the latest literature of the last five to ten years (M.Rohimin et al., 2024; Suparjo et al., 2022) emphasizing the importance of a learning approach that not only transfers knowledge, but also develops a critical and tolerant attitude according to the social context. However, studies that integrate the theory of religious moderation with the practice of learning the Qur'an Hadith are empirically limited. This research is here to answer this gap by combining the framework Islam wasathiyah with field studies at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

Therefore, the urgency of this research lies in the urgent need to build a young generation that is not only proficient in reading and memorizing the Qur'an, but also has a moderate character and is able to live harmoniously in the diversity of Indonesian society, as affirmed by UNESCO, 2009. In the framework of education for peace and human rights, there is supported by evidence of studies on the importance of tolerance education for children and adolescents as researched Verkuyten & Killen, 2021 as well as empirical findings by Alabdulhadi & Alkandari, 2024 on the practice of teaching moderation in the context of Islamic education. Therefore, the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith must be directed at the internalization of the values of moderation so that students have a balanced moral and spiritual foundation.

By affirming the theory of religious moderation, identifying pre-research problems, and demonstrating the urgency and gaps of the research, this introduction places the study within a strong scientific framework. The research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic Religious Education learning models based on religious moderation, as well as provide practical guidance for teachers and policy makers to strengthen tolerant and inclusive character education in madrasas.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses Qualitative Approach with Single Case Study Design to explore in depth the teacher's strategy in internalizing the value of religious moderation through the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Palembang. Case studies were chosen because they allow for contextual and holistic exploration of phenomena (Yin, 2018), so that the researcher can trace the learning process and the teacher's experience in detail.

The research participant is a grade V teacher who teaches the subjects of the Qur'an and Hadith. Informants were selected purposively based on the following criteria: (1) certified teachers and have at least five years of experience teaching the subject, (2) active in the planning and implementation of learning that is the focus of the research, and (3) willing to participate fully in the data collection process. The informants are Nini as a teacher of the Qur'an Hadith, Fitra as the principal and taufik as a representative for facilities and infrastructure. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Palembang was chosen as the location because based on preliminary studies it was found that the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith had been carried out regularly, but the integration of religious moderation values was

still limited. This condition makes the school representative to understand the challenges of internalizing religious moderation at the level of Islamic basic education.

Data collection was carried out through three main techniques: observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was carried out in a semi-structured manner, with guidelines prepared based on the focus of the research, namely the integration of moderation values in materials, methods, and classroom interactions. Semi-structured interviews are designed through several stages: a grid of questions according to the formulation of the problem, a pilot interview with colleagues to ensure clarity and relevance, and adjustments based on input.

Interview questions include learning strategies, examples of moderation value integration, challenges faced, and forms of collaboration with parents or communities. Documentation includes Learning Implementation Plans (RPP), records of student learning outcomes, photos of classroom activities, and madrasah policy documents. All documents were used for triangulation of observation and interview data.

Data analysis following an interactive model Miles dkk., 2018, but applied contextually to field data. The process starts with open coding to identify the units of meaning from interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents. Next is done axial coding to group the codes into initial themes such as "moderation value integration", "learning strategies", and "implementation challenges". The final theme was developed in a Inductive through a comparative process until a thematic category is formed that answers the research questions.

Data validity and validity Maintained through several techniques: (1) member checking, namely requesting the informant's confirmation of the summary of provisional findings; (2) peer debriefing with supervisors and peers to obtain critical input; and (3) Triangulation of sources and techniques by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. Field notes and reflective journals are kept to ensure audit trail transparent. The selection of this method is based on qualitative research theory that emphasizes an in-depth understanding of social phenomena in a natural context (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Thus, this methodological design provides a solid scientific basis while ensuring the credibility of the findings.

The researcher obtained official permission from the madrasah and the informant's consent. The identities of the school and the informant are disguised to maintain confidentiality. All participation is voluntary, and the informant has the right to terminate the involvement at any time.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teachers' Strategies in Internalizing Religious Moderation Through Learning the Qur'an Hadith

This study aims to describe teachers' strategies in internalizing the values of religious moderation through learning the Qur'an and Hadith. Nini, as a teacher of the Qur'an and Hadith, emphasized:

"It is not enough for us as teachers to only teach tolerance, but we must also

teach how religious moderation is actually through the lessons of the Qur'an and Hadith."

Fitra, the principal, added that the school has created a special program to internalize the values of moderation:

"Our school encourages teachers to use differentiated learning, *Contextual Teaching and Learning* (CTL), and cooperative learning. In practice, every time after sports on Friday, students do community service in the neighborhood around the school which is also inhabited by non-Muslim residents. In my opinion, it is one of the practices that has great potential in implementing religious moderation in our schools."

The strategies implemented by teachers include integrating moderation values such as tolerance, respect for differences, and religious balance into the learning process. Nini explained:

"The teacher chose relevant verses and hadiths, for example those that emphasized the importance of brotherhood, the prohibition of doing harm on earth, and respect for fellow humans. The verses and hadiths are explained in the context of students' lives so that they understand religious teachings not only as doctrines, but as a guide to life that is relevant to the challenges of modern times."

The results of class observation showed practices that were in line with the teacher's statement. During the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith, the teacher opens the lesson with greetings and prayers together, then relays the stories of the Prophet and his companions that emphasize the values of tolerance and justice. When delivering the material, the teacher explicitly relates verses and hadith to the students' daily situation, for example how to behave towards friends of different religions or cultural backgrounds. Students seemed enthusiastic in responding to the teacher's questions and actively discussing in groups.

In addition, observations show teachers using discussion and question and answer methods to encourage students to think critically and connect moderation values with real life. Discussions often involve case studies, such as how to resolve differences of opinion amicably. The results of the observations showed that students were able to express their opinions politely and listen to the views of other friends, reflecting the expected practice of tolerance.

The use of creative learning media is an important part of this strategy. Taufik, deputy head of facilities and infrastructure, said:

"The school facilitates projectors, Wi-Fi, and projector screens for teachers to use as learning tools."

Observations confirm that teachers use media such as videos, illustrated stories, and illustrations that contain a message of moderation. The media makes learning more engaging and helps students understand the values of moderation in a more memorable way. When the video about the story of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH was shown, students seemed to pay close attention and ask relevant questions.

Teacher assessments focus not only on cognitive aspects, but also on changes in students' attitudes and behaviors. To strengthen this process, teachers

involve parents and the community so that the values of moderation taught in schools are strengthened in the family and community. The teacher acts as a facilitator, directing the discussion to stay focused on the learning objectives while giving students space to ask questions and express opinions. For example, the teacher provokes discussion with questions such as: "What can we do to maintain harmony with friends who have different beliefs?" "How can we apply the value of balance in our daily lives?"

These questions foster critical thinking, connect the concept of moderation with students' experiences, and encourage them to find practical solutions that are in harmony with Islamic values. Based on the existing findings, teachers' strategies in internalizing religious moderation are not only focused on one method, but a combination of several approaches. A summary of these strategies is presented in the table below.

Table 1. Teacher Approach Strategy

Strategy	Description	Evidence of Interviews/Observations
Integrating the value of moderation into the material	The teacher chooses relevant verses and hadiths that emphasize brotherhood, the prohibition of doing harm, and respect for fellow human beings ²² . The verses and hadiths are then explained in the context of students' daily lives so that they understand religious teachings as a relevant life guide.	Guru Nini stated that he chose relevant verses and hadiths and related them to the students' daily situation ⁴⁴⁴ . Classroom observation shows that teachers relate verses and hadith by behaving to friends of different religions or cultural backgrounds.
Application of discussion and question and answer methods	Teachers use discussion and question and answer methods to encourage students to think critically and connect the values of moderation with real life ⁶ . Discussions often involve case studies, such as how to resolve differences of opinion amicably.	Observations show that teachers use discussion and question and answer methods ⁸ . Observations also show that students are able to express opinions politely and listen to the views of other friends, which reflects the practice of tolerance.
Utilization of interactive learning media	Teachers use creative media such as videos, illustrated stories, and illustrations that contain a message of moderation. These media make learning more engaging and help students understand the values of moderation in a memorable way.	Taufik, the deputy principal, said that the school facilitates projectors and Wi-Fi for teachers as learning tools. Observations confirm that teachers use media such as videos.
Parent and community involvement	Teachers involve parents and the community so that the values of moderation taught in schools are strengthened in the family and society. Activities such as community service with non-Muslim residents are also a form of social experience that strengthens students' tolerance.	Fitra, the principal, added that the school has a special program for internalizing the value of moderation, such as student community service in an environment inhabited by non-Muslims ¹⁶ . Parent and community involvement is also mentioned as an important part of this process.
Differentiated, CTL, and cooperative	The school encourages teachers to use differentiated learning,	<i>Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL)</i> , and cooperative learning to instill the values of moderation.

approach

This study found that the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Palembang is a strategic means to instill the values of religious moderation. Teachers apply a holistic approach by integrating moderation values such as tolerance, justice, and religious balance directly into the subject matter. This strategy is strengthened by the use of discussion and question and answer methods to encourage students to think critically and connect religious teachings with daily life. In addition, teachers also use interactive learning media, such as videos and illustrated stories, to make the material more interesting and easy for students to understand.

This approach is strengthened by the existence of school programs that involve students in cross-community social activities, such as community service work with non-Muslim residents, and collaboration with parents to ensure these values are applied outside the school environment. Thus, the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith not only functions as a transfer of knowledge, but also as a social laboratory that forms a moderate, inclusive, and civilized character in students.

Character Produced Through Internalization of Religious Moderation Through Learning the Qur'an Hadith

The results of the study show that the internalization of the value of religious moderation through the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith not only enriches students' religious knowledge, but also forms various moderate characters that are reflected in their daily attitudes and behaviors. Mrs. Nini emphasized:

"The verses and hadiths that I have chosen emphasize brotherhood and tolerance. Children learn to appreciate differences, for example from the story of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH who is full of affection for all groups."

In group discussions, students respect each other's opinions and show a tolerant attitude as observed in class. The teacher also emphasized the importance of justice, as Mrs. Nini said:

"Every child is given the same opportunity to express their opinions. I always emphasize that fairness must start from the point in mind."

Observations show that the group deliberations are balanced without domination. Another character that develops is politeness and affection, added Mrs. Nini in her interview:

"I close the lesson with advice for students to be friendly and help each other."

Outside of class, students are seen helping friends who are in trouble without being asked. In addition, learning fosters discipline and responsibility. Students arrive on time and prepare study supplies independently. Teachers encourage the application of discipline in worship and daily life. The value of religious balance was also emphasized by Mrs. Nini, in her interview:

"Islam teaches a middle way. We have to respect differences without being overly aggressive."

Students are able to give examples of the application of this balance in daily life. The following summary summarizes the key characters that emerged, accompanied by direct excerpts from interviews and field observations that reinforce each finding.

Table 2. Summary of Characters Formed

Character	Interview Evidence	Observation Results
Tolerance	"Children learn to appreciate differences, for example from the story of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)."	Students respect each other's opinions during group discussions.
Justice	"Every child is given the same opportunity to express their opinions. Fair must begin in the mind."	The deliberation was balanced, without the dominance of one student.
Politeness & Love	"I close the lesson with advice for students to be friendly and help each other."	Students spontaneously help friends who are in difficulty without being asked.
Discipline & Responsibility	—	Students arrive on time and prepare study supplies independently.
Religious Balance	"Islam teaches a middle way. We have to respect differences without being overly aggressive."	Students gave examples of the application of a moderate attitude in daily life.

Table 1 confirms that the values of religious moderation that are integrated into the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith are not only understood cognitively, but also internalized through the real behavior of students. The findings of the interviews and the results of observations showed a strong correlation: the teacher's statements regarding the inculcation of the values of tolerance, justice, politeness, discipline, responsibility, and religious balance were in harmony with the behavior of students observed in the classroom and outside the classroom. This harmony between the teacher's speech and field practice strengthens the credibility of the finding that learning the Qur'an and Hadith plays an important role in shaping the moderate character of students not only understanding the concept of moderation, but also displaying attitudes and actions that reflect these values in daily life.

Discussion

Based on the research findings that have been presented in the previous section, learning the Qur'an and Hadith at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Palembang has proven to play an important role in instilling the values of religious moderation as well as shaping the moderate character of students. This section of the discussion aims to analyze the findings in more depth by linking them to the theoretical framework and previous research studies. The analysis is focused on two main aspects that are the core of the research results, namely teachers' strategies in internalizing the value of religious moderation and the formation of moderate character in students and their implications for the development of Islamic education in the context of pluralistic society.

Teachers' Strategies in Internalizing Religious Moderation through Learning the Qur'an and Hadith

The results of the study confirm that the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Palembang plays a strategic role in instilling the values of religious moderation in students. Teachers not only deliver material cognitively, but also instill the values of tolerance, justice, politeness, discipline, and religious balance through the selection of relevant verses and hadiths, discussion and question and answer methods, and the use of creative learning media. An approach that combines knowledge transfer and moderate character building in religious learning from an early age is very important, as evidenced in studies conducted by Misbahuddin et al., 2024; Pampuji & Mulyadi, 2024 which shows that the values of moderation can be internalized through religious teaching materials, not just memorization.

These findings are in line with the concept *wasathiyyah* (Islamic moderation) which emphasizes the middle position (*The People of Wasatthan*) as affirmed in Q.S. Al-Baqarah:143 (Jubba dkk., 2022). This principle requires Muslims to maintain a balance between the spiritual and social dimensions and avoid extreme attitudes in understanding religion (Hutagalung, 2023; Saiin et al., 2025). Mustofa & Sofia, 2024 emphasized that moderation is an important pillar in maintaining harmony in a pluralistic society and must be instilled from an early age through education. The teacher's practice in relating verses and hadith to students' daily lives is a clear example of the application of the principle *wasathiyyah* at the elementary school level.

The learning strategies of group discussion, problem-solving, and the use of interactive media are also in line with the theory of constructivism learning by Piaget, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978 which emphasizes that knowledge is built through experience and social interaction. Students are not only asked to memorize verses and hadiths, but also interpret their meanings and relate them to their own life experiences. This approach allows students to become active subjects in building religious understanding, not just recipients of information, so that the value of moderation can be deeply internalized.

This process is in line with the model *experiential learning* by Kolb, 2015 which affirms that effective learning occurs when learners experience, reflect, and apply concepts in practice. The results of observation, for example, students discussing politely and respecting each other's opinions show that experiential learning is able to instill moderation values authentically. Real activities such as community service with non-Muslim residents facilitated by schools are a form of social experience that strengthens students' tolerant attitudes. Thus, the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith functions as a social laboratory for the cultivation of the value of moderation.

The findings of this study are in line with the study Hasan & Juhannis, 2024; Mulyana, 2023 which affirms that religious education based on moderation is effective in fostering tolerance and justice. However, this research makes a new contribution because it shows concrete practices at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level of Islamic basic education that are rarely explored in depth. Saepudin, 2021 highlighting the importance of the role of teachers in instilling the value of

moderation, but has not detailed practical steps as found in this madrasah, such as the use of creative media and cross-community activities. Thus, this study complements the literature gap with empirical evidence regarding teacher strategies in the context of basic education.

Formation of Moderate Character of Students and Educational Implications

In addition to strengthening the literature in the research Ayoade, 2020; Yundianto et al., 2023, the findings of this study challenge the practice of learning the Qur'an and Hadith which has tended to focus on the ability to read and memorize sacred texts. The fact that students show tolerant, fair, polite, and disciplined moderate behavior proves that learning that combines the value of moderation is able to form character as a whole, not just limited to the transfer of knowledge (Ma`arif dkk., 2024). This shows the need to reorient religious learning from a cognitive focus towards the formation of a personality that is in harmony with the demands of a pluralistic society.

These findings confirm that religious education in elementary schools must be directed at the formation of moderate personalities who are ready to live in the midst of Indonesia's diversity. Religious education is no longer enough to only hone cognitive skills, but must also foster an inclusive and civilized attitude (Walker dkk., 2021). By combining text understanding and social experience, teachers can prepare the younger generation who have a solid moral foundation as well as social skills to coexist harmoniously.

The practical implications of this research are important for teachers and madrasah managers. The strategy of integrating moderation values into learning materials, the use of interactive media, and contextual discussions can be adapted by other madrasas as a learning model. This step shows that religious moderation can be instilled systematically without having to drastically change the curriculum, but by maximizing the methods and media that are already available.

Activities such as community service with non-Muslims that are carried out regularly in schools can be a real example of how the value of tolerance and interfaith cooperation is instilled from an early age. The involvement of parents and the community in strengthening the values of moderation also emphasizes the importance of synergy between schools, families, and communities. This collaboration expands students' learning spaces so that the value of moderation is not only a discourse in the classroom, but also a living practice in their social environment.

From the theoretical side, this study adds to the treasure of Islamic education studies by showing that the principle of *wasathiyyah* can be implemented through a constructivist approach Vygotsky, 1978 and *experiential learning* Kolb, 2015 in the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith. These findings are relevant to global challenges such as increasing intolerance and social polarization, where basic education is the foundation for the formation of a moderate and inclusive generation. Thus, this research contributes to the international discourse on Islamic education that is adaptive to multicultural contexts.

However, this study also reveals limitations in the form of some teachers' partial understanding of the concept of moderation. This condition requires continuous training programs and the provision of research-based practical guidance so that teachers are able to internalize the values of moderation more systematically. With this step, the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith can continue to be developed as an effective means of forming moderate characters who are ready to face the challenges of diversity and social change in the global era.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that learning the Qur'an and Hadith at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Palembang can be a strategic means to internalize the values of religious moderation while forming a moderate character in students. Through the selection of relevant verses and hadiths, the application of discussion and question and answer methods, and the use of creative learning media, teachers succeed in instilling the values of tolerance, justice, politeness, discipline, and religious balance. Participatory and contextual learning processes allow students not only to understand the concept of moderation cognitively, but also to practice it in real behaviors, such as respect for differences and engagement in cross-community activities.

These findings strengthen the concept of *wasathiyah* (Islamic moderation) and demonstrate the relevance of constructivist theory and *experiential learning* in Islamic religious education. The integration of these three theoretical foundations proves that religious education at the elementary level can serve as the foundation for the formation of an inclusive and civilized generation. Practically, the learning strategies applied by teachers can be adapted by other madrasas as a model for the implementation of religious moderation. On the other hand, these findings also highlight the need to improve teachers' understanding through continuous training so that the internalization of moderation values can be carried out more systematically and evenly.

Thus, the learning of the Qur'an and Hadith is not only a means of transferring religious knowledge, but also a vehicle for the formation of moderate character that is relevant to the pluralistic and contextual Indonesian society in facing the global challenge of intolerance.

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