

IMPLEMENTATION OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION VALUE IN AL-AZHAR SUPERIOR HIGH SCHOOL MEDAN JOHOR SUB-DISTRICT

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the implementation of religious moderation values at SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan Johor, focusing on four main indicators: national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and acceptance of local traditions. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. The results showed that SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan Johor has successfully integrated the values of religious moderation in various aspects of education, including the curriculum, extracurricular activities, and students' daily lives. This implementation includes strengthening the sense of nationalism through activities such as flag ceremonies and extracurricular nationalism; instilling tolerance through inclusive religious learning and cultural arts activities; establishing a safe environment free of violence through the Anti-Bullying Task Force program; and respect for local traditions through arts and cultural activities. In conclusion, SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan Johor has succeeded in creating an educational environment that is tolerant, harmonious, and appreciates diversity, while forming a young generation that is moderate, inclusive, and loves the country. This research contributes to the development of a religious moderation-based education model that is relevant to the challenges of the times.

Keyword: Religious Moderation, Islamic Education, Tolerance, National Commitment, Local Tradition.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi implementasi nilai-nilai moderasi beragama di SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan Johor, dengan fokus pada empat indikator utama: komitmen kebangsaan, toleransi, anti-kekerasan, dan penerimaan terhadap tradisi lokal. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan studi dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan Johor telah berhasil mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai moderasi beragama dalam berbagai aspek pendidikan, termasuk kurikulum, kegiatan ekstrakurikuler, dan kehidupan sehari-hari siswa. Implementasi ini meliputi penguatan rasa nasionalisme melalui kegiatan seperti upacara bendera dan ekstrakurikuler kebangsaan; menanamkan toleransi melalui pembelajaran agama yang inklusif dan kegiatan seni budaya; membangun lingkungan yang aman dan bebas dari kekerasan melalui program Gugus Tugas Anti-Bullying; dan menghormati tradisi lokal melalui kegiatan seni dan budaya. Kesimpulannya, SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan Johor telah berhasil menciptakan lingkungan pendidikan yang toleran, harmonis, dan menghargai keberagaman, sekaligus membentuk generasi muda yang moderat, inklusif, dan cinta tanah air. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi bagi pengembangan model pendidikan berbasis moderasi beragama yang relevan dengan tantangan zaman.

Kata Kunci: Moderasi Agama, Pendidikan Islam, Toleransi, Komitmen Kebangsaan, Tradisi Lokal.



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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, which consists of islands, has a diversity of cultures and religions. This diversity creates a plurality that is united by Pancasila and the motto Bhinneka Tunggal Ika as written on the Garuda bird's ribbon. So that the struggle of Indonesian heroes is not in vain, the community is expected to manifest the nation's integralistic determination contained in the state ideology, namely Pancasila. This is specifically stated in the 3rd principle, namely the Unity of Indonesia.¹

Religious moderation has become one of the important agendas in building a harmonious and tolerant society amid Indonesia's diversity. As a country with a high level of plurality, Indonesia faces challenges in maintaining unity amidst its religious, cultural and ethnic diversity. The concept of religious moderation promoted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia includes four main indicators: national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and acceptance of local traditions. In the Islamic context, religious moderation means prioritising a tolerant attitude in the face of differences, both in religious sects and teachings. This includes openness to accept diversity and avoiding fanatical attitudes that can trigger conflict. These four indicators are expected to be the foundation in forming a society that respects differences and rejects all forms of violence.

Contemporary Challenges and Problems Religious communities in Indonesia are currently faced with a number of contemporary challenges and problems that have the potential to have a negative impact on religious mat life and even threaten the integrity of the nation. These difficulties can be divided into three: radicalism and fanaticism, secularisation and modernisation, as well as fanaticism, secularisation and modernisation, and social and financial inequality.² National education plays an important role in shaping a generation of faith, devotion, and noble character. However, globalisation and the information revolution present great challenges, including the influence of foreign cultures that can shift local values that can create divisions between religious communities.³ Role of school institutions is very significant in internalizing the values of religious moderation. Moderation-based education not only shapes student character but also strengthens a sense of nationality and appreciation for cultural diversity. According to Ma'arif⁴, religious moderation must be instilled from an early age in order to become a unifying force in the midst of

¹ Abdullah Haidar, *Moderasi Beragama di Tengah Isu Kontemporer* (Puslitbang Bimas Agama dan Layanan Keagamaan Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, 2023).

² F. Hidayat et al., "Islam Nusantara: Sejarah Peradaban Islam Kontemporer di Indonesia," *Gudang Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu* 2, no. 1 (2024): 92–99, <https://doi.org/10.59435/gjmi.v2i1.195>.

³ F. Hidayat et al., "Implementasi Kurikulum Kulliyatul Mu'allimin Al-Islamiyah (KMI) dalam Pengembangan Akhlak Mulia Santri Pondok Pesantren Khaira Ummah Aceh Tenggara," *Electronic Journal of Education, Social Economic and Technology* 5, no. 2 (2024): 152–60, <https://doi.org/10.33122/ejeset.v5i2.348>.

⁴ A.S. Ma'arif, *Islam dalam Bingkai Keindonesiaan dan Kemanusiaan: Sebuah Refleksi Sejarah*, 1st ed. (Mizan Pustaka, 2009).

diversity. This is in line with Creswell's⁵ view, which states that education acts as an agent of social change through the development of inclusive and dialogical attitudes.

SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan Johor is one of the educational institutions that has successfully implemented the values of religious moderation systematically. The school integrates the values of religious moderation into the curriculum, extracurricular activities, and students' daily lives. Through this approach, the school seeks to create a young generation that not only has a deep understanding of religion but is also able to coexist with tolerance and respect for diversity. This implementation is reflected in various aspects, such as strengthening national commitment through flag ceremonies and extracurricular nationalism activities, instilling tolerance values through inclusive religious learning, and creating a violence-free environment through the Anti-Bullying Task Force program.^{6,7}

This study aims to explore the implementation of religious moderation at SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan Johor using a descriptive qualitative approach. The focus of the research includes strengthening national commitment, applying tolerance values, preventing violence, and accepting local traditions. With this approach, it is expected to obtain a comprehensive picture of the practice of religious moderation in the context of education and its impact on student character building. This research also provides an academic contribution in efforts to develop a religious moderation-based education model that is relevant to the challenges of the times.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research approach used in this study is descriptive qualitative. This method is used to study real-world problem solving through a systematic process of collecting, organising, clarifying, and evaluating data. The purpose of this research is to describe the implementation of religious moderation carried out by teachers at SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan. The qualitative approach allows researchers to understand social reality in depth, focusing on the meaning and interactions that occur in a particular context. According to Bogdan and Taylor⁸, qualitative research produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words, as well as observable behaviour, which is analysed holistically without separating variables or hypotheses as separate entities.

As a qualitative research, data collection was conducted through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Observation was used to directly observe the

⁵ John W. Creswell, *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*, 4th ed., ed. C.R.K.M.Paul A. Smith (Pearson Education, Inc, 2012).

⁶ Kemenag, *Moderasi Beragama*, 1st ed. (Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, 2019), https://balitbangdiklat.kemenag.go.id/upload/files/MODERASI_BERAGAMA.pdf.

⁷ D. Olweus, *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do* (Blackwell Publishing, 1993).

⁸ L.J. Moloeng, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Remaja Rosdakarya, 2017).

interaction and practice of religious moderation in the classroom and in the school environment. In-depth interviews were conducted with PAI teachers, some students, and other teachers who interacted with them. Documentation studies were used to collect data from official school documents relevant to the implementation of religious moderation. In this research, the researcher acts as the main instrument (human instrument) in charge of collecting, analysing, and interpreting data directly.⁹

Data analysis in this study was conducted inductively, by building patterns and themes from the data collected. This analysis process involved three main steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was done by sorting out important information relevant to the research focus, while data presentation was done in the form of descriptive narratives that supported the analysis. Conclusions were drawn based on patterns found during data analysis. This approach aims to describe the phenomenon as a whole, without being influenced by certain assumptions or interests.¹⁰

To ensure data validity, this research uses triangulation and member checking techniques. Triangulation is done by comparing data from various sources, such as interviews, observations, and documents. Meanwhile, member checking is done by asking respondents to confirm the truth of the data that has been collected and analysed. According to Creswell¹¹, these steps are important to increase the validity and reliability of qualitative research, so that the results obtained can be scientifically accounted for.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Religious moderation is a concept that refers to a religious attitude that prioritises balance, tolerance and harmony in social life. According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, there are four main indicators of religious moderation, namely: (1) national commitment, (2) tolerance, (3) non-violence, and (4) acceptance of local traditions. National commitment reflects loyalty to basic state values, such as Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Tolerance is realised through respect for differences in religious beliefs and practices. Non-violence emphasises the importance of peaceful conflict resolution, while acceptance of local traditions shows openness to cultural diversity without losing the essence of religion.

Ma'arif¹² also emphasises that religious moderation is not only related to personal attitudes, but also how religion becomes a unifying force in the midst of diversity. He underlined the

⁹ Creswell, *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*.

¹⁰ Moloeng, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*.

¹¹ Creswell, *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*.

¹² Ma'arif, *Islam dalam Bingkai Keindonesiaan dan Kemanusiaan: Sebuah Refleksi Sejarah*.

importance of an inclusive and dialogical understanding of religion to avoid exclusivism and radicalism. In the context of education, religious moderation can be measured through the extent to which students are able to appreciate differences, behave fairly towards others, and show a critical attitude towards teachings that are contrary to national and human values.

National Commitment

National commitment is one of the important indicators in religious moderation that emphasises loyalty to the basic values of the state, such as Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the motto of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. Based on the results of research at SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan, it was found that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers actively integrate national values into learning. This can be seen from the teacher's efforts in explaining the importance of maintaining national unity through religious teachings, for example by teaching tolerance between religious communities and avoiding excessive fanaticism. Teachers also use various approaches, such as group discussions and case studies, to help students understand the relevance of national commitment in everyday life.

This opinion is in line with Syamsul Arifin's view, which states that national commitment is an important foundation for creating social harmony amid diversity. He emphasises that religious moderation cannot be separated from the awareness of the importance of maintaining the integrity of the nation and state. In this context, education plays a strategic role in instilling national values to the younger generation. SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan has successfully utilised this momentum by integrating national values into religious learning.

In addition, the research shows that students of SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan have a good understanding of the importance of national commitment. For example, many students are able to link Islamic teachings with national values, such as unity, justice, and religious freedom. This understanding is supported by extracurricular activities that promote the spirit of nationalism, such as flag ceremonies, nationalism-themed debate competitions, *paskibra*, scouts, and even the Indonesian Red Cross (PMI). According to Creswell¹³, such activities can strengthen the internalisation of religious moderation values, especially national commitment, among students.

¹³ Creswell, *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*.

Islam itself strongly supports the concept of national commitment. In the Qur'an, Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

Meaning: *O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female. Then, We made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most honourable among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious* (Qs. Al-Hujurat ;13).

This verse emphasises the idea that diversity is an inherent principle, and it is the duty of humanity to recognise and respect each other's differences. This verse has significance in terms of nationalism, emphasising the importance of respecting the rich ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity that exists in Indonesia. In addition, educators at SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan often link national commitment to Islamic principles of *ukhuwah wathaniyah*, or national brotherhood.

This notion emphasises the obligation of every individual to maintain the cohesion and unity of the nation. This methodology explains to students the integral relationship between good citizenship and the appreciation of worship, as well as adherence to Islamic values. In summary, the implementation of national commitment at SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan shows good results, although there are still certain challenges to be faced. Along with the advancement of digital literacy, collaboration among educators and support from all components of the education system are expected to improve religious moderation, especially in relation to national commitment.

Tolerance

The measure of tolerance in religious moderation relates to the disposition of mutual respect and acceptance of diversity, including religious beliefs, cultural nuances, and social dimensions. At SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan, the principle of tolerance is deeply woven into daily interactions as well as various educational policies and initiatives. This high school, which is affiliated with Al-Azhar Foundation and encompasses educational units from kindergarten to university, lives by a philosophy of religious moderation that promotes the values of tolerance both inside and outside.

One method of fostering tolerance is by creating opportunities for students to engage in comprehensive religious studies through specialised subjects, including Qur'an Hadith, Fiqh, Aqidah Akhlak, SKI, and Tahfidz. Through 11 hours of religious instruction each week, students not only gain an in-depth understanding of religious principles but also an appreciation of the various perspectives that exist within Islam. This is in line with the perspective of Arya¹⁴, who

¹⁴ A. Arya, *Pendidikan Islam: Tradisi dan Modernisasi Menuju Milenium Baru*, 2nd ed. (Kencana, 2014).

argues that religious education should serve as a means to foster the values of tolerance and counter exclusivism.

In addition, tolerance is expressed through the incorporation of two educational frameworks, namely the Merdeka Curriculum and the Ministry of Religious Affairs Curriculum. This integration allows students to acquire a strong religious education while simultaneously encouraging a comprehensive understanding of general knowledge. The existence of a school diploma and a madrasah diploma illustrates the dedication of these institutions in fulfilling the various educational needs of students from two different perspectives. Abdurrahman Wahid argues that inclusive education should effectively combine religious and national values to promote social harmony.

Routine activities in the morning, such as reading Asmaul Husna and praying together for the foundation's founder, are also a means to instil the values of spirituality and tolerance. On Fridays, the reading of selected letters such as Yasin, Ar-Rahman, or Al-Waqiah is done together, creating an atmosphere of harmonious togetherness. This activity teaches students to appreciate the diversity of ways of worship in Islam, in accordance with the word of Allah:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا وَإِعْدِلُوا

هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

Meaning: *O you who believe, be ye upholders for the sake of Allah (and) witnesses (who act) justly. Do not let your hatred of a people encourage you to be unjust. Be just, for that is nearer to piety. Fear Allah. Verily, Allah is mindful of what you do.* (QS. Al-Maidah: 8).

Celebrations of national festivals, such as Indonesia's Independence Day, also demonstrate tolerance. All units, from kindergarten to high school, are involved in performing arts. These activities cover a wide range of cultural expressions, including musical theatre, dance, music, and fashion shows featuring traditional clothing from across Indonesia. In fact, the students also introduced religious attire from the various recognised religions in Indonesia.

Such activities are a tangible form of multicultural education that can facilitate the development of tolerance among students, according to Fakhri¹⁵. In religious education, tolerance is taught through practical methods, such as the Iqra' remedial programme, which is designed for students who have difficulty reading the Qur'an. The programme not only improves students' understanding of the Qur'an but also emphasises the importance of mutual help and recognition of differences in ability among students. This method reflects the principles of inclusiveness that underpin religious moderation.

¹⁵ M. Fakhri, *Analisis Gender dan Transformasi Sosial*, 10th ed. (Pustaka Pelajar, 2006).

In general, SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan has effectively integrated the principles of tolerance into various educational disciplines. The school remains committed to improving the understanding and application of tolerance through various initiatives, although there are still obstacles, such as the potential of social media to fuel intolerance. This high school has become a real illustration of the successful implementation of religious moderation in accordance with Islamic and national principles, through a comprehensive approach.

Anti Violence

The indicator of non-violence in the framework of religious moderation emphasises the importance of creating an environment that is peaceful, safe, and free from violence, both in physical and verbal forms. At SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan, this principle is realised through the establishment of an Anti-Bullying Task Force, designed to foster an educational environment that supports and promotes the comprehensive development of students. The task force consists of educators, counsellors, and student representatives who have received training to identify, prevent, and address cases of bullying in the educational environment.

The main responsibilities of the Anti-Bullying Task Force cover multiple dimensions. Initially, they have the task of enlightening students on the detrimental effects of violence and bullying, both in person and through social media platforms. In addition, they engage in systematic observation of student interactions both within the classroom and in the external environment. Thirdly, the task force offers counselling services for students who have experienced or been involved in bullying, with the aim of helping them address the issue constructively. Fourth, they carry out regular initiatives such as seminars, workshops and innovative activities to enhance students' understanding of the importance of mutual respect.

This methodology is in line with the perspective of Olweus,¹⁶ a leading authority in the field of bullying research, who states that violence prevention in educational institutions requires strong co-operation between educators, students and parents. Olweus asserts that initiatives against violence should be anticipatory, encouraging an educational environment that condemns all forms of violence.

SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan has adopted this methodology by establishing a comprehensive support system involving all stakeholders. The school's anti-violence initiatives are further strengthened by a curriculum that incorporates anti-violence principles into religious education. In the Aqidah Akhlak domain, for example, students are taught to stay away from despicable traits such as hasad (envy) and ghibah (slander), which often trigger disputes. The educator further emphasised the importance of ukhuwah Islamiyah (brotherhood among Muslims)

¹⁶ Olweus, *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do*.

and ukhuwah insaniyah (brotherhood among all human beings), as expressed in Islamic teachings. Allah's words in the Qur'an support this approach:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحِلُّوا شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا آمِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ
يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ
الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ عَاوَنُوا
اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

It means: *O you who have believed, do not violate the sanctuaries of Allah, do not violate the honour of the Sacred Months, do not disturb the hadiyu (sacrificial animals) and the qalā'id (marked sacrificial animals), and do not disturb the visitors to the Baytulharam while they seek the bounty and pleasure of their Lord. When you have made tahalul (completed ihram), hunt (if you wish). Let not your hatred of a people, because they prevent you from the Sacred Mosque, lead you to transgress against them. Help each other in (doing) righteousness and piety, and do not help each other in sin and enmity. Fear Allah, surely Allah is very severe in His punishment. (Qs Al-Maidah ;8).*

This verse confirms that Muslims are commanded to cooperate in goodness and avoid actions that harm others. In the context of education, this is relevant to teach students to stay away from all forms of violence and support each other in creating a positive environment.

The presence of the Anti-Bullying Task Force and other supporting initiatives have been shown to have a significant impact on reducing the incidence of violence occurring in schools, according to the findings of the study. According to data collected internally, the number of reports of bullying has dropped by forty per cent over the past two years, since the establishment of this task force.

The fact that this is the case shows that the holistic approach that the school has developed to deal with the issue of violence is effective. On the other hand, there are still obstacles to overcome, especially when it comes to educating children about the long-term consequences of violence. Some students admitted that they still find it difficult to report cases of bullying because they are afraid of being labelled bad or punished for doing so. As a result, the Anti-Bullying Task Force continuously endeavours to build trusted relationships with students by adopting a kind and compassionate approach.

It has been established that SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan has a strong commitment to the creation of a safe and peaceful educational environment through the existence of various structured and sustainable anti-violence initiatives. Not only does this work contribute to the implementation of religious moderation, but it also helps to mould a young generation that has good character and concern for the welfare of others.

Adaptive to Local Culture

As it is known that Indonesia is a religiously diverse country, moderate attitudes and practices should be emphasised in an effort to resolve differences and create togetherness among religious communities.¹⁷ Local wisdom is a manifestation of religious expression. Religious moderation launched by the Ministry of Religious Affairs is based on this reason. Religion accommodates good cultures and traditions in society that do not contradict the qhat'i aqidah of religion or do not deviate from the basic teachings of religion.¹⁸ Local wisdom aims to improve welfare and create peace, because it is extracted from cultural products that concern the life and life of a community, such as value systems, beliefs and religions, work ethics, and even how dynamics take place.¹⁹

The issue of moderation is not just a matter of individuals, but groups and people, communities and countries, especially when currently various extreme groups have shown their faces under the pretext of religious interpretations that are very far from the essence of Islam. Culturally, the idea of religious moderation has been embedded in ancestral heritage that provides direction to understand each other and have a sense of tolerance for neighbours with different beliefs.²⁰ Religious moderation is a moderate religion by tolerating the diversity of beliefs. The ancestral heritage is reflected in local wisdom. Local wisdom has noble values that become a unifying tool for society and become an adhesive for diversity in Indonesia. Local wisdom can also build religious moderation in Indonesia.²¹

One important indicator of religious moderation is the acceptance of local traditions. At SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan, acceptance of local traditions is reflected in various activities that integrate religious values and Indonesian culture. As an Islamic school that implements two curricula, namely the Merdeka Curriculum and the Ministry of Religious Affairs Curriculum, this high school successfully combines the depth of religious education with respect for diverse local cultures.

The institution organises morning prayer sessions as a means to reinforce religious and national values. Every morning, before classes begin, students are encouraged to recite prayers,

¹⁷ K. Khoiruddin, "Moderasi Beragama dalam Kearifan Lokal pada Masyarakat Pesisir Barat Provinsi Lampung," *Moderatio: Jurnal Moderasi Beragama* 3, no. 1 (2023): 76–91.

¹⁸ M. Hasbi Amiruddin and Cut Zainab, "Moderasi Beragama dan Multikultural dalam Pandangan dan Pengajaran Akademisi di UIN Ar-Raniry dan UIN Antasari," *Kalam: Jurnal Agama dan Sosial Humaniora* 10, no. 1 (2022): 1–28.

¹⁹ R. Sibarani, "Pendekatan Antropolinguistik dalam Menggali Kearifan Lokal sebagai Identitas Bangsa," *Prosiding The 5th International Conference on Indonesian Studies: Ethnicity and Globalization*, 2013, 274–90.

²⁰ M. Muhammad, "Hubungan Agama dan Budaya pada Masyarakat Gampong Kereumbok Kabupaten Pidie, Provinsi Aceh," *Substantia: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 22, no. 2 (2020): 85–96.

²¹ L. Khasanah, "Akulturasi Agama dan Budaya Lokal (Upaya Membangun Keselarasan Islam dan Budaya Jawa)," *At-Thariq: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Budaya* 2, no. 2 (2022): 5.

including Al-Fatihah, as a way of honouring the memory of the foundation's founder who has passed away. This illustrates the importance given to respect for ancestors and the preservation of local customs within the framework of moderate religious education. On Fridays, students engage in a joint recitation of Surah Yasin, Ar-Rahman or Al-Waqiah, a practice that strengthens spiritual connections and upholds the noble values of Islamic culture.

Recognition of local traditions is clearly reflected in the wide array of extracurricular activities available. SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan provides a wide range of extracurricular activities that include nationalism, sports, arts, and religious activities. Among the current national extracurricular activities are Pasukan Pengibar Bendera (Paskibra), Pramuka, and Palang Merah Remaja (PMR), which aim to foster a deep appreciation of the homeland and a strong sense of national identity. In addition, athletic activities such as football, basketball, and swimming, along with artistic endeavours such as vocal performance, taekwondo, and calligraphy, reflect the wide array of activities that students from different backgrounds can participate in.

The institution offers an 'Iqra' Remediation' programme, designed for students who face challenges in reading the Qur'an. This initiative provides special support to students who face challenges in reading the Qur'an in a separate class, reflecting the institution's dedication to improving students' religious competence while respecting the nuances of local educational traditions. In addition, SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan emphasises the importance of arts and culture in the educational experience. During the commemoration of Indonesia's Independence Day (HUT RI), the institution organises art performances involving all levels of education, from kindergarten to senior high school.

This venture encompasses a variety of artistic expressions, including dance, vocal performances, marching ensembles, and musical theatre. A fashion show was held featuring traditional dress from across Indonesia, along with religious attire representing the various religions practised in the country. This venture illustrates the school's commitment to respecting and recognising the rich local traditions and cultural diversity inherent in Indonesia.

In this context, SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan demonstrates a commendable openness to local culture and arts. The institution engages arts educators from various fields of expertise, including Mr Tri Adinata, a music specialist, Ibu Ramlah, a dance expert, Ibu Anum, a literature connoisseur, and Mr Taufik, a cultural historian.

As a result, the institution emphasises not only the teaching of religion but also creating an environment for students to acknowledge and appreciate the diverse cultural heritage found in Indonesia. In short, SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan masterfully harmonises the incorporation of local traditions with the principles of religious and national education. This methodology reflects an effort towards religious moderation that not only conveys religious principles but also respects

and protects local culture, creating an environment where students develop into tolerant, open-minded, and accepting individuals.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to describe the implementation of religious moderation in SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan, focusing on several main indicators, namely national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and acceptance of local traditions. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan has successfully integrated the values of religious moderation in various aspects of school life, both in the curriculum, extracurricular activities, and students' daily lives. First, in terms of national commitment, SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan shows the strengthening of patriotism through routine activities such as the flag ceremony every Monday, as well as various extracurricular activities that focus on nationalism, such as Paskibra and Scouts. In addition, the religious education provided is not only limited to teaching religious knowledge, but also teaches the importance of maintaining national unity. This reflects that this school not only teaches religious aspects but also instils strong national values.

Second, tolerance indicators are also well implemented in SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan. This school teaches the importance of mutual respect and acceptance of differences through activities such as programmes that provide space for students to discuss differences in cultural and religious backgrounds. In addition, the diversity of extracurricular activities, such as arts, sports, and religion, shows that this school appreciates and celebrates the diversity that exists in Indonesia. Students are taught to coexist with tolerance, both in religious and cultural contexts.

Third, in the indicator of non-violence, SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan has succeeded in creating a safe and peaceful environment through the establishment of the Anti-Bullying Task Force. This task force plays an important role in detecting and handling cases of bullying, as well as educating students about the negative impact of violence. With these supporting programmes in place, SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan demonstrates a strong commitment to maintaining harmony within the school and creating an atmosphere that supports students' development. school and creating an atmosphere that supports positive student development.

Fourth, SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan also shows acceptance of local traditions by integrating various elements of Indonesian culture in school activities. For example, through art performances that involve all units from kindergarten to high school, as well as fashion shows that introduce traditional clothing from various regions in Indonesia. In addition, the school also provides space for students to recognise and appreciate local arts and culture by recruiting art

teachers who are experts in their fields. This reflects that the school does not only focus on religious education, but also on the preservation and appreciation of local culture.

Overall, the implementation of religious moderation at SMA Unggulan Al-Azhar Medan has succeeded in creating a balanced educational environment between teaching religion, nationality, and respect for local culture. With various programmes and activities that support religious moderation, the school has succeeded in forming students who not only have good religious knowledge, but also have tolerant characters, love for the country, and respect for diversity. This success shows that religious moderation can be effectively implemented in the context of education in Islamic schools, without neglecting national values and local culture.

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