

INTERNALIZING RELIGIOUS MODERATION VALUES THROUGH ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: A CONTEXTUAL STUDY IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ON ARAR ISLAND, SOUTHWEST PAPUA

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Keywords: Islamic Religious Education, Religious moderation, Internalization, Religious diversity, Elementary school, Arar Island	ABSTRACT <i>Religious diversity in elementary schools requires educational practices that foster tolerance, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence. However, limited empirical attention has been given to how Islamic Religious Education (PAI) internalizes religious moderation within the everyday social context of religiously diverse island communities. This study examines how religious moderation values are internalized through PAI at an elementary school on Arar Island, Southwest Papua. A qualitative descriptive approach involved the principal, teachers, and students as key informants. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation and analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, supported by source and technique triangulation. The findings show that religious moderation was internalized through the integration of moderation values into PAI learning, dialogic learning practices, teacher role modeling, and interactions among students from different religious backgrounds. Observation and interview data indicated that students cooperated across religious differences, respected peers' religious practices, and participated in shared school and community activities without religious segregation. These findings suggest that PAI serves not only as a means of teaching religious moderation explicitly but also as a context for developing its values through everyday social interactions. The study contributes empirical insight into PAI-based religious moderation by showing how its internalization is shaped by the religiously diverse social context of an island community in Arar Island, Southwest Papua.</i>
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INTRODUCTION

Religious diversity in elementary schools presents an important educational context for developing students' capacity to live respectfully with others. At the primary school level, education is not limited to the transmission of academic knowledge but also contributes to the development of learners' social, emotional, and moral dispositions. In geographically and socially diverse regions, this role becomes particularly important because students encounter differences in religious, cultural, and social backgrounds as part of their everyday lives. In this context, education needs to provide opportunities for learners to understand religious values while simultaneously developing attitudes of respect, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence.

This issue is particularly relevant in Southwest Papua, including Sorong Regency, where geographical conditions, limited educational access, and socioeconomic challenges continue to influence the provision of education. Previous reports have highlighted difficulties related to educational facilities, infrastructure, transportation, and the accessibility of schools in remote areas of the region. (Patading, 2023). At the same time, the experiences of students in remote areas demonstrate strong aspirations to continue their education despite geographical and infrastructural constraints. (Utama & Pratama, 2022). These conditions indicate that educational development in Southwest Papua needs to be understood not only in terms of access and infrastructure but also in relation to the social environment in which children learn and develop.

Within this context, the strengthening of values that support social cohesion, tolerance, diversity, and peaceful coexistence is particularly significant. A UNESCO-related discussion identifies limited access to relevant and quality education, marginalization, inequality, discrimination, and other socioeconomic grievances among factors that may contribute to vulnerability to radicalization (Pusat Penelitian Kebijakan Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan, 2018). Accordingly, education can play an important role in developing students' capacity to respond constructively to differences. For Muslim students, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) provides a relevant educational space because it not only conveys religious knowledge and

ritual practices but also addresses ethics, morality, and interpersonal relationships.

At the elementary school level, PAI has an important role in establishing students' foundational religious understanding and moral character. Religious learning needs to be delivered through age-appropriate, interactive, and meaningful approaches so that religious values can be understood and practiced in students' everyday lives. In addition to teaching Islamic principles, PAI can provide opportunities for students to develop respect for religious and cultural diversity. Thus, the internalization of religious values should not be understood merely as the transfer of religious knowledge but as a process through which values become reflected in students' attitudes and everyday interactions.

The framework of religious moderation provides a relevant perspective for strengthening this process. The Ministry of Religious Affairs established religious moderation as an important framework for religious life in Indonesia and designated 2019 as the "Year of Religious Moderation." The framework identifies four main indicators of religious moderation: national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation of local traditions (Kementerian agama Republik Indonesia", 2023). These indicators are further related to principles such as humanity, public welfare, justice, balance, obedience to the constitution, national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and respect for local wisdom. In educational settings, these principles provide a basis for developing students' ability to understand and practice religious values while respecting differences.

The relevance of religious moderation is particularly evident on Arar Island in Sorong Regency, Southwest Papua, where Muslim and Christian communities live side by side. The religious diversity of the island provides a distinctive social context in which students encounter religious differences not only through classroom instruction but also through everyday interaction. Consequently, the internalization of religious moderation through PAI needs to be examined in relation to the actual social environment in which students learn and interact. Rather than treating religious diversity as an abstract concept, the Arar context makes it possible to examine how moderation values

are communicated, practiced, and experienced within everyday school and community life.

The importance of internalizing values during childhood is supported by the understanding that values function as fundamental orientations that influence attitudes and actions. Suyahmo, as cited in Ali, defines value as a quality that provides utility to human life both physically and spiritually. (Ali, 2007). Allport similarly conceptualizes values as foundational beliefs that guide individual choices and actions and provide a basis for attitudes and behavior. (Gordon W. Allport, 1961). From this perspective, the internalization of religious moderation requires more than the delivery of conceptual knowledge. It involves opportunities for students to understand, experience, and practice values through interactions with teachers, peers, parents, and the wider community.

The policy relevance of this issue is also reflected in national policy. Presidential Regulation (*PERPRES*) No. 18 of 2020 positions religious moderation as an important social asset in national development, while *PERPRES* No. 7 of 2021 strengthens national efforts to prevent violent extremism (JDIHBPK, 2023). Within the educational context, these policies reinforce the importance of developing religious understanding that can coexist with civic responsibility, social harmony, and respect for diversity. For a socially and religiously diverse community such as Arar Island, these principles provide an important framework for examining the role of PAI in students' everyday religious and social experiences.

Previous Studies and Research Gap

Previous studies have established that religious moderation can be developed through various educational practices. Gunawan et al., in their study of the internalization of religious moderation values through PAI at SMA Al Biruni Cerdas Mulia, Bandung, demonstrated that moderation values can be incorporated into PAI learning through systematic planning, implementation, evaluation, and religious guidance activities. Their findings emphasize the role of PAI instruction in developing students' attitudes toward religious moderation. However, the study primarily examined the internalization process within the formal instructional structure of a senior high school.

A more recent study by (Nadlifa et al., 2025) similarly demonstrates the importance of the educational role of PAI teachers in cultivating religious moderation. Their study at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Kutorejo Mojokerto shows that moderation values can be fostered through PAI learning, habituation, exemplary practices, and school activities. This finding reinforces the importance of teachers and the wider school environment in the internalization of moderation values, while also indicating the need to examine how such processes operate in different educational and socio-religious contexts.

A study by Wahab et al. examined the implementation of religious moderation among early childhood students at RA Darul Da'wah wal-Irsyad (DDI) Lonja, Sigi Regency, Central Sulawesi. The study found that moderation values were developed through school leadership policies, curriculum implementation, habituation, and exemplary practices. It also identified cooperation among teachers and school facilities as supporting factors. Importantly, the absence of non-Muslim students was identified as a limitation because students had fewer opportunities to experience religious diversity directly. This finding indicates that the social and religious composition of the school environment may influence how religious moderation is experienced and practiced.

Liando and Hardiman examined religious moderation practices at SMA Muhammadiyah Manado. They found that moderation was developed through religious activities, socio-religious interactions, classroom interactions, and the integration of moderation values into subjects. Their study demonstrates that religious moderation extends beyond formal religious instruction and can become part of the broader culture and everyday interactions within educational institutions.

Taken together, these studies indicate that religious moderation in educational settings may be cultivated through PAI instruction, habituation, teacher modeling, institutional policies, and everyday social interaction. However, they leave an important contextual question insufficiently explored: how is religious moderation internalized through PAI when students' everyday educational and social environments are themselves characterized by religious diversity? The existing studies provide valuable accounts of moderation practices in formal educational institutions. Still, less attention has been given

to the interaction between PAI learning, everyday school relationships, and the local social-religious context of an island community where Muslim and Christian students and communities live in proximity.

This gap is particularly significant in the context of Arar Island. Unlike settings in which religious moderation is primarily discussed as a curricular or institutional objective, Arar provides a context in which religious difference is part of students' everyday social reality. Therefore, examining PAI on Arar Island makes it possible to understand how religious moderation values are internalized through the interaction of classroom learning, teacher role modeling, dialogue, student cooperation, and social practices that occur within a religiously diverse community.

The novelty of this study lies in its contextual examination of religious moderation through PAI at the elementary school level on Arar Island, Southwest Papua. The study does not view internalization solely as the delivery of moderation concepts through classroom instruction; rather, it examines how PAI learning is connected with students' everyday experiences of religious diversity. In this way, the study extends previous research by bringing together three dimensions that are often examined separately: PAI learning practices, school-based social interaction, and the local religious and cultural context.

The study contributes empirical insight into the implementation of PAI-based religious moderation in a geographically and socially distinctive setting. In particular, it shows how moderation values may be communicated through learning activities and simultaneously reinforced through teacher example, dialogue, cooperation among students of different religious backgrounds, and participation in shared school and community activities. The study therefore contributes to the discussion of religious moderation in Islamic Religious Education by demonstrating the importance of examining internalization as a contextual process that develops through both formal learning and everyday social interaction.

Based on this research gap and contextual significance, this study focuses on the following research questions:

1. How are religious moderation values internalized through Islamic Religious Education in an elementary school on Arar Island, Sorong Regency, Southwest Papua?

2. How are the internalized religious moderation values manifested in students' attitudes and everyday interactions?

Accordingly, this study aims to examine the process through which religious moderation values are internalized through PAI and to identify how these values are manifested in students' attitudes and everyday interactions within the religiously diverse context of Arar Island, Southwest Papua.

Conceptual Foundation

1. Concept of Value Internalization

The term *internalization* refers to a process through which particular values, attitudes, or principles are instilled and gradually become embedded within an individual. (Lawrence & Valsiner, 1993). In the context of education, internalization is not merely concerned with transferring knowledge about values but also with fostering the development of attitudes and behaviors that reflect those values in students' daily lives. Thus, internalization can be understood as a process of strengthening and embedding beliefs, attitudes, and values within an individual so that they become an integral part of the individual's personality and are manifested in moral behavior. (Munif, 2025) .

The concept of internalization emphasizes a gradual process. Values introduced through educational activities initially exist as external knowledge or principles. Through continuous learning, habituation, guidance, exemplary behavior, and social interaction, these values are progressively accepted and integrated into the individual's internal system. Once internalized, the values are expected to influence the way individuals think, feel, make decisions, and behave.

In the context of religious education, value internalization therefore involves more than conveying religious concepts theoretically. It requires educational processes that enable students to understand, appreciate, accept, and practice religious values in their everyday lives. The success of value internalization can consequently be observed through the consistency between students' understanding of a particular value and their actual attitudes and behavior.

According to Chabib Thoha, the method of instilling *akhlaqul karimah* values, often referred to as the method of teaching morals, is a way of delivering moral education materials from teachers to students by selecting one

or more teaching methods appropriate to the subject matter (Thoha, 2000). This perspective emphasizes that the process of instilling values requires appropriate educational methods. Teachers do not merely explain what is right and wrong but also select learning strategies that can encourage students to understand and practice moral values.

The concept of value itself has been discussed by various philosophers and educational scholars. Max Scheler views value as a quality that is independent and does not change along with changes in the objects to which it is attached. From this perspective, values possess an intrinsic quality that distinguishes them from empirical characteristics. (Zhong, 2022). Immanuel Kant, meanwhile, argues that value is not dependent on material conditions or empirical experience but exists as a principle that has intrinsic worth. (Thoha, 2000). In practical terms, values can be reflected in an individual's beliefs concerning what ought to be done, such as being honest and sincere, as well as ideals that an individual seeks to achieve.

Mulyana defines value as a belief that guides individuals in making choices. In a broader sense, values function as standards that regulate a system of action (Susilo, 2013). Values may also constitute virtues associated with social relationships, ideals, and efforts to achieve those ideals. Therefore, values serve as important references in determining how individuals perceive situations, make judgments, establish priorities, and act within their social environment.

Based on these perspectives, value internalization can be understood as a systematic and continuous process of instilling principles that are considered good, beneficial, and correct according to particular beliefs, until those principles become integrated into an individual's identity. Internalized values subsequently influence an individual's patterns of thought, feelings, attitudes, interpersonal relationships, decision-making, and behavior. In education, the internalization of values is therefore achieved not only through verbal instruction but also through habituation, exemplary practices, interaction, and the creation of an educational environment that consistently reflects the values being promoted.

In relation to religious moderation, value internalization refers to the process through which the principles of religious moderation are understood,

accepted, appreciated, and manifested in students' attitudes and behavior. Religious moderation should therefore not be positioned merely as theoretical knowledge but as a value system that shapes students' ways of thinking and interacting with others. The internalization process is expected to foster attitudes such as fairness, balance, tolerance, respect for differences, rejection of extremism, and responsible interaction within a pluralistic social environment.

2. Religious Moderation

The term *moderation* originates from the Latin word *moderatio*, which refers to moderation, balance, or the avoidance of excess. In the Indonesian context, the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI) defines moderation in two principal senses: reducing violence and avoiding extremism. In English, *moderation* is commonly associated with meanings such as average, standard, centrality, or impartiality (Hefni, 2020). In the Islamic tradition, the concept of religious moderation is closely associated with the term *wasathiyah*, which conveys the meanings of moderation, balance, and taking a middle position.

In Islam, *wasathiyah* is understood as an important characteristic of Islamic teachings that encourages balance in religious life. Yusuf al-Qaradawi argues that *wasathiyah* represents one of the distinctive characteristics of Islam. It does not mean weakening religious principles or abandoning established religious teachings, but rather understanding and implementing religious teachings proportionately, comprehensively, and responsibly (Maskuri & dkk, n.d.). Religious moderation, therefore, should not be interpreted as negotiating or compromising fundamental religious beliefs with other religions. Rather, it refers to the way individuals practice their religious teachings while maintaining respect, fairness, and peaceful relations with people who hold different religious beliefs.

A common misconception is that promoting tolerance and religious moderation is equivalent to adopting a liberal attitude that disregards fundamental religious teachings. Such an understanding is problematic because moderation does not require individuals to abandon their religious convictions. Instead, religious moderation emphasizes the ability to remain firmly committed to one's religious teachings while avoiding attitudes that lead

to hatred, violence, discrimination, or the rejection of people with different beliefs (Tim Penyusun Kementerian Agama, 2020).

The concept of *wasathiyah* in Islam is not a new teaching. It has been present since the emergence of Islam and can be traced to the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, and the practices of his Companions and the early generations of Muslims (Arif, 2020). The principle of moderation is reflected in the Prophet Muhammad's model of religious practice, which emphasizes balance, justice, compassion, and avoidance of excess. In contemporary Islamic thought, this concept has been further developed and articulated by scholars such as Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who presents *wasathiyah* within a comprehensive framework of Islamic thought and social life.

According to Yusuf al-Qaradawi, religious moderation is closely related to social values such as consultation (*shura*), justice, freedom, human rights, and the protection of minority rights. These values demonstrate that moderation is not merely an individual religious attitude but also has important social implications. In a pluralistic society, religious moderation requires individuals to uphold their religious commitments while recognizing the rights and dignity of others.

Al-Qaradawi identifies several principles that can serve as guidelines for understanding religious moderation. First, Islam should be understood comprehensively rather than selectively. Second, there should be a balance between the permanence of *sharia* principles and the changing circumstances of human life. Third, religious practice should support peace and respect for human values. Fourth, religious, cultural, and political plurality should be recognized as part of social reality. Fifth, the rights of minorities should be acknowledged and protected. These principles demonstrate that *wasathiyah* involves a balanced relationship between religious commitment and social responsibility.

In the Indonesian context, religious moderation is also closely associated with the ability to maintain a balanced position in religious life. A moderate religious attitude avoids both excessive rigidity and excessive permissiveness. It seeks to uphold religious teachings while simultaneously respecting diversity and maintaining peaceful social relations. Thus, religious moderation is

reflected not only in theological understanding but also in everyday attitudes, social interactions, and responses to differences.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia identifies four main indicators of religious moderation: national commitment, tolerance, rejection of violence, and accommodation of local culture. National commitment refers to the extent to which religious attitudes are consistent with the principles of national life and the Indonesian state. Tolerance refers to the willingness to respect differences in beliefs, practices, and opinions without requiring others to abandon their own convictions. Rejection of violence emphasizes the avoidance of physical and non-physical forms of violence in the name of religion. Meanwhile, accommodation of local culture refers to the ability to engage constructively with local cultural traditions as long as they do not contradict fundamental religious principles.

Based on the above perspectives, religious moderation can be understood as a way of understanding, practicing, and expressing religious teachings through a balanced, fair, tolerant, and non-extreme approach. Religious moderation does not diminish religious commitment; rather, it encourages individuals to express their religious convictions responsibly while respecting diversity and human dignity. In educational contexts, these principles are particularly important because educational institutions play a strategic role in developing students' attitudes toward diversity, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and responsible religious practice.

Accordingly, in this study, religious moderation is conceptually understood through four principal dimensions: national commitment, tolerance, rejection of violence, and accommodation of local culture. These four dimensions serve as the conceptual basis for examining how religious moderation values are understood, internalized, and manifested within the educational environment.

Building upon the background and previous studies discussed above, this study focuses on examining the process of instilling religious moderation values through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in an elementary school on Arar Island, Sorong Regency, Southwest Papua. Specifically, the study addresses two research questions: (1) How are religious moderation values internalized through Islamic Religious Education in an elementary school on

Arar Island, Sorong Regency, Southwest Papua? and (2) How are the internalized religious moderation values manifested in students' attitudes and everyday interactions?

Accordingly, this study aims to examine how religious moderation values are internalized through PAI and how these internalized values are manifested in students' attitudes and everyday interactions within the religiously diverse context of Arar Island. The study does not treat internalization as a direct or causal effect of PAI instruction; rather, it examines the processes, experiences, and observable manifestations associated with the cultivation of religious moderation within the school environment. This perspective allows the study to explore how classroom learning, teacher role modeling, dialogue, peer cooperation, and shared school and community activities contribute to the development and expression of moderation-oriented values in students' everyday lives.

The study contributes a contextual understanding of religious moderation in Islamic Religious Education at the elementary school level by bringing together PAI learning, students' everyday interactions, and the local religious and cultural context of Arar Island. In this setting, religious diversity is not merely a curricular topic but part of students' everyday social experience. Examining this relationship provides empirical insight into how religious moderation can be cultivated through educational practices and subsequently expressed through students' respectful, cooperative, and peaceful interactions with others.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative approach, which is well-suited for investigating social phenomena, institutional dynamics, behavior, and interpersonal relationships within a community (Rosady Ruslan, 2004). This approach was selected because the study sought to understand the process of cultivating religious moderation values through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) based on participants' experiences, educational practices, interactions, and the contextual conditions of the school environment. Rather than measuring the phenomenon quantitatively, the study aimed to provide a

detailed description and interpretation of how religious moderation values were introduced, practiced, and manifested in students' everyday interactions.

The descriptive qualitative design was particularly relevant because the research focused on describing educational practices and participants' experiences within their natural school setting. It enabled the researcher to examine the dynamics of religious moderation education while taking into account the social and religious diversity of the local context. The design also allowed information obtained from different participants and data sources to be compared throughout the research process.

Research Location

The research was conducted on Arar Island, located within Sorong Regency, Southwest Papua Province. Arar Island is inhabited predominantly by Indigenous Papuans (Orang Asli Papua) and is characterized by a religiously diverse demographic, where Muslim and Christian communities reside within the same territory. This context provided a relevant setting for examining the cultivation of religious moderation values through PAI and their manifestation in students' interactions within the school environment. Before data collection, the researcher obtained permission from the school to conduct observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and documentation. The research activities were conducted within the school context while maintaining the participants' privacy and respecting the school's procedures.

Research Informants

In qualitative research, study participants are referred to as informants individuals who provide essential data regarding the research context, setting, and phenomena. Informants were selected using a purposive sampling strategy to ensure that participants possessed relevant expertise and direct involvement aligned with the data requirements (Arikunto, 2019). The selection was therefore based on the relevance of participants' roles and experiences rather than statistical representation. A total of 19 participants were involved in the study. They consisted of one school principal who also served as the PAI teacher, one Christian Religious Education teacher, two classroom teachers, ten students, and five parents. The ten students participated in one focus group discussion (FGD), while the adult participants provided information through individual interviews.

The school principal was selected because of his role in school management and his simultaneous responsibility as the PAI teacher. The Christian Religious Education teacher was included to provide a perspective on religious interaction and educational practices within the religiously diverse school context. The two classroom teachers were selected because of their direct involvement in students' classroom activities and their observation of students' everyday interactions. The ten students participating in the FGD were selected because they directly experienced the learning process and social interactions in the school environment. Five parents were included to provide information concerning students' behaviors and experiences beyond the school setting.

The selection criteria included: (1) having direct knowledge of or involvement in the implementation of religious education and related educational activities; (2) having direct experience with students' learning or social interactions in the school environment; and (3) being able to provide information relevant to the research questions. Data collection was continued until the information obtained from the participants became repetitive and no substantially new information relevant to the research focus emerged. At this point, the researcher determined that additional data collection was no longer producing new substantive themes and therefore stopped the data collection process.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through direct observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, focus group discussion (FGD), and documentation. The use of complementary data collection techniques was intended to obtain comprehensive information and facilitate comparison among different sources of evidence. Data collection is a fundamental stage of qualitative research because the quality and relevance of the data obtained directly influence the credibility of research findings (Sugiyono, 2012).

a. Observation

Direct observation was conducted to obtain first-hand information about the implementation of religious moderation values through PAI in the natural school setting. The researcher observed learning activities, teacher-student interactions, students' behaviors, and educational practices reflecting religious

moderation. Particular attention was given to students' interactions across religious differences, patterns of cooperation, respect for others, and classroom practices related to the four dimensions of religious moderation examined in the study. The observation was conducted unobtrusively so that the researcher could document naturally occurring activities and interactions without directing the participants' behavior. Field notes were used to record relevant activities, interactions, and contextual conditions observed during the research.

b. Semi Structured Interviews and Focus Group Discussion

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were used to obtain detailed information concerning participants' experiences and perspectives. In qualitative research, in-depth interviews are useful for obtaining rich and contextualized information that may not be captured through observation alone (Satori & Komariah, 2014). The interviews were guided by predetermined areas of inquiry while allowing participants to elaborate on their experiences and perspectives. The interview questions focused on the objectives and practices of religious moderation education, strategies used by teachers, the integration of moderation values into PAI learning, students' experiences, interactions among students, and challenges encountered in cultivating religious moderation. Probing questions were used when participants' responses required clarification or further exploration. In addition to individual interviews, one FGD involving ten students was conducted to explore students' shared experiences concerning religious education, tolerance, cooperation, respect for religious differences, and their everyday interactions at school. The FGD allowed students to express their experiences and perspectives in a group setting and provided complementary evidence to the information obtained from teachers and parents.

c. Documentation

Documentation was used as a complementary data collection technique to strengthen and contextualize the information obtained through observation and interviews. Documentary data provide important evidence for verifying educational practices and supporting the interpretation of field data (Arikunto, 2019). The documents examined included school learning archives, teacher and homeroom teacher records, records of learning activities, the school

curriculum, and lesson plans (*Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran/RPP*). These documents were analyzed to identify information concerning the planning and implementation of PAI and the educational context supporting the cultivation of religious moderation values.

Data Analysis Technique

The data were analyzed using a descriptive qualitative approach. The analysis focused on identifying meanings, patterns, themes, and relationships emerging from participants' experiences, observations, and documentary evidence. Data analysis followed the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. These processes were conducted interactively throughout the research rather than as strictly sequential stages.

a. Data Collection

Data collection and analysis were conducted interactively during the fieldwork. Information obtained through observations, interviews, the student FGD, and documentation was organized according to the research focus. The researcher continuously reviewed the emerging information to identify data relevant to the cultivation and manifestation of religious moderation values through PAI.

b. Data Condensation

Data condensation involved selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the empirical data obtained from the field. Interview and FGD information, observation notes, and documentary materials were reviewed repeatedly. The researcher developed initial codes from recurring statements, student behaviors, teacher practices, learning activities, interactions, and contextual conditions related to religious moderation. The initial codes were then compared and grouped according to similarities and relationships. Related codes were subsequently organized into broader categories and themes corresponding to the research questions. Data that were not relevant to the research focus were excluded from further analysis. This process enabled the researcher to identify substantive patterns in the cultivation and manifestation of religious moderation values.

c. Data Display

The condensed data were organized into structured displays to facilitate comparison and interpretation. The findings were primarily presented through narrative descriptions and, where appropriate, thematic categories or tables. Data from different participants and techniques were compared to identify patterns concerning the forms, strategies, experiences, and manifestations of religious moderation values in the school environment.

d. Conclusion Drawing and Verification

Conclusion Conclusions were developed continuously throughout the analysis process by interpreting patterns, categories, and themes emerging from the data. Preliminary interpretations were repeatedly compared with interview and FGD transcripts, observation records, and relevant documents. The researcher verified whether emerging conclusions were adequately supported by the available empirical evidence and remained consistent with the research questions.

Trustworthiness of the Data

The credibility of the findings was strengthened through source and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from the school principal/PAI teacher, Christian Religious Education teacher, classroom teachers, students, and parents. This comparison enabled the researcher to examine whether information concerning the cultivation and manifestation of religious moderation values was consistent across different participant perspectives.

Technique triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained through observations, individual interviews, the student FGD, and documentation. For example, information provided by teachers concerning classroom practices was compared with observations of learning activities and relevant school documents. Similarly, information concerning students' attitudes and interactions was compared across student FGD data, teacher and parent accounts, and observational evidence.

The researcher also examined similarities and discrepancies among the data sources during the analysis process. Rather than treating discrepancies as errors, differences in participants' accounts were considered as contextual information that required further interpretation. The combination of purposive

participant selection, iterative data analysis, data saturation, source triangulation, and technique triangulation was used to ensure that the interpretations were grounded in the empirical conditions of the research setting.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Internalization of Religious Moderation Values through Islamic Religious Education in Elementary Schools on Arar Island, Sorong Regency, Southwest Papua

The findings indicate that the internalization of religious moderation values through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at the elementary school on Arar Island takes place through interconnected classroom practices, school activities, teacher role modeling, and interactions involving families and the wider community. Rather than being presented as a separate subject, religious moderation values are incorporated into existing PAI learning materials and connected with situations encountered by students in their everyday lives.

The findings are presented according to the four indicators of religious moderation used in this study: national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation of local traditions. These indicators were identified through the integration of interview accounts, observations of learning and school activities, and documentary evidence from curriculum materials, lesson plans (RPP), learning activity records, and teacher records.

1. National Commitment

The findings related to national commitment were reflected in school activities that brought students from different religious backgrounds together in a common educational and social environment. The school organized activities involving students across religious backgrounds, including national commemorations, collaborative school activities, and community-oriented programs. These activities provided opportunities for students to participate as members of the same school community without religious segregation. The school also incorporated values related to togetherness, respect, cooperation, and responsibility into learning activities. In classroom discussions, teachers

connected religious values with students' experiences of living together in a diverse community.

The principal explained:

“We incorporate topics that are relevant to the children’s everyday lives along with concrete examples. Teachers also integrate the concepts of tolerance and harmony into the learning materials. We make sure that what is taught is relevant to the children’s daily experiences. Through concrete examples, they can understand the importance of tolerance more easily (AS, interview, August 12, 2024).”

Observation of classroom and school activities showed that students from different religious backgrounds participated in common learning and school activities. Documentation examined by the researcher, including curriculum materials, RPP, learning activity records, and teacher records, further showed that religious and social values were addressed within the broader learning process rather than being restricted to isolated religious activities. National commitment was also visible in joint activities organized during national commemorations. These activities provided a common space for students to participate in school life while maintaining their respective religious identities. Thus, the empirical data show that national commitment was addressed through shared participation, cooperation, and the positioning of students from different religious backgrounds as members of the same school community.

2. Tolerance

Tolerance was the most explicitly visible dimension in classroom learning and students’ interactions. PAI teachers integrated topics concerning respect for differences, interreligious harmony, and peaceful coexistence into lessons, particularly when discussing *akhlaq* and social relationships. Teachers also used examples taken from students’ everyday experiences, such as respecting friends who were carrying out religious practices and avoiding attempts to impose personal religious beliefs on others. The internalization process was supported by several instructional approaches. In project-based learning, students worked collaboratively with peers from different religious backgrounds. Learning tasks included creating posters about living harmoniously with others and writing short stories based on experiences of respecting differences. The principal stated:

“This method makes the children actively involved in learning while helping them understand the importance of cooperation and tolerance” (AS, interview, August 10, 2024).

The dialogic approach was also used to provide students with opportunities to discuss religious differences and harmonious relationships. Students were encouraged to express their opinions and listen to different perspectives. A Christian Religious Education teacher explained “Through discussion, the children become more confident in speaking and understand different perspectives” (K, interview, August 10, 2024). Storytelling and role-playing were further used to present concrete examples of tolerant behavior. Stories involving people who respected differences and avoided conflict were discussed with students, while role-playing activities illustrated situations such as helping friends during religious worship or expressing good wishes on another religious community’s celebration. One fourth-grade student stated “The teacher often tells us stories about people who respect one another and do not fight. That helps us understand better” (F, interview, August 10, 2024).

These classroom practices were complemented by activities outside regular PAI lessons. Students from different religious backgrounds were observed participating in joint activities, playing together, and working collaboratively on creative and environmental projects. The school also organized joint activities during religious celebrations and other community events. One teacher explained:

“Activities like these are very effective in developing a sense of mutual respect. The children do not only learn about diversity theoretically but also see directly how beautiful religious diversity can be.” (DR, interview, August 10, 2024).

The combination of interview and observation data therefore shows that tolerance was addressed through both explicit classroom instruction and opportunities for direct interaction among students with different religious backgrounds.

3. Non-Violence

The non-violence dimension was reflected primarily through learning activities and school interactions that emphasized peaceful communication, mutual respect, and the avoidance of religiously based conflict. In classroom discussions, students were encouraged to express their opinions, listen to

others, and respond to differences without hostility. Storytelling activities also presented examples of individuals who maintained peaceful relationships and did not respond to differences through conflict. Students' accounts provide further evidence of how this value was understood. One student stated Now I understand better that we should not force other people to follow our religion. We have to respect one another (RR, student interview, October 12, 2024).

Observation of students' interactions also indicated opportunities for cooperation across religious differences. Community service and *gotong royong* were conducted as shared activities involving students regardless of religious background. Students worked together to clean the school environment, plant flowers, and paint classroom walls. These activities created situations in which students interacted and completed common tasks without religious separation. The Christian Religious Education teacher similarly described the school environment as one in which religious differences did not prevent students from learning and playing together:

“Our school has now become a place where children can learn and play together without differences becoming a barrier” (FK, Religious Education teacher, interview, October 12, 2024).

The available data therefore show that non-violence was manifested primarily through peaceful interaction, respectful communication, cooperation, and the absence of religious separation in shared school activities. The findings do not establish a causal reduction in conflict; rather, they document how peaceful interaction and non-confrontational responses to religious differences were represented in students' experiences and school practices.

4. Accommodation of Local Traditions

The fourth indicator was reflected in the school's engagement with local religious and cultural practices. The school organized or participated in activities associated with the religious and cultural life of the Arar Island community, including Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, *Mandi Safar*, and Christmas-related activities. *Mandi Safar*, identified in the field data as an Islamic tradition practiced on Arar Island during the month of Safar, involves the wider community. The school used such occasions as opportunities for students to encounter religious and local traditions within their own social environment. During Eid al-Fitr, non-Muslim students participated in *halal bihalal* and encountered the value of *silaturahmi*. During Christmas-related activities, Muslim students were exposed to themes of love and peace associated with the

celebration. These activities were not presented as a replacement for students' own religious identities. Instead, the findings show opportunities for students to encounter and respect religious and cultural practices that are part of the community in which they live. As one teacher explained:

“Activities like these are very effective in developing a sense of mutual respect. The children do not only learn about diversity theoretically but also see directly how beautiful religious diversity can be” (DR, interview, August 10, 2024).

The accommodation of local traditions was also supported by the school's routine community-oriented activities. *Gotong royong*, environmental activities, and collaborative projects involved students from different religious backgrounds. These activities connected the values discussed in PAI with the social and cultural environment experienced by students outside the classroom.

Manifestations of Internalized Religious Moderation in Students' Attitudes and Everyday Interactions

The second research question concerns how internalized religious moderation values are manifested in students' attitudes and everyday interactions. The findings indicate that the values introduced through PAI learning and reinforced through school activities were reflected in students' everyday relationships, particularly in their respect for religious differences, cooperation and mutual assistance, peaceful communication, and participation in shared school and community activities. These manifestations were identified through student and teacher interviews, observations of classroom and school activities, and documentation of learning and school programs. Respect for religious differences was evident in students' understanding that differences in religious beliefs should not become a reason for coercion, exclusion, or conflict. One student explicitly stated “Now I understand better that we should not force other people to follow our religion. We have to respect one another” (RR, student interview, October 12, 2024).

This statement demonstrates how the value of tolerance introduced through PAI was expressed in the student's understanding of everyday relationships with people of different religious backgrounds. The observation data further showed that students participated in learning and school activities without being separated according to religious identity. Students interacted,

played, and completed activities together, providing everyday contexts in which respect for religious differences was practiced rather than merely discussed as an abstract concept.

The internalized values were also manifested through cooperation and mutual assistance among students from different religious backgrounds. Students worked together in collaborative learning projects, environmental activities, and *gotong royong*, including cleaning the school environment, planting flowers, painting classroom walls, and completing creative projects. These activities required students to communicate, divide responsibilities, and assist one another in accomplishing shared tasks. The principal's account regarding project-based learning emphasized that the approach encouraged students to become actively involved while developing cooperation and tolerance (AS, interview, August 10, 2024). The observation data similarly indicated that religious identity did not function as a barrier to students' participation in common activities. Cooperation therefore appeared not only as an instructional strategy but also as part of students' routine interactions within the school environment.

Peaceful interaction was another visible manifestation of the internalized values. Students were observed communicating and participating in activities without religious differences becoming an apparent barrier to friendship and collaboration. Classroom dialogue provided opportunities for students to express their views, listen to different perspectives, and respond to differences through discussion rather than confrontation. The Christian Religious Education teacher explained that Through discussion, the children become more confident in speaking and understand different perspectives (K, interview, August 10, 2024).

This pattern was also reflected in students' everyday interactions, where religious differences were not described as an automatic source of disagreement. The Christian Religious Education teacher further described the school as a place where "children can learn and play together without differences becoming a barrier" (FK, Religious Education teacher, interview, October 12, 2024). These accounts are consistent with observations of students learning, playing, and participating in shared activities across religious backgrounds.

The manifestation of religious moderation was also evident in students' participation in shared religious, cultural, social, and school activities. Students from different religious backgrounds participated in national commemorations, *gotong royong*, environmental activities, collaborative projects, and activities associated with religious celebrations. During Eid al-Fitr, for example, non-Muslim students participated in *halal bihalal* activities and encountered the value of *silaturahmi*, while Muslim students participated in school activities associated with Christmas. The findings indicate that such participation did not require students to abandon their respective religious identities. Rather, these activities created opportunities for students to encounter, acknowledge, and respect religious and cultural practices that form part of their shared social environment on Arar Island. As one teacher explained:

“Activities like these are very effective in developing a sense of mutual respect. The children do not only learn about diversity theoretically but also see directly how beautiful religious diversity can be” (DR, interview, August 10, 2024)."

The students' experiences in community-oriented activities provide further evidence of how these values appeared in ordinary interactions. During *gotong royong* and community service, students worked collectively on tasks without religious separation. One student described the experience When we do community service, we have fun together with our friends. Sometimes I do not even know what religion they belong to, but we can still work together (R, interview, August 24, 2024).

This account illustrates that cooperation had become part of students' social experience and was not limited to formally structured PAI lessons. The fact that the student emphasized being able to work together without focusing on religious identity indicates that religious difference could coexist with friendship and collective participation in everyday school life. The findings also indicate that these manifestations were reinforced by interactions beyond the classroom. Teachers served as everyday examples through respectful and non-discriminatory communication and by providing equal opportunities for students from different religious backgrounds to participate in school activities. Parental involvement likewise contributed to the continuity of these values, as

students reported encountering friendly and respectful attitudes toward people of different religious backgrounds within their families. Thus, the manifestations observed among students were supported by consistency between classroom learning, teacher-student relationships, peer interactions, family practices, and the broader school environment.

Nevertheless, the findings should be understood as evidence of observed practices and reported experiences rather than as proof of a causal transformation in students' behavior. The data show that students demonstrated and described patterns of respect, cooperation, peaceful interaction, and shared participation in contexts where religious differences were present.

“The principal noted that the school continued to face challenges, including limited resources and differences in teachers' understanding of religious moderation, and described teacher training, parental and community collaboration, and periodic reflection as responses to these challenges (AS, principal, interview, October 12, 2024)”.

The Christian Religious Education teacher also identified differences in students' family backgrounds and varying levels of understanding as challenges in consistently applying moderation values in everyday life (FK, Religious Education teacher, interview, October 12, 2024).

Overall, the findings demonstrate that internalized religious moderation values were manifested in students' everyday attitudes and interactions through respect for religious differences, cooperation and mutual assistance, peaceful communication, and participation in shared school, religious, cultural, and community activities. These manifestations were visible not only during formal learning but also in ordinary situations in which students learned, played, worked, and interacted with one another. The findings therefore show that the internalization of religious moderation through PAI was reflected in the ways students navigated religious diversity in their everyday school environment on Arar Island.

DISCUSSION

Internalization of Religious Moderation Values through Islamic Religious Education

The The findings demonstrate that the internalization of religious moderation values through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at the elementary

school on Arar Island occurs through an integrated process rather than through the delivery of moderation concepts as a separate body of knowledge. Religious moderation is incorporated into PAI learning materials, classroom interaction, instructional methods, teacher role modeling, and school activities that reflect the religious and social diversity of the local community. This finding is consistent with the understanding of religious moderation as an approach that emphasizes balanced religious attitudes, tolerance, rejection of violence, and respect for cultural and social diversity. In the Indonesian educational context, such values are more likely to become meaningful when they are connected with students' concrete social experiences rather than presented only as abstract concepts.

This finding is in line with Nadlifa et al. (2025), who show that the cultivation of religious moderation through PAI involves not only instructional content but also teacher guidance, habituation, exemplary practices, and school activities. The present study extends this perspective by showing how these mechanisms operate within an elementary school whose students encounter religious diversity as part of their everyday social environment.

The integration of moderation values into PAI learning is particularly important because elementary education is a formative context in which students develop patterns of social interaction and attitudes toward difference. The findings show that teachers connected concepts such as *akhlaq*, tolerance, respect, cooperation, and peaceful coexistence with situations encountered by students in their daily lives. This contextual approach suggests that PAI functions not only as a medium for transmitting religious knowledge but also as a space for developing students' ethical dispositions. The use of discussion, storytelling, role-playing, and project-based learning provides students with opportunities to encounter moral situations, express their views, listen to others, and consider alternative perspectives. In this sense, the internalization process involves cognitive understanding as well as repeated social experiences through which religious values become connected to students' everyday behavior.

The use of dialogic learning is particularly relevant to this process. The finding that students are encouraged to express opinions and understand different perspectives indicates a movement from one-directional religious

instruction toward learning that allows students to encounter difference through communication. This resonates with Freire's conception of dialogical education, in which learning is developed through interaction, dialogue, and recognition of learners as active participants rather than passive recipients of knowledge. In a religiously diverse school such as the one on Arar Island, dialogue can provide an educational space in which students learn that religious difference does not necessarily require social distance. The significance of this practice lies not simply in teaching students to "tolerate" difference but in allowing them to experience communication and cooperation across difference within the learning process.

The findings also indicate that project-based activities and collaborative tasks strengthen this contextualization. When students from different religious backgrounds work together on posters, environmental projects, school activities, or other common tasks, moderation values become embedded in a shared experience. This corresponds with Banks' perspective on multicultural education, particularly the importance of creating educational environments in which diversity is recognized, and students have opportunities to participate equitably in the learning process. The Arar Island context adds an important dimension to this perspective because religious diversity is not an external issue introduced into the classroom; it is part of students' everyday social environment. Consequently, the teaching of religious moderation becomes more meaningful when it draws upon the diversity that students already encounter in their families, peer relationships, and community.

The role of local traditions is also significant in understanding the internalization process. The incorporation of activities connected with *Mandi Safar*, *halal bihalal*, Eid celebrations, Christmas-related activities, *gotong royong*, and community-oriented programs demonstrates that religious moderation is negotiated within the cultural environment in which students live. This finding supports a contextual understanding of Islamic education in which religious learning can engage with local culture without eliminating students' religious identities. Rather than positioning local traditions as separate from religious education, the school creates opportunities for students to encounter religious and cultural practices as part of their shared social environment. In this regard, accommodation of local traditions becomes an

educational mechanism through which students learn to distinguish between maintaining their own religious commitments and respecting the cultural and religious practices of others.

This contextual relationship between local culture and Islamic education is also reflected in (Muchtar, 2026) discussion of the Kulfot tradition in the Seram community of Maluku, which highlights solidarity, cooperation, collective responsibility, social harmony, and deliberation as values that can be connected with Islamic educational processes. Although that study adopts a conceptual and library-based approach, its emphasis on culturally responsive Islamic education supports the present finding that local social and cultural practices can provide meaningful contexts for value learning.

Teacher role modeling further strengthens the internalization process. The findings suggest that moderation is communicated not only through lesson content but also through the everyday behavior of teachers. This is important because values such as respect, tolerance, and peaceful interaction are difficult to internalize through verbal instruction alone. Students repeatedly encounter teachers as social models whose ways of communicating, responding to differences, and organizing participation provide concrete examples of how religious values can be practiced. The findings therefore reinforce the view that character and values education depends on the coherence between what is taught and what is experienced within the educational environment.

At the same time, the findings show that the internalization of religious moderation cannot be attributed solely to PAI instruction. The involvement of other teachers, parents, school activities, and the wider community creates a broader environment that either reinforces or weakens the values introduced through formal learning. The principal's account concerning teacher training, parental collaboration, and community involvement illustrates that the school understands moderation as a shared educational responsibility. This is particularly relevant in a small and socially interconnected community such as Arar Island, where students' experiences outside the classroom are closely connected with their school experiences. The internalization of religious moderation can therefore be understood as an ecological process involving classroom learning, teacher behavior, peer interaction, family practices, and community life.

Nevertheless, the findings also reveal that this process is not without limitations. Limited resources and differences in teachers' understanding of religious moderation indicate that the implementation of moderation-oriented PAI requires institutional support and continuous professional development. This finding is important because it prevents the internalization process from being understood as an automatic consequence of including moderation-related content in the curriculum. The presence of relevant materials does not necessarily guarantee consistent implementation. Instead, teachers need sufficient conceptual understanding, pedagogical capacity, and contextual resources to translate moderation principles into learning experiences that are appropriate for students and their local environment.

Thus, the contribution of the findings to the first research question lies in showing how PAI can function as a contextual medium for religious moderation in a religiously diverse elementary school. The process observed on Arar Island combines curriculum integration, dialogic and active learning, teacher modeling, shared activities, and engagement with local religious and cultural practices. The contextual character of this process is particularly important because it demonstrates that religious moderation is not simply taught as a normative concept but constructed through repeated educational and social experiences that are meaningful within students' own environment.

Manifestations of Internalized Religious Moderation in Students' Attitudes and Everyday Interactions

The findings related to the second research question indicate that internalized religious moderation values were manifested primarily through students' everyday ways of relating to others. These manifestations included respect for religious differences, cooperation and mutual assistance, peaceful communication, and participation in shared school and community activities. The significance of these findings is that moderation was not observed only in students' ability to reproduce concepts introduced in PAI lessons but also in the ways they interacted with peers in ordinary school situations. This distinction is important because the internalization of values becomes more meaningful when values are reflected in social practices rather than remaining at the level of verbal knowledge.

The students' expressions about not forcing others to follow their religion and the need to respect one another illustrate an emerging understanding of religious difference as something that can coexist with social relationships. This finding is consistent with the broader conception of religious moderation, which places tolerance and respect for difference at the center of harmonious religious life. However, the field data provide a more contextual understanding of this principle: tolerance was not limited to students knowing that they should respect different religions, but was expressed through opportunities to learn, play, cooperate, and participate together. In this respect, the everyday school environment becomes an important arena in which abstract religious values acquire practical meaning.

The finding that students cooperate across religious differences is particularly significant. Collaborative learning, *gotong royong*, environmental activities, and community service create situations in which students focus on shared responsibilities rather than religious distinctions. The statement by R that students can enjoy community service together and sometimes do not even know the religion of their friends illustrates how shared activity can shift attention from religious categorization toward common social experience. This does not mean that religious identity disappears; rather, the data suggest that religious identity does not necessarily determine the boundaries of friendship and cooperation. Such experiences are important in multicultural education because they provide students with direct encounters that challenge social separation based solely on difference.

The manifestation of peaceful interaction can also be interpreted through the students' opportunities to communicate and encounter different perspectives. The use of dialogue in learning provides an institutional space in which disagreement can be managed through communication rather than confrontation. When students learn to listen to different opinions and communicate respectfully, they develop interactional capacities that extend beyond the classroom. The finding reported by the Christian Religious Education teacher that students can learn and play together without religious differences becoming a barrier further illustrates that peaceful coexistence is embedded in ordinary school relationships. In this context, the non-violence dimension of religious moderation is manifested less through the absence of

dramatic conflict and more through everyday practices of respectful communication, non-coercion, cooperation, and avoidance of exclusion.

This interpretation is also supported by Averoezy and Prasetyo's study, (2021) which emphasizes the role of Islamic Religious Education in fostering religious tolerance and harmony through educational experiences in both school and wider community settings. The present study adds a more specific elementary-school perspective by showing how such harmony is expressed through students' everyday communication, cooperation, and shared participation in a religiously diverse community.

The participation of students in shared religious, cultural, and social activities provides another important manifestation. The involvement of students from different religious backgrounds in activities associated with Eid, Christmas, national commemorations, environmental programs, and *gotong royong* demonstrates that the school provides spaces for shared participation while allowing students to retain their respective religious identities. This finding is relevant to the concept of accommodation of local traditions because students are not required to choose between religious commitment and social participation. Instead, they encounter forms of participation that enable them to appreciate the practices of others while remaining situated within their own religious identities. In a community such as Arar Island, where religious and cultural relationships are part of everyday social life, such shared participation can become an important context for learning how difference is negotiated constructively.

The findings also highlight the importance of consistency between school and family environments. Students' experiences of respectful relationships at home reinforce the messages communicated through PAI and school activities. This suggests that the manifestation of religious moderation cannot be understood exclusively as an outcome of classroom instruction. Rather, students encounter similar values across several social settings. When teachers model respect, peers cooperate across religious differences, school activities facilitate shared participation, and families reinforce peaceful relationships, students receive mutually reinforcing experiences that can support the development of moderation-oriented attitudes.

At the same time, the findings need to be interpreted cautiously. The study documents students' statements, observed interactions, and participation in school activities; it does not establish a causal relationship between PAI instruction and changes in students' attitudes. Nor does participation in shared activities automatically demonstrate a complete or permanent internalization of religious moderation. Students' attitudes may also be influenced by family background, community relationships, school culture, and individual experiences. The challenges identified by the principal and the Christian Religious Education teacher, particularly differences in family backgrounds and varying levels of understanding, demonstrate that the process remains dynamic and requires continued reinforcement.

From the perspective of multicultural education, the findings suggest that everyday interaction itself can become an important educational resource. Students learn about diversity not only from formal explanations but from repeated encounters with peers who have different religious backgrounds. This experiential dimension is important because it transforms diversity from an abstract concept into an ordinary feature of social life. In the Arar Island context, the school therefore operates as a social space where students practice coexistence through friendship, cooperation, dialogue, and shared responsibilities.

The findings ultimately suggest that the internalization of religious moderation through PAI becomes visible when students are able to translate religious values into ordinary social practices. Respect for difference is expressed through non-coercive attitudes; tolerance is practiced through friendship and shared participation; non-violence is reflected in peaceful communication and the absence of religious exclusion; and accommodation of difference is experienced through participation in the diverse religious and cultural life of the community. The contribution of this finding lies in demonstrating that the effectiveness of moderation-oriented PAI should be understood not only from the content taught but also from the everyday social environment in which students practice the values they encounter through education.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the internalization of religious moderation values through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at an elementary school on Arar Island occurs through the integration of contextual learning, teacher role modeling, dialogue, habituation, and social interaction within the school environment. Religious moderation is therefore internalized not only through the delivery of religious knowledge but through opportunities for students to understand, experience, and practice values such as tolerance, respect, cooperation, peaceful communication, and non-coercion in their everyday context. The internalized values are manifested in students' attitudes and interactions through respectful relationships across religious differences, cooperative behavior, peaceful communication, and participation in shared school and community activities. These findings indicate that religious moderation becomes meaningful when it is embedded in everyday educational and social practices rather than treated solely as classroom content.

The main contribution of this study is its contextual explanation of how PAI-based religious moderation can be cultivated at the elementary school level within a religiously diverse island community. The socio-religious context of Arar Island, where Muslim and Christian communities interact in everyday life, demonstrates that religious diversity can function not only as a subject of learning but also as a lived educational context for developing moderation-oriented attitudes. Scientifically, this study extends previous discussions of religious moderation in PAI by connecting classroom practices with students' everyday social interactions and the surrounding community context. Practically, the findings suggest that schools can strengthen religious moderation by connecting PAI learning with students' lived experiences, teacher example, collaborative activities, and constructive engagement with families and the local community.

This study is limited to one elementary school on Arar Island and relies on qualitative data from observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and documentation; therefore, the findings are context-specific and are not intended to establish a causal effect of PAI on students' behavior. Future research may examine similar processes across different schools and socio-

religious settings to develop context-sensitive approaches to religious moderation education further.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Rusyaid contributed to the conceptualization of the study, research design, and investigation. Darnanengsih contributed to the conceptualization, methodology, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and manuscript writing. Anisa contributed to data collection, investigation, and the preparation of the manuscript. Nur Azizah contributed to data collection, data organization, and manuscript review. All authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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