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MADRASAH TEACHER MANAGEMENT IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the strategies of madrasah teacher management in enhancing students' understanding of religious moderation, with a specific focus on how these values are systematically integrated into the learning process. Employing a qualitative approach with a case study design conducted at a selected Madrasah Tsanawiyah Raudatul Hasanah in Muara Sabak Barat, Tanjung Jabung Timur. This study utilized data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation involving three teachers, four students, and the school principal, selected using purposive sampling techniques. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model and validated through triangulation and member checking. The findings reveal that teachers are capable of instilling values such as tolerance, respect for diversity, and a spirit of togetherness through participatory learning strategies specifically designed to contextualize the principles of religious moderation within students' daily lives. These results contribute significantly to the development of a classroom-based educational model for religious moderation that is both practical and sustainable.

Keywords Madrasah, religious moderation, students' understanding, Teacher management.

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INTRODUCTION

In an era marked by rising polarization and identity-based conflicts, the call for religious moderation has become more pressing than ever (Leniawati & Haq, 2024; Octavianne et al., 2024). As global societies grapple with the tension between tradition and modernity, moderation emerges not just as a value but as a vital strategy for coexistence and resilience. Religious moderation is a fundamental principle in building a harmonious (Muslih et al., 2023), tolerant (Nugroho, 2024), and peaceful society amidst the realities of ethnic (Mala & Hunaida, 2023a), cultural (Pratiwi & Suniadewi, 2024), and religious diversity (Wardi et al., 2023). In the context of Indonesia as a multicultural nation, religious moderation is not merely a normative discourse but an urgent necessity for maintaining social stability and national integration. A sound understanding and practice of moderate religious values can serve as a safeguard against the spread of extremist ideologies that threaten social cohesion. Accordingly, education plays a central role in shaping the character of the younger generation to be open-minded, respectful of differences, and fair in their treatment of others (Bar-Tal et al., 2021).

Madrasahs, as Islamic-based educational institutions, bear both moral and institutional responsibilities in realizing the goals of national education, particularly in cultivating noble character and a moderate religious identity. The curriculum implemented in madrasahs not only focuses on cognitive aspects of religious instruction but also emphasizes social ethics and inclusive spirituality (Daheri, 2022). This role positions madrasahs strategically in transforming religious teachings into a way of life that is friendly (Mala & Hunaida, 2023a), tolerant (Wardi et al., 2023), and upholds human dignity (Riaz et al., 2023). Therefore, the internalization of religious moderation in madrasahs is inseparable from the quality and management of the learning process delivered by teachers.

Prior to the implementation of this study, students at the selected Madrasah Tsanawiyah Raudatul Hasanah in Muara Sabak Barat demonstrated a limited and normative understanding of religious moderation. Based on interviews with four students from grades VII to IX, most of them interpreted religious moderation merely as “being kind to others,” without the ability to articulate key components such as tolerance toward different Islamic schools of thought, rejection of violence, or the importance of justice in religious life. Classroom observations revealed that during religious discussions, students rarely posed critical questions or demonstrated contextual understanding of diversity-related issues. Furthermore, documentation in the form of student assignments showed a

tendency to quote religious texts literally, with little to no connection to the pluralistic social realities around them (Idoko, 2022).

This condition is exacerbated by the limited strategies employed by teachers in fostering contextual learning experiences. Interviews with three Islamic Religious Education teachers revealed that teaching practices have predominantly relied on verbal delivery of content, with minimal student engagement in open discussions on diversity-related topics. This was further confirmed through analysis of lesson plans (RPP) and instructional modules, which indicated that values such as tolerance and inclusivity were not explicitly formulated as learning objectives (preliminary document observation)(Lumban Tobing et al., 2025). Teachers primarily used lecture-based methods, and classroom activities were not designed to cultivate students' reflective attitudes toward differences in belief or culture (preliminary observation results)(Retno et al., 2025; Ssemugenyi, 2023).

Beyond the lack of participatory learning methods, teachers' limited understanding of contemporary diversity-related issues emerged as a significant barrier. Documentation indicated that teaching references were largely outdated textbooks that failed to address current social realities (Beigzadeh et al., 2024). In interviews, one teacher admitted difficulty in responding to students' questions about radicalism due to the absence of specialized training on religious moderation. This lack of exposure has resulted in minimal dialogical space within classrooms—spaces that are, in fact, essential for nurturing openness and empathy among students (Dempsey, 2023).

Three weeks of classroom observation revealed that teachers had yet to manage the learning environment as a space for constructive dialectical engagement. Teacher–student interactions were dominated by closed-ended questioning, with little effort to develop students' critical thinking regarding religious texts. Religious activities within the school were largely ceremonial and had not been directed toward reinforcing values of peace and tolerance (Suryani & Muslim, 2024). As a result, the internalization of religious moderation remained incidental and fragmented, rather than an integrated and intentionally designed component of instructional management.

A study by Akhmadi (2022) indicates that madrasah teachers generally exhibit moderate attitudes at medium to high levels. However, this degree of moderation is influenced by factors such as educational background and employment status. While the research offers valuable insights into teacher attitudes, it does not explore in depth how these attitudes are implemented within classroom learning management. Furthermore, Ulfatun Ni'mah et al. (2023) emphasize the role of guidance

and counseling (BK) teachers in fostering students' moderate behavior through extracurricular activities such as PIK-R. BK teachers act as facilitators, motivators, and mentors. However, the study is limited to one type of teacher and does not address instructional strategies within regular subject-based classroom teaching.

Tutik (2022) developed a model for implementing religious moderation in madrasahs using Berger's social construction approach, involving institutional vision-mission, school programs, and instructional activities. Although the study is comprehensive, it does not specifically examine the technical aspects of classroom learning management—such as the integration of moderation values into lesson plans (RPP) or the application of interactive strategies in teaching. Sudarman et al. (2025) discuss the strengthening of religious moderation by integrating it into Islamic Education (PAI) subjects and extracurricular activities(Nurbayani & Amiruddin, 2024; Warsah & Istan, 2025). Methods such as active debates and student participation were shown to enhance tolerance. Nevertheless, the study primarily focuses on supplementary programs and does not delve into how teachers manage regular classroom instruction to internalize those values.

Meanwhile, Kosim et al. (2023) developed a moderation-based curriculum module using the ADDIE model. The module was validated and utilized in both instructional and school-wide activities. However, the study does not evaluate how teachers concretely implement the module within the day-to-day management of classroom learning. Across these five studies, there remains a clear research gap concerning a comprehensive analysis of teacher learning management in the context of internalizing religious moderation. Most existing research addresses teacher attitudes, specific roles, or curriculum development, but falls short of examining how planning, implementation, and evaluation processes are systematically designed to foster students' understanding of religious moderation.

The novelty of the present study lies in its focus on uncovering effective patterns of madrasah teacher management in internalizing religious moderation values. This research integrates an analysis of lesson planning (RPP), contextual learning strategies, and affective-psychomotor evaluation within the instructional process. Thus, it offers both theoretical and practical contributions that have not been addressed by previous studies. From a policy standpoint, the research is directly relevant to the implementation of the Penguatan Moderasi Beragama (PMB) initiative by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019), which mandates that

madrasahs integrate the four core indicators of moderation—komitmen kebangsaan, toleransi, anti-kekerasan, and akomodatif terhadap budaya lokal—into their educational processes.

This policy underlines the role of teachers as key agents in promoting national unity and peace through structured pedagogical approaches (Millican et al., 2021; Ramezanzadeh & Rezaei, 2023). Pragmatically, the findings of this study offer concrete, evidence-based insights for stakeholders involved in education reform, particularly in strengthening teachers' capacity to embody and transmit moderation values in culturally and religiously diverse classrooms. These insights are critical for developing professional training modules, lesson planning frameworks, and assessment tools that are aligned with the goals of inclusive religious education. Ultimately, this research not only affirms the centrality of teacher management in shaping moderate religious attitudes but also supports the broader national agenda of countering radicalism and fostering social cohesion through education (Adel et al., 2024).

METHOD

This study is a qualitative research employing a case study approach in Private Madrasah Tsanawiyah Raudathul Hasanah. The primary objective of this study is to explore in depth how teachers manage the learning process to enhance students' comprehension of religious moderation values. A descriptive approach is utilized to capture the phenomenon contextually through direct interaction with research subjects and observation of real-life situations in the field (Turale, 2020). The study does not aim for statistical generalization, but rather focuses on a deep understanding of the processes, meanings, and managerial dynamics applied by teachers in the context of inclusive and moderate religious education.

The data in this study consist of field observations, interview transcripts, and written documents related to the implementation of religious moderation education in the madrasah. Data sources were drawn from various stakeholders directly involved in the educational process, including Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers, the school principal, guidance and counseling teachers, and students from different grade levels at the Madrasah Tsanawiyah, where the research was conducted. The diversity of these data sources aims to provide a comprehensive representation of the realities in the field and ensure the depth of the information collected.

Data collection was carried out through three main techniques: observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation (Doyle et al., 2020). Observations were conducted directly at the research site for three weeks, from June 10 to June 30, 2025. These observations included classroom learning activities as well as religious and social programs integrated with the school's religious moderation initiatives. The researcher systematically recorded patterns of teacher–student interaction, methods of material delivery, and students' responses to issues related to tolerance, anti-violence, and respect for diversity.

In-depth interviews were conducted with key respondents who held strategic roles in the educational process at the madrasah. These respondents included Islamic Religious Education teachers, the school principal, guidance and counseling teachers, and students from grades VII, VIII, and IX. The interviews aimed to explore perceptions, experiences, and management practices in teaching that contribute to fostering students' understanding of religious moderation. The information gained from these interviews was crucial for revealing internal processes that may not be visible through observation alone.

Documentation served as a complementary method to support the data obtained through observations and interviews. Collected documents included Lesson Plans (RPP), syllabi, learning modules, extracurricular activity reports, student projects related to religious moderation, and school policy documents on character education and religious moderation. These documents were analyzed to examine the extent to which religious moderation values were systematically integrated into the planning and implementation of the learning process.

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman (Ernawati et al., 2022). Data reduction was carried out from the early stages of data collection at MTs Raudatul Hasanah in Muara Sabak Barat. The researcher conducted direct classroom observations to document how teachers incorporated values of religious moderation, such as tolerance and patriotism, into the learning process. Subsequently, interviews were held with Islamic education teachers (PAI), homeroom teachers, and the school principal to explore their strategies for internalizing these values. Relevant documents such as lesson plans (RPP) and syllabi were also examined to assess how character education was planned. All collected data were manually coded according to thematic categories—such as "tolerance in classroom discussions" or "interfaith cooperation in student activities"—to ensure that only relevant data were selected for further analysis.

The reduced data were then organized into thematic matrices to compare how different teachers implemented moderation values in their teaching practices. The researcher also constructed concept maps to illustrate the relationship between teacher strategies and the values being instilled. Descriptive narratives were used to contextualize field findings, reinforced with direct quotations from teachers and students to maintain data authenticity—for instance, a student's statement that the teacher emphasized mutual respect despite differing opinions.

Conclusion drawing was conducted by identifying recurring patterns in the data, such as the tendency of teachers to apply dialogic and participatory approaches. The researcher compared data across informants and triangulated findings with classroom observations and documentation. Preliminary conclusions were then validated through follow-up discussions with the relevant teachers to avoid misinterpretation. The final results indicate that the teachers consistently integrated moderation values into the learning process through classroom discussions, contextual teaching approaches, and extracurricular religious activities.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study explores the structured efforts of madrasah teachers in managing religious moderation education through an integrated framework that comprises planning, implementation, and evaluation. The findings are presented to capture the multidimensional nature of this pedagogical practice, highlighting how teachers intentionally embed values of tolerance, diversity, and peaceful coexistence within their instructional design and classroom engagement. Through a combination of qualitative data and reflective testimonies, the research illustrates how these strategies translate into transformative learning experiences. To provide clarity and coherence, the main results are first summarized in a table format, showcasing the management aspects, key strategies employed, and their direct impact on students. This is followed by a detailed narrative discussion that contextualizes the findings and deepens the analysis of how moderation values are effectively integrated into Islamic education within the madrasah setting.

Table 1. Management Aspects, Key Findings, Strategies Implemented, and Their Impact

Management Aspect	Key findings	Strategies implemented	Impact on students
Planning	Integration of moderation values into lesson plans and instructional tools	formulation of learning objectives centered on tolerance, diversity, and non-violence	enhancing students' initial awareness of the importance of peaceful coexistence.
Implementation	Teachers act as facilitators, role models, and mediators of moderation values	participatory methods such as discussions, case studies, and reflective dialogues based on local contexts are employed	students become more actively engaged in discussions, develop an understanding of diverse perspectives, and demonstrate openness in attitude
Evaluation	A holistic assessment approach is applied, encompassing cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions	Tools such as reflective journals, attitude observations, peer reviews, and performance-based assessments are utilized	Students demonstrate progress in developing tolerant attitudes, empathy, and a tendency to avoid violence
Teacher's Role	Teachers serve as agents of change in promoting religious moderation	They act as inclusive role models, show openness to differences, and create safe spaces for dialogue	This fosters students' trust and strengthens the internalization of moderation values through exemplary conduct.
Contextual Method	The use of local case studies helps connect the concept of religious moderation to students lived realities	Teaching materials are developed from community-based issues (e.g., diversity in students' neighborhoods)	As a result, students more easily understand and internalize moderation values due to their direct relevance to daily life.
Inhibiting Factors	Uneven teacher understanding and the lack of experience-based teaching materials hinder effective implementation	Limited training opportunities and the absence of contextual learning media further constrain pedagogical innovation.	As a result, some teachers still perceive religious moderation narrowly and are not yet equipped to develop experiential and context-driven learning approaches.
Supporting Factors	The commitment of madrasah principals and training initiatives from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and external partners serve as key enablers.	Internal policy support and capacity-building programs—such as workshops on developing moderation-based teaching media—enhance teachers' confidence and creativity.	These factors empower educators to address issues of tolerance and diversity in an exploratory and contextually relevant manner.

Source: Results of research analysis

The findings of this study indicate that madrasah teachers manage the cultivation of students' understanding of religious moderation through a systematic framework encompassing three key stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation. In the planning phase, teachers explicitly integrate values such as tolerance, patriotism, respect for diversity, and non-violence into the Lesson Plans (RPP), embedding them in the learning objectives and instructional content. This reflects a pedagogical shift from a content-oriented approach to a value-based education model. One teacher remarked, "In our lesson plans, learning objectives are not just about memorizing verses or understanding fiqh, but also about helping students appreciate differences in their own environment." During the implementation stage, teachers serve as both facilitators of dialogue and role models of moderation. Participatory methods such as group discussions, case studies, and reflective dialogues are employed to actively and contextually instill moderation values. Teachers also draw on local issues to make the concept of moderation more relevant to students' lived experiences. As one teacher explained, "We discuss real cases, like neighborhood conflicts, so that students understand tolerance must be practiced, not just studied."

The evaluation process is carried out holistically, assessing not only students' cognitive understanding but also their attitudes and behaviors in responding to diversity. Instruments such as reflective journals, attitude observations, and performance-based assessments are used to gauge how deeply students have internalized moderation values. One teacher stated, "We ask students to write reflections at the end of each session to see whether they truly grasp the importance of moderation, not just memorize the terminology." The success of this process is heavily influenced by the role of the teacher as an agent of change who embodies the values of moderation through classroom behavior and interactions. Teacher exemplarity plays a crucial role in shaping student character. Nonetheless, challenges persist, particularly regarding some teachers' limited understanding of moderation as an active, peace-building process, as well as the scarcity of contextual learning resources. A teacher admitted, "I used to think moderation was just about not being extreme, but after the training, I realized it's about actively fostering peace." Supporting factors such as strong leadership from the madrasah principal and training programs provided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs are essential in addressing these challenges. These initiatives have boosted teachers' confidence and enhanced their capacity to introduce sensitive diversity-related topics in the classroom in a safe and productive manner.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that madrasah teachers implement religious moderation through a structured management strategy encompassing three interconnected stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation. These stages serve as an integrated framework through which educators internalize core values of moderation into the learning process. Rather than viewing religious moderation as supplementary or peripheral, teachers embed it as a central pillar in instructional planning and delivery. This systematic approach demonstrates a comprehensive effort to transform educational environments into platforms for cultivating tolerance, non-violence, pluralism, and civic responsibility among students. The strategic alignment across these stages highlights the institutional commitment to nurturing inclusive and peaceful religious attitudes within the school culture.

In the planning stage, teachers deliberately design Lesson Plans that reflect values such as tolerance, respect for diversity, love for the homeland, and non-violence as guiding pedagogical principles. These values are interwoven into learning objectives, materials, and activities, shaping the broader framework of instruction rather than being confined to specific lessons. This approach signals a shift from content-centered teaching toward value-oriented education. The curriculum planning reflects (Nasser et al., 2019; Wahab Syakhrani et al., 2023) transformative model of Islamic education, which emphasizes the construction of contextually responsive and morally grounded learning experiences. Teachers no longer focus exclusively on academic competencies; they also prioritize character development and the cultivation of students' ability to coexist peacefully in diverse social settings (Kasim et al., 2021).

During the implementation stage, teachers act as both facilitators and role models by demonstrating and promoting moderate behavior through participatory and dialogic teaching strategies. They adopt interactive methods such as group discussions, case studies, and reflective dialogue to engage students in examining religious values critically. These strategies enable students to encounter and respond to religious diversity thoughtfully, promoting empathy and mutual respect. By contextualizing discussions with local examples and real-life scenarios, educators foster relevance and deeper engagement. The classroom becomes a dialogical space where moderation is not only taught but also practiced and experienced, thereby reinforcing its significance in everyday life. This experiential learning approach enhances students' internalization of moderation values in practical and meaningful ways.

In the evaluation stage, teachers assess not only students' cognitive understanding but also their attitudinal and behavioral growth concerning religious moderation. Evaluation instruments include reflective journals, performance assessments, peer reviews, and observational rubrics that capture students' responses to diversity, tolerance, and dialogue. These assessments are integrated throughout the learning process to ensure continuous monitoring and support for students' development. The evaluation framework reflects a holistic view of learning that extends beyond academic achievement to include moral and civic dimensions. Through this comprehensive evaluation process, teachers ensure that the values of moderation are not only taught and discussed but also internalized and demonstrated in students' interactions within and beyond the school environment.

Educators assume multifaceted roles throughout the instructional process (Jones et al., 2024; Mustari & Nurhayati, 2024). Beyond being transmitters of religious knowledge, they position themselves as facilitators and exemplars of moderate and inclusive behavior. Their presence in the classroom is characterized by active engagement with students through dialogic and participatory methods. Instructional strategies such as case studies, problem-based learning, and structured group discussions are regularly employed to prompt critical inquiry and reflective thinking. These techniques encourage learners to engage deeply with complex contemporary religious issues, allowing for personal interpretation and internalization of moderation values. The facilitative role of teachers also creates a safe space for diverse opinions and fosters a collaborative environment conducive to meaningful dialogue.

The implementation of dialogue-based learning significantly enhances students' awareness of religious plurality and social harmony. Rather than delivering static doctrinal content, teachers invite students to critically examine diverse religious practices and viewpoints. This methodological shift reinforces students' appreciation for inclusivity, especially in pluralistic societies. Research by Ubani et al. (2020) supports this pedagogical approach, indicating that dialogic methods and student participation are pivotal in cultivating inclusive religious worldviews. Through these practices, students learn to approach religious differences not as threats but as opportunities for mutual respect and coexistence. The emphasis on open discussion ensures that learners develop the cognitive and emotional skills necessary for navigating diversity.

The use of local and context-specific case studies further strengthens the relevance of moderation values within the students' lived realities (Abolaji et al., 2025; Barham et al., 2025). Case materials are often drawn from students' immediate environments, such as their neighborhoods or local communities, allowing for tangible engagement with the issues discussed. This grounded approach enables students to relate theoretical values to concrete experiences, thereby deepening their understanding and retention. The practice of contextualizing instruction bridges the gap between abstract religious ideals and everyday social interactions. A student's comment exemplifies this impact: understanding religious differences becomes more intuitive and meaningful when observed and discussed within familiar contexts.

The overall instructional framework thus evolves into an integrated model that combines cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of learning. Planning, execution, and evaluation are all informed by the objective of cultivating moderate, tolerant, and socially responsible individuals (Berry et al., 2025; Kholis & Rini, 2023). The classroom transforms into a microcosm of a plural society, where dialogue, empathy, and ethical engagement are practiced consistently. Through this process, Islamic education transcends its traditional boundaries and becomes a transformative force for peacebuilding and social cohesion. The emphasis on value-based education not only aligns with contemporary pedagogical theories but also addresses the urgent need for religious moderation in increasingly diverse and complex societal landscapes.

The evaluation of students' understanding and internalization of moderation values is carried out holistically. Assessment goes beyond cognitive aspects to include affective and participatory dimensions. Teachers use attitude observations, student engagement in discussions, and individual reflections as primary assessment tools. This approach aligns with authentic assessment practices that emphasize evaluating students' holistic competencies in real-world contexts, as discussed by Shaw (2023). Reflection becomes a key instrument in measuring how deeply these values are embedded, as it allows students to express their personal understanding and moral awareness developed during the learning process. A teacher explained, "We ask students to write personal reflections at the end of each lesson to see if they truly understand the importance of moderation—not just memorize the terminology."

The role of the teacher as an agent of change is central to the success of this process. Teachers' moderation in speech, attitudes toward differences, and classroom responses are inseparable elements of their learning management strategies. Teachers who position themselves as open and

inclusive companions create a safe space for students to express themselves and learn to appreciate diversity. This reinforces the idea that religious moderation education cannot merely be taught—it must be concretely embodied in everyday practices (Gumiandari, 2022). One madrasah principal emphasized, "A teacher's attitude in the classroom is a real reflection of religious moderation. If the teacher cannot set an example, students will struggle to trust what is being taught."

A major challenge encountered in this practice is the limited understanding among some teachers regarding the comprehensive concept of religious moderation. Some still interpret moderation merely as a middle-ground stance or passive neutrality, rather than as an active effort to foster a peaceful and tolerant religious life. Furthermore, the lack of contextual and experience-based learning resources poses a serious constraint. The reliance on conventional teaching materials often falls short in supporting the desired pedagogical approach. This gap highlights the urgent need for capacity building through ongoing training and the development of contextually responsive teaching materials. As one teacher admitted, "At first, I was confused about the difference between being moderate and simply neutral. Only after the training did I realize that moderation is active, not passive."

Significant supporting factors for the success of this strategy include the madrasah principal's commitment to providing space for pedagogical innovation and the availability of training programs facilitated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and partner institutions. Principals with progressive views on religious moderation tend to encourage teachers to innovate and collaborate in developing relevant teaching methods. Practical training programs, such as workshops on developing moderation-based learning media, have proven to enhance teachers' understanding and enrich their classroom strategies (Mala & Hunaida, 2023b). One workshop participant shared, "After joining the workshop, I felt more confident bringing tolerance issues into the classroom. I used to worry they were too sensitive."

This study highlights the critical need to reconceptualize the role of teachers in madrasah education—not simply as instructors delivering content, but as strategic agents actively shaping students' religious consciousness in line with the principles of moderation(Maarif et al., 2024; Mala & Hunaida, 2023a). Such a transformation requires a pedagogical shift from transmission-based instruction to a more holistic model rooted in value integration, ethical exemplarity, and reflective practice. Teachers are positioned as both facilitators of learning and moral exemplars who internalize and model the values of tolerance, inclusivity, and critical engagement with religious

discourse. This strategic role empowers educators to become cultural mediators who guide students not only in mastering religious knowledge but also in developing the civic dispositions necessary for navigating complex and pluralistic societies (Agbaria, 2024; Udemba, 2024). By framing moderation as a lived, dialogical, and educational practice rather than a static doctrine, the study reveals how teachers can foster students' ability to reconcile religious commitments with broader social responsibilities (Felsenthal & Agbaria, 2025).

The novelty of this research lies in its identification and articulation of a structured, context-responsive model of religious moderation-based learning management. This model integrates pedagogical planning, teacher behavior, and evaluative reflection into a cohesive framework that can be applied systematically across madrasah settings (Rahman, 2025; Sugito, 2024). The study's findings advance the discourse on contextual Islamic education by grounding theoretical commitments to moderation in observable and replicable classroom practices. Through this lens, madrasahs emerge not merely as religious institutions, but as strategic platforms for nurturing national cohesion and pluralistic citizenship (Riaz et al., 2023; Romlah et al., 2025). The model proposed here provides a practical and adaptable foundation for education policymakers, curriculum developers, and teacher training institutions aiming to strengthen democratic values and social harmony in increasingly diverse contexts. Thus, this research not only fills a gap in existing literature but also offers a timely and actionable contribution to the development of Islamic education that is ethically grounded, socially responsive, and pedagogically sound (Bukhari, 2025).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the learning management employed by madrasah teachers in internalizing the values of religious moderation has proven effective through structured planning, implementation, and evaluation processes that are oriented toward character development. Learning strategies that emphasize dialogue, active participation, and critical reflection are capable of fostering tolerant, inclusive attitudes and a contextually grounded religious awareness. The teacher's role as a facilitator of values—rather than merely a transmitter of content—is central to this approach, with exemplary behavior serving as a key instrument in shaping an open and diversity-appreciating learning environment. The novelty of this research lies in its emphasis on the transformative role of teachers in managing religious moderation-based learning, a dimension that has not been explicitly highlighted in many previous studies. The integration of moderation values

into lesson plans and value-based classroom practices not only offers practical contributions to the development of Islamic education curricula but also provides a crucial foundation for constructing a peaceful religious narrative that is responsive to contemporary socio-religious dynamics.

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