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**The Role of Madrasahs in Instilling Religious Moderation for Students at  
MAS YPI Batang Kuis**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study discusses the role of the Private Madrasah Aliyah (MAS) YPI Batang Kuis in instilling religious moderation in students as an effort to form a tolerant, inclusive, and balanced character in understanding Islamic teachings. The approach used in this study is qualitative with a case study method, where data is collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study indicate that religious moderation in this madrasa is implemented through the integration of Wasathiyah Islamic values in the curriculum, extracurricular activities, and the role models of teachers and educators. Programs such as interfaith discussions, Islamic studies, and social actions are effective means of building moderate attitudes among students. This study also reveals several challenges in the implementation of religious moderation, such as the influence of the social environment which is still exclusively oriented and the limited teaching materials that are in accordance with the principles of moderation. Therefore, synergy is needed between madrasahs, the government, and the community in strengthening religious moderation education through increasing teacher capacity, developing a more contextual curriculum, and providing adequate learning resources. With these steps, MAS YPI Batang Kuis is expected to continue to contribute to forming a generation that has an inclusive religious understanding and is able to live side by side harmoniously in a pluralistic society.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Religious moderation is becoming an increasingly important concept in maintaining social harmony amidst the diversity of Indonesian society. Religious moderation is defined as a religious attitude that avoids extremism, both in the form of radicalism and excessive liberalism (Mujiburrahman, 2019).

In the context of Islamic education, madrasas have a strategic role in instilling the values of religious moderation in students, so that they can understand Islamic teachings in an inclusive and tolerant manner (Azra, 2018).

Islamic education has a responsibility to shape students' character so that they have a balanced understanding of religious teachings. Madrasahs as Islamic educational institutions play a role in shaping students' mindsets so that they do not get caught up in narrow fanaticism that can lead to radicalism (Hidayatullah, 2021). Therefore, madrasahs need to instill the principles of *tawassuth* (moderation), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *i'tidal* (justice) in Islamic religious learning (Nasir, 2020).

As an institution oriented towards Islamic education, madrasah has a curriculum that includes education in morals, *fiqh*, and Islamic history which can be an effective means of instilling religious moderation (Abdullah, 2020). At MAS YPI Batang Kuis, various approaches are taken to build students' understanding of Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, including through discussion-based learning, study of classical books, and integration of moderation values in school life.

At MAS YPI Batang Kuis, the Islamic education curriculum has been designed to reflect the principle of religious moderation. The subjects of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Akidah Akhlak provide an understanding of the importance of tolerance and balance in religion (Ma'arif, 2021). In addition, extracurricular activities such as short-term Islamic boarding schools and interactive discussions help strengthen students' understanding of diversity in Islam.

Teachers in madrasas have a major role in shaping students' moderate character. According to Zainuddin's research (2021), the methods used by teachers in instilling religious moderation include a dialogical approach, providing real examples in everyday life, and emphasizing the values of brotherhood in Islam. At MAS YPI Batang Kuis, teachers also instill the values of moderation by teaching the history of Islamic civilization which shows how Islam developed with an attitude of tolerance towards other cultures.

Although madrasas have an important role in instilling religious moderation, there are several challenges that must be faced. One of them is the continued assumption that religious moderation can weaken Islamic values (Syamsuddin, 2022). In addition, another challenge is the influence of social media which can form extreme mindsets among students. Therefore, strengthening digital literacy is needed so that students are not easily influenced by misleading information related to religion.

In addition to formal learning in the classroom, extracurricular activities such as Rohis, Islamic studies, and social activities are also effective means of instilling religious moderation among students (Fauzan, 2020). At MAS YPI Batang Kuis, programs such as social service and interfaith dialogue also provide students with direct experience of the importance of tolerance in community life.

Religious moderation is also closely related to students' ability to think critically and independently. Students who are equipped with a moderate understanding of religion tend to be better able to sort out correct information and are not easily provoked by extreme narratives (Arifin, 2021). Therefore, madrasas need to continue to encourage learning that prioritizes critical thinking so that students have a strong understanding in responding to various religious issues.

The role of madrasas in instilling religious moderation must also be supported by families and communities. According to Siregar (2022), an inclusive and open family environment to differences will strengthen the understanding of religious moderation among students. Therefore, there needs to be synergy between madrasas, families, and communities in building the character of students who have a moderate attitude in religion.

Madrasahs have a very important role in instilling religious moderation for students, especially in MAS YPI Batang Kuis. Through a moderation-based curriculum, interactive teaching strategies, and supportive extracurricular activities, students can understand Islam in a more inclusive and tolerant way. However, the implementation of religious moderation in madrasahs still faces various challenges that require solutions, such as strengthening digital literacy and family involvement in students' religious education.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### **1. Research Approach and Type**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to analyze the role of madrasahs in instilling religious moderation for students at MAS YPI Batang Kuis. Case studies were chosen because they allow researchers to explore in depth the phenomena that occur in the Islamic education environment (Yin, 2018). This qualitative method focuses on a deep understanding of the experiences and perceptions of teachers, students, and related parties in implementing the values of religious moderation (Creswell, 2016).

## **2. Location and Subject of Research**

This research was conducted at MAS YPI Batang Kuis, a private Islamic high school committed to Islamic education and the implementation of religious moderation values. The subjects of the study consisted of the head of the madrasah, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subject teachers, students, and other education personnel who play a role in shaping students' character. The purposive sampling technique was used in selecting informants to obtain data relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2020).

## **3. Data Collection Techniques**

The data in this study were collected through three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted with the principal, teachers, and students to gain an understanding of the strategies implemented in instilling religious moderation (Moleong, 2019). Observations were conducted to observe learning activities, student interactions, and the implementation of the moderation-based curriculum. In addition, documentation studies were used to analyze teaching materials, madrasah policies, and records of extracurricular activities related to religious moderation (Bogdan & Biklen, 2017).

## **4. Data Analysis Techniques**

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). The collected data was reduced to eliminate irrelevant information, then presented in the form of descriptive narratives. Furthermore, conclusions were drawn by ensuring the conformity between the findings in the field with the theories and concepts that had been studied. Triangulation techniques were used to increase the validity of the research results by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation (Patton, 2015).

## **5. Validity of Data**

To ensure the validity of the data, this study applies credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability techniques. Credibility is maintained through triangulation of sources and methods, and by conducting member checking with informants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability is carried out by describing the research context in detail so that the research results can be applied in other madrasahs with similar characteristics. Dependability is obtained by systematically recording all stages of the research, while confirmability is carried out by maintaining objectivity in the interpretation of data and research findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that MAS YPI Batang Kuis has implemented various strategies in instilling religious moderation in students. These strategies include the integration of moderation values in the curriculum, the implementation of Islamic-based extracurricular activities, and a dialogical approach in religious learning. Teachers play a major role in instilling a moderate attitude by providing a balanced understanding of religion, avoiding extreme views, and encouraging a tolerant attitude among students.

Observations conducted in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) classes show that teachers use discussion methods to discuss contemporary issues in Islam, such as pluralism, Islamic brotherhood, and differences in Islamic schools of thought. This approach helps students understand the importance of a moderate attitude in religion and avoid fanaticism that can cause conflict. Several students expressed that they found it easier to understand moderate Islamic teachings when teachers provided concrete examples in everyday life.

In addition to formal learning, madrasas also instill religious moderation through extracurricular activities such as religious discussions, studies of classical and contemporary books, and leadership training based on Islamic values. These activities aim to shape students' character to be more open to differences and able to interact with diverse communities. In an interview with the head of the madrasa, it was stated that the madrasa actively invites speakers from various religious backgrounds to provide students with a broader understanding.

Analysis of madrasah documents, such as syllabus and RPP (Lesson Implementation Plan), shows the integration of religious moderation values in learning materials. For example, in the subject of Fiqh, students are taught various opinions of scholars regarding a religious problem without judging a particular school of thought. Likewise, in the History of Islamic Culture lesson, students are introduced to various thoughts of Islamic figures who have a moderate approach in preaching and spreading Islam.

The research findings also revealed that madrasahs face several challenges in instilling religious moderation, such as the influence of social media which often spreads inaccurate information and tends to trigger radicalism. Several teachers expressed their concerns about the negative impacts of uncontrolled digital content, which can shape students' thinking without clear filters. Therefore, madrasahs strive to improve religious digital literacy for students by providing an understanding of how to sort out credible information.

The results of interviews with several students showed that most of them understand the importance of religious moderation and apply it in their social interactions. They stated that education in madrasas helps them in dealing with differences of opinion and respecting their friends who have different backgrounds of thought. With this guidance, students feel more prepared to interact in a pluralistic society and are not easily influenced by extreme teachings.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that the role of madrasahs in instilling religious moderation is very important. Through a moderation-based curriculum, an inclusive learning approach, and supportive extracurricular activities, MAS YPI Batang Kuis has endeavored to form students who have a balanced religious understanding, are tolerant, and are able to live harmoniously in a diverse society.

## **Discussion**

The results of the study indicate that MAS YPI Batang Kuis has a strategic role in instilling religious moderation in students through various educational programs and madrasah policies. This is in line with the concept of Islamic education which emphasizes the balance between religious beliefs and tolerance of differences (Muhaimin, 2020). Religious moderation is taught in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subject with an approach that emphasizes the values of *tawassuth* (moderate), *tawazun* (balanced), *i'tidal* (fair), and *tasamuh* (tolerant) as recommended in the concept of *Islam Wasathiyah* (Rahmat, 2021).

The implementation of religious moderation values in this madrasah is also supported by the madrasah principal's policy which encourages the integration of the concept of moderation into various aspects of teaching and learning activities. Islamic Religious Education teachers play an active role in building students' understanding of the importance of tolerance and mutual respect in social life. In practice, the learning approach used is based on discussion, case studies, and analysis of social phenomena related to religious diversity (Hidayat, 2019).

Extracurricular activities at MAS YPI Batang Kuis are one of the effective means of instilling the values of religious moderation. Activities such as interfaith discussions, Islamic studies with an inclusive approach, and joint social actions train students to understand the importance of a moderate attitude in community life (Azra, 2018). These activities are also strengthened by habituation programs such as reading the Qur'an with contextual interpretation and joint prayers involving all members of the madrasah.

In addition to the curriculum and extracurricular activities, madrasas also implement an exemplary approach from teachers and educators. Teachers become figures who demonstrate a moderate attitude in religion by providing real examples of how to establish harmonious relationships with people who have different religious and cultural backgrounds (Zuhdi, 2021). This exemplary behavior has been shown to have a strong influence on the formation of student character, as explained in Bandura's social learning theory which emphasizes the importance of role models in education (Bandura, 1997).

However, this study also found several challenges in implementing religious moderation in madrasas. One of them is the difference in students' understanding which is still influenced by the social and family environment. Some students still have exclusive views towards other groups due to a lack of in-depth understanding of religious moderation (Mansur, 2020). To overcome this, it is necessary to strengthen religious literacy-based education that emphasizes understanding religious texts contextually (Hasan, 2019).

Another challenging factor is the limited resources to support religious moderation programs, especially in providing teaching materials that are in accordance with the principles of moderation. Teachers often face difficulties in finding references that balance classical Islamic texts with more inclusive contemporary Islamic thought (Mufid, 2021). Therefore, there needs to be synergy between madrasahs, the Ministry of Religion, and Islamic higher education institutions to provide a more comprehensive curriculum and teaching materials related to religious moderation.

Overall, MAS YPI Batang Kuis has shown a strong commitment in instilling the values of religious moderation in students. Although there are challenges in its implementation, the efforts made by this madrasah have made a significant contribution in forming a young generation who have an inclusive religious understanding and are able to live side by side harmoniously in a pluralistic society. The results of this study are in line with previous studies which emphasized that madrasah education has a strategic role in forming students' moderate character as part of efforts to prevent radicalism and intolerance in the Islamic educational environment (Nurcholish, 2018).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that MAS YPI Batang Kuis has a significant role in instilling the values of religious moderation in students through a curriculum approach, extracurricular activities, and teacher role models. This madrasah integrates the concept of Islam Wasathiyah in

various aspects of education, so that students not only understand religious teachings textually but can also apply them in a more inclusive and tolerant social life. In addition, programs such as Islamic studies, interfaith discussions, and joint social actions have proven effective in forming moderate attitudes among students, in line with government efforts to strengthen religious moderation in the educational environment.

However, this study also found challenges in implementing religious moderation, such as differences in students' understanding influenced by the social environment and limited resources in providing teaching materials that are in accordance with the principles of moderation. Therefore, collaborative efforts are needed between madrasas, the government, and the community in strengthening religious moderation education, both through increasing teacher capacity, developing a more contextual curriculum, and providing adequate learning resources. With these steps, it is hoped that madrasas can continue to be the main fortress in forming a generation with an inclusive Islamic perspective and able to live side by side in a multicultural society.

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