

IMPLEMENTATION AND BENEFITS OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN MAINTAINING FAITH AND PRESERVING HARMONY IN MADRASAH

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation and practice of religious moderation in madrasahs and their surroundings, as well as the benefits of instilling religious moderation in students who live as Muslim minorities in Bali. The research method used is qualitative research with a phenomenological approach. The technique for determining informants used purposive sampling, consisting of the head of the madrasah, the deputy head of the madrasah, subject teachers, and ten students. Data were collected using participant observation techniques, structured interviews, and documentation studies. Primary data included the implementation and practice of religious moderation in the madrasah environment and the benefits felt based on observations and interviews. Secondary data consisted of data from previous studies, reports, and regulations related to the implementation of religious moderation, particularly in the madrasah environment. The data was analysed using an interactive model, namely data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study show that the implementation of religious moderation at MAN Buleleng is through curriculum policy, subject integration, habit-forming programmes, religious programmes, social programmes, and leadership training. Furthermore, the practice of religious moderation includes respecting other people's holidays, interacting with people of different religions, attending institutional invitations, recruiting non-Muslim teachers, and distributing takjil (food to break the fast) across faiths during Ramadan. The benefits felt by students from the instilling of religious moderation can be classified into various dimensions, such as psychological, social, personal religious, citizenship, and inclusive attitudes. Various findings show that religious moderation has various benefits in the context of Muslim minorities as an effort to maintain faith and maintain harmony among religious communities.

Keywords

Madrasah, Maintaining Faith, Muslim minority, Religious moderation, Social Harmony.



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INTRODUCTION

Since the launch of the Religious Moderation Programme in Indonesia by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2019, the concept of religious moderation has become a central issue in public discourse, with various studies conducted on the programme. Indonesia, as a country that officially recognises various religions and diverse local belief systems, is required to be able to manage its plurality as a unifying cultural asset. This reality underlines the importance of fostering a moderate attitude, particularly through character education (Saepudin et al., 2023). The goal is to avoid extreme interpretations of religion and to recognize the limits of freedom of life to create a balanced, peaceful, and harmonious life (Subchi et al., 2022). Religious moderation aims to build an inclusive society with mutual respect for religious diversity (Fuadi et al., 2024; Hasan & Juhannis, 2024a).

Madrasahs are one of the institutions in the effort to instill religious moderation. As part of Indonesia's national education system, madrasahs play an essential role in the internalization of values, including moderate religious attitudes. Therefore, they are expected to introduce and strengthen the principles of religious moderation within the educational ecosystem (Nugroho & Nailufaz, 2022), including in Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) Buleleng, located in Buleleng Regency, Bali Province. This role becomes particularly urgent given several religion-related tensions that have recently resurfaced in Bali, such as the blasphemy case during the Nyepi celebration in Sumberklampok Village (Kusuma, 2023) and allegations of religious hate speech by a regional legislative member that triggered public protests (Rahmanda, 2024).

MAN (Madrasah Aliyah Negeri) Buleleng is one of the formal educational institutions located in Patas Village, Buleleng Regency, North Bali, which plays a role in implementing the values of religious moderation in the madrasah environment. Religious moderation is a balanced religious attitude between practising one's own religion (exclusive) and respecting the religious practices of others with different beliefs (inclusive) (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019). Religious moderation is an important issue in education because it plays a role as a vehicle for shaping students' character and religious understanding (Hasan & Juhannis, 2024a). Through education, religious moderation can be strengthened among students by introducing moderate values from an early age (Haris et al., 2024). This can be seen based on studies on religious moderation in schools. As shown in the study by Mulyana (2023), the values of religious moderation are contained in Islamic education textbooks at the junior high school level, as well as the mainstreaming of religious moderation in madrasahs as an effort to preserve moderate Islamic

teachings (Rohman et al., 2022). However, this study focuses more on the implementation of religious moderation in areas with a Muslim minority population, specifically at MAN Buleleng, Bali Province. As shown in the study by Dasopang et al. (2022), there is integration between culture and religion in Islamic education by preserving cultures that are in accordance with religious teachings and adapting cultures based on religion in several madrasahs in North Tapanuli Regency, North Sumatra Province. Furthermore, the results of a study by Anggraeni et al. (2023) show that the practice of religious moderation at MAN 1 Jembrana is realised through the formation of the Tolerance and Moderation Gang (Gantara), interfaith dialogue, and the preservation of the traditions and cultural values of the Balinese people. Similarly, based on the results of a study by Hadi & Usbani (2024), the Bali Bina Insani Islamic Boarding School in Tabanan Regency, Bali Province, integrates and practises values of tolerance, such as offering local content subjects in the Balinese language and Balinese dance lessons, and employing Hindu teachers and staff while treating them professionally.

Based on previous research, such as the results of a study Kosim et al., (2025) Comparing tolerance education practices in Indonesia, Thailand, and Cambodia in the context of Muslim minorities, it was found that Indonesia has systematically integrated values of tolerance through a religious moderation agenda and the P5 (Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project) and PPRA programmes (Rahmatan Lil Alamin Student Profile). Meanwhile, in the context of religious moderation in Islamic educational institutions in Bali Province, the transformative Islamic education model contributes to maintaining Islamic identity and shaping a generation of Muslim minorities who are religious, tolerant, and globally competitive, as implemented at MA Khalifa Nusantara Denpasar (Bakar et al., 2025). Similarly, the integration of religious moderation at MAN 1 Jembrana, Jembrana Regency, is carried out through subjects, school culture, curriculum, extracurricular activities, and the preservation of Balinese traditions and cultural values (Anggraeni et al., 2023; Wiguna et al., 2024). In addition, the integration of religious moderation values in vocational education institutions such as SMK Teknologi Informasi (TI) Bali Global, Klungkung Regency, is carried out through Islamic religious education subjects, learning evaluations, habit formation, and role modelling (Ratnah et al., 2024). It can be said that the cultivation of religious moderation in Muslim minority areas can be easily integrated with various elements in the educational institution environment.

Although studies on religious moderation in madrasahs have been conducted extensively, studies on religious moderation in madrasah environments, particularly Madrasah Aliyah in Muslim minority areas such as Bali Province, specifically in Buleleng Regency, are still limited. This is interesting because the practice of religious tolerance, which is part of the values of religious moderation, will be directly confronted with the daily reality of the Muslim community as a minority in Buleleng Regency in maintaining social relations and harmony between religious communities. On the other hand, social interaction between the two religious groups, Islam and Hinduism, cannot be separated, given their historical, cultural, and social roots. Previous studies have focused more on the integration of religious moderation or values of tolerance with various subjects and activities in madrasahs, as well as the practice of religious moderation as manifested in interfaith activities and integration with local culture. However, studies focusing on the perceived benefits of religious moderation for students and teachers in the context of Muslims as a minority are still rare. Students face the inevitability of interacting and living side by side with individuals of different religions or beliefs in an Islamic school environment (Chotimah et al., 2025). In the context of religious majorities and minorities in Indonesia, this is an inevitability (Marzuki & Fikri, 2022). Furthermore, it is stated that when differences cannot be accepted, it will lead to conflict, which will result in the marginalisation and discrimination of minorities in public spaces such as educational institutions (Marzuki & Fikri, 2022). Minority groups often struggle to gain access due to marginalisation and discrimination practices from the majority group (Chalik, 2023).

The study is anchored in the phenomenon of mainstreaming religious moderation within madrasahs, which has existed long before its formal adoption by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Rohman et al., 2022). Efforts to mainstream religious moderation aim to instil nine key words contained in the Indonesian Government's definition of Religious Moderation: humanity, public interest, fairness, balance, constitutional obedience, national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and respect for tradition (Wahid et al., 2024). The same applies to principles such as *tawasut*, *tawazun*, and *tasamuh* in thought and action. Thus, education remains an important means of fostering tolerance, social cohesion, and resilience in a pluralistic society (Mulyana, 2023). In analysing the findings, this study uses Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann's social construction theory, as in several previous studies mentioned above (Muslim et al., 2024; Suhendra, 2022), which emphasises the processes of externalisation, objectification, and internalisation in constructing social reality (Berger & Luckmann, 2023). Similarly, other theories, such as Social Identity Theory, explain

how the dynamics of in-groups and out-groups influence attitudes and behaviour (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). By focusing on the Muslim minority in Bali, this study offers a new perspective that distinguishes it from previous studies, most of which were conducted in Muslim-majority areas. It is hoped that this study will contribute to a broader academic discussion on religious moderation in multicultural environments and Muslim minorities.

This study aims to describe the implementation of religious moderation, the practices of religious moderation carried out in the madrasah environment and the surrounding multicultural community, and explore the various benefits experienced by students from the instillation of religious moderation at MAN Buleleng. Therefore, this study contributes to increasing the knowledge of the dynamics of religious moderation, especially in Muslim minority areas within the madrasah environment. This makes religious moderation a program and foundation that can be examined from various perspectives.

METHOD

This paper uses a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach. The phenomenological approach aims to explore in-depth a phenomenon experienced by participants based on their lived experiences (Urcia, 2021). Therefore, in this paper, the researcher reveals matters related to this research objective, such as the implementation and practice of religious moderation and the benefits perceived by students from instilling religious moderation in the madrasah environment, as well as their daily experiences. Primary data in this paper were obtained through observations and interviews related to the implementation, practice, and benefits of various moderation practices. Secondary data relate to population data by religious composition, data on the number of Islamic senior high schools (madrasah aliyah) in Buleleng Regency, and various relevant research findings. This research was conducted at MAN Buleleng, located in Patas Village, Gerokgrak District, Buleleng Regency, Bali Province, from June 2023 to November 2023.

In data collection, researchers used participant observation techniques, structured interviews, and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted with selected informants using purposive sampling techniques, such as the Head of MAN Buleleng, Deputy Head of Curriculum, Deputy Head of Student Affairs, teachers of Akidah Akhlak, Civic Education, and Sociology, as well as ten students. Observations were conducted to observe the implementation of religious moderation in the MAN environment. In addition, documentation was used to collect data in the

form of documents related to religious moderation, data on the composition of the population based on religion, and relevant previous research results.

Data analysis techniques use an interactive model consisting of data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014). The researchers collected data related to the defined problem formulation, such as the implementation of religious moderation, the practice of religious moderation in daily life, and the perceived benefits, followed by data condensation, such as the processes of selection, narrowing down, simplification, summarisation, data transformation, data presentation, and conclusions. Validity testing using technical triangulation, source triangulation, and member checking (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), all stages have been approved by MAN Buleleng.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The implementation of religious moderation at MAN Buleleng is systematically implemented through curriculum policies, the integration of values into subjects, and madrasah habituation programs. Interviews indicate that the implementation of religious moderation at MAN Buleleng directly adheres to the Ministry of Religious Affairs' policies, specifically KMA Number 347 of 2022 concerning the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Madrasah. Religious moderation is not taught as a separate subject but is integrated into all subjects and the Rahmatan lil 'Alamin (PPRA) Student Profile Strengthening Project.

Table 1. Implementation of Religious Moderation at MAN Buleleng

No	Aspect	Form of Implementation
1.	Curriculum Policy	Integration of religious moderation across all subjects and PPRA projects
2.	Subject Integration	Integration of the values of tolerance, muamalah, and the boundaries of faith in Aqidah Akhlak and other subjects
3.	Habituation Programs	3S (Greetings, Smiles, Say Hello), morning recitation, congregational prayers
4.	Religious Programs	Pondok Ramadhan, Cerdas Cermat Keagamaan, Zakat Fitrah
5.	Social Programs	Distribution of takjil across religions
6.	Leadership Training	Religious moderation material in Basic Student Leadership Training

Source: Results of research analysis

The practice of religious moderation at MAN Buleleng is evident in daily social interactions between the madrasah's students and the multicultural community in Bali. Interviews revealed that these practices include tolerance, respect for local traditions, and active involvement in cross-school

and interfaith activities.

Table 2. Findings on the Practice of Religious Moderation

No.	Actor	Forms of Moderation Practice	Context
1.	Students and teachers	Respect Nyepi Day by not leaving the house and not using loudspeakers during the call to prayer.	Hindu majority neighborhood
2.	Students	Positive interactions with non-Muslim students when participating in olympiads and other academic activities	Inter-school
3.	Madrasah	Attendance at invitations to Hindu majority schools	Institutional relations
4.	Management	Recruitment of non-Muslim teachers	School governance
5.	Teachers, education staff, and students	Distribution of takjil across religions	Internal madrasah

Source: Results of research analysis

Table 2 shows that various practices of religious moderation carried out by students and teachers at MAN Buleleng are manifested in various forms of social interaction, both within the madrasah and in the surrounding multicultural community. These practices are reflected in the attitudes of students and teachers who respect Nyepi Day by not engaging in activities outside the home and not using loudspeakers when performing the call to prayer in a predominantly Hindu community. In addition, MAN Buleleng students also demonstrate positive and inclusive interactions with non-Muslim students in various inter-school academic activities, such as when participating in Olympiads and other school activities. At the institutional level, the madrasah actively fosters harmonious relations with schools that have a Hindu background or majority by always attending various official invitations. In terms of madrasah management, particularly in the policy of recruiting non-Muslim teachers, efforts are made to create an inclusive educational environment that prioritises the needs of the school. This is further reinforced by the daily practices of teachers, educational staff, and students, such as the distribution of takjil during Ramadan to all residents regardless of their religious background, further emphasising that the values of tolerance, respect for diversity, and social solidarity have been internalised in madrasah life.

The results of the study indicate that instilling religious moderation in students in the madrasah environment can provide benefits that are felt by students as Muslim minorities in their social environment. This can be seen based on various dimensions such as psychological, social, religious, citizenship, and attitudes towards diversity. From these various dimensions, students feel

the benefits of instilling religious moderation, such as a sense of security, the ability to interact harmoniously with non-Muslims, understanding the limits of tolerance and beliefs, respecting local culture and customs, and having an inclusive view without losing their Islamic identity.

Table 3. Findings on the Benefits of Religious Moderation

No	Dimension	Perceived Benefits
1.	Psychological	Feeling safe and comfortable as a Muslim minority
2.	Social	Ability to interact harmoniously with non-Muslims
3.	Religious	Understanding the limits of tolerance and faith
4.	Citizenship	Respect for local culture and customary rules
5.	Inclusive attitude	An inclusive view without losing Islamic identity

Source: Results of research analysis

Table 3 shows that the instilling of religious moderation in students at MAN provides benefits for Muslim students who are in the minority. This can be seen in various dimensions, such as the psychological dimension, which makes students feel safer and more comfortable in their daily lives as a minority. This is because religious moderation teaches that differences are not a threat, thereby reducing social anxiety. Similarly, in the social dimension, religious moderation teaches students to be able to interact well with people from different backgrounds, to respect each other, and thus maintain harmony. Meanwhile, in the religious dimension, students become aware of the limits set by Sharia law, such as in matters of tolerance, without having to sacrifice their beliefs and principles in accordance with Islamic teachings. Furthermore, in the civic dimension, religious moderation strengthens students' awareness that they live with a variety of cultures and traditions in society. In the context of Bali, students understand the importance of respecting various local cultures and customary rules, so that with this awareness and understanding, they can prevent various cultural frictions in the community. And in the dimension of attitudes towards diversity, with religious moderation, students have an inclusive view. They realise that they live in Indonesia, which is full of diversity in identity, both in terms of ethnicity and religion, and other beliefs.

Discussion

There is a close relationship between religious moderation and madrasah educational institutions, because madrasah educational institutions not only function as institutions for teaching Islam or deepening understanding of Islam, but also as strategic spaces for fostering an inclusive religious attitude. This is reflected in the publication of the Guidelines for the Implementation of Religious Moderation in Madrasahs by the Directorate of Curriculum, Facilities, Institutions, and Madrasah Student Affairs (Direktorat KSKK Madrasah, 2021), which serves as a national reference for madrasahs in internalising the principles of religious moderation within the school community.

These guidelines emphasise that religious moderation must be embedded in the teaching process and institutional culture. According to (Info Publik Emis Kemenag, 2024), there are seven senior high school madrasahs, both public and private, in Buleleng Regency, and MAN Buleleng is the only public senior high school madrasah operating in a socio-cultural context dominated by non-Muslims.

In line with this policy framework, the implementation of religious moderation at MAN Buleleng refers to the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 347 of 2022 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of an Independent Curriculum in Madrasahs. This regulation emphasises the implementation of the Strengthening of the Rahmatan lil Alamin Student Profile (PPRA), which prioritises the instilling of diverse moderation values through structured learning activities and the instilling of these values in everyday life. In this context, diverse moderation is understood as an educational approach that fosters tolerance, respect for diversity, love for the homeland, and a culture of peace through various academic and non-academic activities.

The curriculum plays an important role in education because it forms the basis for achieving educational goals and developing students' abilities (Haris et al., 2024). Integrating the values of pluralism and religious tolerance into the curriculum enables the formation of a more inclusive generation that is able to respect differences in beliefs. Religious moderation in the context of education emphasises the importance of promoting values of tolerance, dialogue, and respect for religious differences in the educational environment (Hasan & Juhannis, 2024a). Findings from this study show that at MAN Buleleng, religious moderation is not taught as a separate subject but is systematically integrated into various subjects.

Based on the findings, the internalization of the values of religious moderation through various subjects, such as Aqidah Akhlak. In this subject, students are given an understanding of the boundaries and differences in aqidah (belief) and muamalah (social interaction). This is supported by the findings of Zulfatmi, (2023) that in learning Aqidah Akhlak the values of religious moderation can be internalized. However, the internalization of the values of religious moderation can not only be done in Islamic-based subjects, but several research results also show that the values of religious moderation can be internalized in other general subjects, such as civics (Mustafa, 2023), sociology (Syahrin, Idris, et al., 2023), Social Sciences and Natural Sciences (Tribrata et al., 2025). Therefore, it can be said that the internalization of the values of religious moderation can be done in various

subjects, where the process can begin with conveying the values of love and compassion between fellow religious adherents to students (Syahrin et al., 2023). This further confirms that religious moderation is not only the responsibility of religious subject teachers, but is the responsibility of all teachers, which can be internalized in various subjects at school (Chotimah et al., 2025).

In addition to formal learning, the application of various forms of moderation at MAN Buleleng is also reinforced through various habit-forming programmes that are part of the madrasah's hidden curriculum. Rohman et al. (2022) state that religious moderation values can be effectively instilled through habit formation, empowerment, and indoctrination in daily activities. At MAN Buleleng, these practices are realised through the 3S programme (Salam, Senyum, and Sapa), morning tadarus (recitation of the Qur'an), congregational prayers, and various religious activities during Ramadan. Observations show that the 3S programme is consistently implemented at the school gate, where teachers greet students every morning with a greeting, a smile, and a thank you. This practice creates a warm and respectful atmosphere of interaction between teachers and students. Reciting the Qur'an in the morning before starting lessons in class and performing the dhuha and zuhr prayers also serve as a regular reminder of discipline and spirituality. Meanwhile, during Ramadan, there are programmes such as short Islamic boarding schools, religious quizzes, the collection and distribution of zakat fitrah, and social activities such as distributing takjil to the community regardless of religious background. Therefore, the values of religious moderation can be implemented to students at school in various ways, such as through extracurricular activities, school programmes and activities, and classroom learning (Albana, 2023). These activities show that religious moderation is not only manifested in personal piety but also in inclusive social care.

Based on previous research, the implementation of religious moderation at MAN Buleleng is similar to practices at other madrasahs, such as MAN Bontang and MAN Balikpapan. MAN Bontang develops religious moderation through the formation of a special team that has undergone training and has become the main driver of programme implementation, with regular evaluations conducted through supervision activities (Mahmud & Umiarso, 2025). Meanwhile, MAN Balikpapan integrates the values of religious moderation into religious studies and citizenship subjects and reinforces them through student-led religious study groups (Majelis Taklim) under the guidance of teachers (Mahmud & Umiarso, 2025). However, the various methods and elements involved or becoming a forum in forming moderate character in the madrasah environment cannot be separated from the role of teachers. Internalization of religious moderation is effective when

teachers in the classroom apply learning strategies through dialogue, active participation, and critical reflection (Musthofa, 2025), as well as not limited to classroom learning but can also be through extracurricular activities and real-life examples (Fasyiransyah et al., 2025). From the results of previous research in accordance with the findings at MAN Buleleng, that teachers play a role in encouraging students to understand religious teachings substantially and contextually, preventing understanding the context in a narrow, exclusive, or even confrontational way. Other elements, such as family and social circles, are inseparable. This is because the formation of moderate religious character among young people is inextricably linked to the role of family and peers (social circles) (Sirry, 2020). Therefore, the instillation of religious moderation is not solely implemented in formal institutions, but collaboration with both informal and non-formal institutions further facilitates the actualization of religious moderation in social life, which contributes to maintaining interfaith harmony and fostering faith in Muslim minority communities.

Demographically, Bali Province is dominated by Hindus, followed by Muslims, then Christians, Buddhists, Catholics, and Confucians (Kementerian Agama Provinsi Bali, 2023). Based on this composition, Muslims are quantitatively a minority group. However, Islam has been present and developed in Bali since the 15th century (Kartini, 2011; Ramdhani et al., 2020), indicating that the presence of Muslims in Bali has long historical roots and is inseparable from the social dynamics of the local community. Meanwhile, the relationship between Muslims and Hindus in Bali is characterised by a relatively harmonious pattern of interaction. Peaceful and harmonious relations between Hindus and Muslims have existed since the kingdom era (Wisarja & Sudarsana, 2023). One of the reasons for the peaceful relations between the two groups is the development of Balinese local wisdom, namely *menyama braya* (Arjawa & Zulkifli, 2021). As expressed by Padmadewi et al., (2025) *Menyama braya* is the local wisdom of the Balinese people that embodies the universal principles of harmony and kinship, fostering a sense of connectedness between individuals and encouraging them to live side by side. Until now, the values of *menyama braya* are applied in the multicultural society in Bali with mutual respect and tolerance between each religious group (Wisarja & Sudarsana, 2023). So that it becomes an important capital in implementing and practicing religious moderation, which aims to maintain harmony.

The findings of this study indicate that the practice of religious moderation at MAN Buleleng is evident in social interactions between students, educators, and the surrounding community, both inside and outside the madrasah. In a Muslim minority context, students are accustomed to

establishing social relationships with groups of different faiths. By instilling religious moderation in the madrasah, the harmonious relationships that have been established can be maintained without losing their Islamic identity. Respecting Nyepi Day by staying at home and not using loudspeakers during the call to prayer is crucial to maintaining interfaith harmony. The practice of respecting events and teachings of religions other than Islam certainly does not violate Islamic teachings themselves. This finding also aligns with research on teaching tolerance to Muslim minorities, such as in private Islamic schools in Thailand, which encourage interfaith interaction among students and emphasize the Islamic teaching of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (Kosim et al., 2025). Rejecting extremism and liberalism in religion is key to balance, in order to preserve civilization and create peace (Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama, 2019). In the context of Muslim minorities, this practice is crucial because it contributes to strengthening the ability to adapt to various cultures, respect other religions, and foster a tolerant attitude by understanding the limits according to Islamic teachings.

The recruitment of non-Muslim teachers at MAN Buleleng is also part of the practice of religious moderation. Previous research in the Balinese context has shown that the recruitment of non-Muslim teachers and the introduction of Balinese language lessons at the Bali Insani Islamic Boarding School in Tabanan Regency, Bali Province, are efforts to integrate the values of tolerance (Hadi & Usbani, 2024). The presence of non-Muslim teachers can provide Muslim students with an understanding of religious diversity, as is the case in Islamic schools in the Netherlands (Budak, 2022). In addition, madrasahs also maintain the strengthening of internal Islamic identity through regular religious activities, such as monthly recitations for teachers and educational staff at MAN Buleleng. This pattern shows a balance between an inclusive attitude towards diversity and efforts to strengthen Islamic faith and values within the madrasah environment. Thus, the practice of religious moderation at MAN Buleleng offers empirical novelty because it demonstrates that madrasahs, as Islamic educational institutions, can play a strategic role in shaping an inclusive religious identity in a Muslim minority context. Schools can serve as bridges connecting diverse cultural and religious backgrounds by teaching tolerance, mutual respect, and interfaith cooperation (Hasan & Juhannis, 2024a). This practice not only strengthens the social and religious resilience of Muslim students but also makes a significant contribution to maintaining harmony and interfaith harmony in Bali.

Based on the social construction theory of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, findings related to the implementation and practice of religious moderation can be scientifically analyzed. In

this theory, society, as an objective and subjective reality, can be understood dialectically as a continuous process consisting of moments of externalization, objectivation, and internalization (Berger & Luckmann, 2023). The key to the theory of reality construction lies in Berger's dialectic of externalisation, objectification, and internalisation, which is influenced by Hegel's dialectic and understood in the same way as defined in the collectivity of phenomena by Marx (Dharma, 2018). The three dialectical moments of social reality are essentially interrelated, and each represents an essential character of the social world (Dreher, 2016).

Externalisation is the process by which individuals perceive social reality and begin to understand it according to their subjective understanding or adaptation to the sociocultural world as a human product (Berger & Luckmann, 2023). In the context of this study, Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (Man Buleleng) implements religious moderation based on the curriculum, madrasah policies, and various programs related to religious moderation to instil balanced thinking, attitudes, and character in religion and interfaith relations for madrasah residents so that they can understand the realities that exist in their surroundings in order to live side by side. Furthermore, objectification is a social interaction that occurs in an institutionalised intersubjective world or undergoes a process of institutionalisation so that social reality becomes normal and objective for individuals (Berger & Luckmann, 2023). The religious moderation programme institutionalised by MAN Buleleng has slowly become part of madrasah culture and rules and is implemented repeatedly, making religious moderation a common understanding that is accepted collectively by madrasah members. Meanwhile, internalisation is the process by which individuals identify themselves, internalise and accept the meanings or realities that exist in society, either through socialisation or discussion (Berger & Luckmann, 2023). Institutionalised religious moderation shapes religious identity and inclusive and adaptive attitudes, becoming the consciousness and behaviour of madrasah members in the context of a Muslim minority. Thus, religious moderation in the madrasah environment is not merely a normative discourse or slogan but shapes the social reality and social practices applied in the social life of madrasah members. A generation educated with religious moderation will be better able to overcome differences and find joint solutions to social problems (Arifinsyah et al., 2020).

The presence of religious moderation as a programme implemented in madrasahs is gradually benefiting students. In the context of Muslim minorities, internalised religious moderation provides students with the understanding they need to think and behave wisely in a multicultural environment. Based on research findings, the benefits of religious moderation for Muslim minority

students can be classified into five main dimensions: psychological, social, religious, personal, civic, and inclusive attitudes. Psychologically, religious moderation fosters a sense of security and comfort for students as a Muslim minority. This sense of security plays a crucial role in supporting the learning process and building self-confidence, as students do not feel threatened or marginalized in expressing their religious identity. Similarly, when students are in a heterogeneous environment, emphasizing religious moderation, which teaches that differences are not threats, can reduce social anxiety when interacting in a multicultural environment. This finding aligns with research findings that reveal religious moderation correlates with happiness among Muslim communities, even though they are in a minority position (Abdullah & Rasbi, 2023). Furthermore, Abdullah & Rasbi (2023) revealed that Muslims with moderate attitudes toward religion tend to have higher levels of happiness, which is associated with improved quality of life, self-confidence, and overall life satisfaction. Thus, even though Muslims are in a minority position, having a moderate character can make them comfortable, happy, and feel safe in their environment.

In the social dimension, religious moderation improves students' ability to interact harmoniously with non-Muslim groups. Students are able to establish effective communication, build equal social relationships, and avoid exclusive or confrontational attitudes. This finding aligns with (Chalik, 2023), who stated that positive relations between the non-Muslim majority community and the Muslim minority community can prevent potential conflict through ongoing communication, understanding, and social cooperation. Meanwhile, from a personal religious dimension, religious moderation helps students understand the boundaries between tolerance and faith. Students are not guided towards religious relativism, but rather strengthened in a substantial and contextual understanding of Islam. Thus, tolerance is practiced without obscuring the basic principles of faith. This understanding forms an important foundation for the formation of a mature religious identity amidst the reality of religious pluralism. The goal of instilling religious moderation in students is to enable them to take the middle path (not leaning towards extremism or liberalism) based on the Qur'an and Hadith, being balanced, straightforward, and steadfast (*i'tidāl*) (Syahrin, Idris, et al., 2023). Moderation emphasizes balance based on moral conviction and character in interactions, both individually and in groups (Abdain et al., 2022). Rejecting extremism and liberalism in religion is key to balance, preserving civilization, and creating peace (Badan Litbang and Diklat Kementerian Agama, 2019).

In the civic dimension, religious moderation encourages students to respect local culture and customary rules prevailing in Balinese society. This demonstrates a commitment to nationality and an awareness of the various religions, cultures, and customs that exist in Indonesia. Religious moderation, in this case, serves as a bridge between religious identity and civic identity. A culture of respect for other cultures and cultural diversity, openness, and curiosity foster adaptation and integration within society (Murtiningsih & Veronika, 2022). Meanwhile, in terms of inclusive attitudes, religious moderation encourages inclusivity among students. Inclusivity is an attitude and open-mindedness in respecting differences of opinion, thought, ethnicity, and religion (Rohman & Muhtamiroh, 2022) without fear of losing one's identity as a Muslim. Students view religious differences as a social reality that must be respected, not as a threat. Inclusive attitudes can strengthen the resilience of the Muslim minority identity and foster social cohesion in a multicultural environment.

Various findings regarding the benefits experienced by students as a Muslim minority are supported by the long-standing historical relationship between Muslims and Hindus in Bali. As stated by Tohari & Raya, (2021), despite the world facing various forms of extremism and terrorism, Muslim-Hindu relations in Bali remain strong. This suggests that religious moderation and long-standing interfaith relations can serve as effective social capital in addressing global challenges. Meanwhile, in the educational context, these findings emphasize the importance of transformative Islamic education. Islamic education serves not only as a means of conveying normative knowledge but also as a vehicle for developing students' social capacities. According to Bakar et al., (2025), transformative Islamic education can equip students with skills for coexistence, respecting differences, and preventing potential religious-based conflicts. Thus, madrasas play a strategic role in shaping a generation of moderate, inclusive, and socially resilient Muslim minorities.

The findings regarding the benefits of implementing religious moderation among Muslim minority students can also be explained through the social identity theory proposed by Tajfel & Turner (1986). This theory explains that social identity is an individual's knowledge that they are part of a particular social group, along with some emotional meanings and values that are important to them in their membership in that group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In the context of this study, students in the madrasah environment understand and recognize that they are part of the Muslim minority group in their environment. Furthermore, Tajfel & Turner (1986) revealed that social identity can be positive or negative, and if the out-group is superior to the in-group, it will trigger

strategies such as individual mobility, social creativity, and social competition. Social mobility is a form of individual action to leave a group and join another group that is considered more positive (Trepte & Loy, 2017). The various benefits of instilling and practising these values in students in the madrasah environment will certainly attract every Islamic educational institution to start implementing them, as has been done by schools or madrasahs (groups) that have implemented matters related to the values of religious moderation, particularly in the interpretation, practice, and process of forming a character of religious moderation in students.

In the context of Bali, understanding and practising religious moderation needs to be done from an early age as an effort to implement Islam *rahmatan lil 'alamin* by Muslim minorities, which is considered positive. However, if there is individual mobility in social terms, such as ethnicity, religion, or background, it is often difficult to do so (Trepte & Loy, 2017). Furthermore, there is social creativity that is considered more creative than the previous strategy (social mobility) because of the various benefits felt by students in the psychological, social, personal religious, civic, and inclusive attitudes dimensions in the context of madrasahs in Bali, which can build their identity as Muslims into a group that is religious, tolerant, inclusive, and able to coexist peacefully with the majority group. Thus, a positive image can be constructively formed without having to change the social position as a Muslim minority. This is done by comparing groups on new dimensions, comparing them with out-groups that are not threatening, or reinterpreting low status (Trepte & Loy, 2017). Another strategy is social competition, which aims to change a low status to a higher status and is also known as a social change strategy (Trepte & Loy, 2017). Direct competition with outside groups to gain status can take various forms, ranging from debates, protests, to revolutions and wars (Hogg, 2016). This strategy has the potential to trigger conflicts between religious groups. Therefore, the presence of religious moderation for students in madrasahs is more appropriately understood as a form of social creativity strategy. This is because madrasah students, as a Muslim minority in Bali, are making efforts to maintain their identity as Muslims while building and maintaining harmony between religious communities and with the majority group, as well as efforts to benefit from the instilling of religious moderation in the madrasah environment.

CONCLUSION

This article concludes that religious moderation serves as a strategic mechanism for shaping an inclusive religious identity and strengthening social resilience for Muslim students in a minority

context. Similarly, in the context of MAN Buleleng, religious moderation allows for a balance between commitment to Islamic teachings and openness to social, cultural, and religious diversity in a spirit of tolerance and respect. In the implementation of religious moderation, it can be through policies, subjects and various programs in madrasas, as well as in the practice of religious moderation, every element involved is needed as part of the effort to actualize religious moderation in the social environment and various benefits are felt by students from the instillation of religious moderation which is not only in insight but also in beliefs, directions and forms of practice in daily life. The various benefits experienced by students through the instilling of religious moderation in the madrasah environment equip students to establish harmonious relationships, think and behave openly, respect diversity, and maintain tolerance among religious communities.

The results of this study contribute to the development of scientific discourse on the implementation and benefits of religious moderation in the context of Muslim minorities. However, this study has limitations because it only focuses on one research location or one madrasah, namely MAN Buleleng. Therefore, for further research, it is recommended to develop comparative studies across regions or educational institutions. Similarly, in terms of the research method used, this study has limitations in that it only uses one research method, namely qualitative research with a case study approach. Therefore, for further research, it is recommended to use more diverse methods, such as quantitative research methods, so that the data produced can be measured, or mixed methods to make it more complex.

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