

STRENGTHENING TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION AT MTsN 1 PIDIE JAYA

Rahmawati

¹Students of the Islamic Religious Education Study Program, Islamic University of Aceh

This study arises from the context of implementing Sharia Law in Aceh, which necessitates strengthening religious moderation to foster tolerance and respect for diversity. The research focuses on teachers' understanding of religious moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya, the factors influencing it, and the strategies employed for its reinforcement. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving the head of the madrasah, the deputy head, and several teachers. The findings indicate that teachers have a reasonably good understanding of religious moderation, supported by internal factors and external factors leadership support, training, modules, and online seminars. Challenges encountered include time constraints, limited access to relevant literature, and the socio-cultural homogeneity in Pidie Jaya. Reinforcement efforts include regular training, provision of relevant teaching materials, collaboration with religious figures, group discussions among teachers, and the use of social media. These strategies are considered effective but require ongoing evaluation and material development to ensure comprehensive implementation of religious moderation.

Keywords : *reinforcement, religious moderation, MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya*

Citation :

Rahmawati. 2025. Strengthening Teachers' Understanding of Religious Moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya. MSJ: Majority Science Journal, 3(2), xxx-xxx

Corresponding Author:

Rahmawati

rahmawati.spdi82@gmail.com



1. Introduction

The term religious moderation has not long developed in the country, but if we trace the aspects of the values of religious moderation, it has actually existed since this country's independence, one of which is the birth of Pancasila, and the existence of the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. In the context of Indonesia, the term moderation in recent years has been very popular, even the Indonesian Government through the Indonesian Ministry of Religion has created an idea of thought and movement known as religious moderation. On October 8, 2019, Minister of Religion Lukman Hakim Syaifudin released a book on religious moderation.

The big idea of religious moderation in Indonesia was raised on various increasingly big national issues. Indonesia as a large country with ethnic, tribal, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity compared to other countries in the world, has the potential for very high differences in perception and conception. So it is undeniable that radicalism and terrorism movements in the name of religion/jihad are spreading widely, indoctrinating society. Radicalism or violence in the context of religious moderation is understood as an ideology that aims to change the social and political system in an extreme way under the pretext of religion.

In Indonesia, religious moderation is becoming increasingly important in facing the challenges of religious plurality and socio-cultural diversity. Indonesia, with its rich diversity of culture, religion, race, and language, is a real reflection of a multicultural society. This diversity is not only a wealth, but also a great potential that can be a blessing if managed wisely. However, in such diversity, there are challenges that must not be ignored. If not handled wisely, this diversity can give rise to threats in the form of division and hatred that threaten social harmony (Lestari et.al., 2022). Because empirically, various conflicts that occur in Indonesia are often due to various SARA conflicts. Failure to dialogue religious understanding with social realities in Indonesia which is multicultural, plural, and diverse is the root of social conflicts based on religion. Failure to dialogue understanding is experienced by hardline groups who do not want to tolerate and find it difficult to compromise with different religious understandings (Yunus & Salim, 2018).

The problems faced by Muslims in the world, especially the Indonesian nation, are increasingly complex compared to previous periods. Almost all aspects of life are experiencing problems, such as aspects of political, legal, social, economic, cultural, and religious education (Purwanto et.al., 2019). In conditions like this, many people demand changes in various aspects of life, including the values of religious understanding (Shihab, 2017). Some of them are confined by rigid narratives in religion which then give rise to radical and intolerant understandings or thoughts that prolong the phase of backwardness of Muslims. Some others are not radical or intolerant, but fail or are unable to capture the beautiful messages or narratives of Islam for the advancement of their civilization.

Based on this reality, the Ministry of Religion has long been aware of the need for a clear direction in promoting religious moderation as an integral part of national identity based on the values of diversity and tolerance. According to the Ministry of Religion, the way of practicing religion should be oriented towards the actualization of religious understanding on a moderate path, not extreme and not excessive. Religious moderation needs to continue to be conveyed to all levels of society. Given the many conflicts in the name of religion. Religion that is present to maintain human dignity and honor is actually misused to demean fellow human beings (Muhibbin, 2019). The Ministry of Religion's vision of religious moderation includes efforts to strengthen a balanced understanding of religious teachings, promote interfaith dialogue, and encourage religious practices that respect human rights and shared values.

In recent years, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has taken concrete steps to realize this vision of religious moderation, including through inclusive religious education, training for religious leaders, and public campaigns that promote tolerance and respect for differences. From the results of the researcher's investigation, there are several regulations related to the implementation of the government regarding the application of religious moderation, especially in educational institutions, namely;

1. Decree of the Director of Islamic Education 7272 of 2019 concerning guidelines for the implementation of religious moderation in Islamic education.
2. Decree of the Minister of Religion (KMA) Number 6 of 2007 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Religious Moderation Program: This KMA provides guidelines for the implementation of the religious moderation program, including in terms of education, socialization, and training.
3. KMA Number 489 of 2016 concerning Strengthening Religious Moderation Activities within the Ministry of Religion and Vertical Agencies: This KMA emphasizes the importance of strengthening religious moderation activities within the Ministry of Religion and vertical agencies under it.
4. KMA Number 518 of 2017 concerning the Community Development and Empowerment Program in Moderate Religious Understanding: This KMA establishes a community development and empowerment program in moderate religious understanding.
5. KMA Number 516 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of a Comprehensive and Competitive Islamic Education Program: Although it does not explicitly discuss religious moderation, this KMA aims to improve the quality of inclusive and competitive Islamic education.
6. KMA Number 188 of 2020 concerning Increasing Islamic Religious Education Module Activities in Efforts to Increase Religious Literacy and Diversity: This KMA establishes steps to increase religious moderation activities through the use of Islamic religious education modules.
7. KMA No. 93 of 2022 concerning Guidelines for Implementing Strengthening of Religious Moderation for Civil Servants of the Ministry of Religion.

The regulation above explains that there are regulations that regulate the mandatory implementation of religious moderation for ASN and also its implementation in educational institutions. Therefore, religious moderation needs the right place to grow and develop. Educational institutions are the right place to sow religious moderation. In educational institutions, the Ministry of Religion campaigns for religious moderation, including through Islamic religious education (PAI). Islamic religious education is considered to have an important role in forming a moderate attitude in religion (Oktaviani, 2024). Educational institutions are the right means to spread students' sensitivity to various differences. Educational institutions can truly be a place for sowing national ideas, instilling multicultural values, spreading love and affection to humans, and bringing religious messages peacefully (Agung & Zako, 2018).

In educational institutions, religious moderation can be instilled by building awareness of diversity and respecting differences. Educational institutions should be a place where the idea of nationality is instilled, multicultural values are spread, compassion for others is spread, and religious messages are conveyed peacefully. Thus, educational institutions have a very important role in building a tolerant and harmonious society, as well as realizing the vision of religious moderation desired by the Ministry of Religion. For this reason, teachers in educational institutions must understand the concept of religious moderation and then apply it in learning. This requires teachers to provide explanations and build moderate attitudes in students so that they can respond to diversity with full wisdom.

The explanation above emphasizes the importance of teachers understanding religious moderation as a personal part of themselves as ASN, and also as a conveyor of religious moderation to students. From the results of the researcher's initial investigation, teachers at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya are still relatively weak in understanding religious moderation. This was conveyed by an informant, that there are still few teachers who participate in training on religious moderation. On the other hand, teachers may have a limited understanding of the concept and principles of religious moderation, namely not understanding in depth the importance of moderation in a religious context and its implications in the context of education.

Then the understanding of religious moderation has not been fully integrated into classroom learning. Teachers have not actively included the values of moderation in learning, so that students do not get an adequate understanding of the concept. Lack of support and

training from the school or related institutions can cause teachers to not have sufficient resources or understanding to apply religious moderation in the context of learning. However, these data need to be studied in depth. Academically and scientifically, researchers have not been able to justify that teachers at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya still have a weak understanding of religious moderation, so this study is important.

2. Method

This study applies a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore teachers' understanding of religious moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya. Primary data sources were obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation from the principal, vice principal, and teachers. Meanwhile, secondary data sources were taken from relevant literature such as books, scientific articles, and policy documents.

The research instruments include interview guides (to explore understanding, supporting factors, obstacles, and strategies for religious moderation), observation guides (to see the application of religious moderation in learning), and document analysis (learning modules, madrasah policies, and activity records). In addition, recording tools and field notes are used to record the interview process and collect data systematically.

Data collection was conducted at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya, Aceh, through observation, interviews, and documentation to understand field conditions and ongoing religious moderation practices. Qualitative data analysis includes three stages: data reduction (sorting relevant data), data presentation (displaying data systematically), and drawing conclusions (finding patterns, relationships, and meanings from the collected data). The final results are expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the understanding and strategies for strengthening religious moderation at the madrasah.

3. Results and Discussion

Understanding of Religious Moderation of Teachers at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya

MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya was founded in 1963 on the initiative of the then Head of Bandar Dua Sub-district, Muhammad Amin, in collaboration with the local community. Initially named SMI (Islamic Middle School), this institution went through several name changes until it officially became MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya in 2010. Located on Jl. Ulee Gle–Jangka Buya, this madrasah has produced outstanding graduates in various fields, including national figures such as Tgk. Mukhtar Arifin and Muhammad Husin Hamidi.

The implementation of religious moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya has become a major concern after the government's instruction to integrate these values into education. Teachers, as the leading implementers of learning, play a central role in forming a generation that is tolerant, fair, and respectful of differences. Through interviews with the head of the madrasah, the deputy head of the madrasah, and several teachers, it was obtained that the concept of religious moderation is understood and applied in various subjects, not only religious lessons.

The principal of the madrasah emphasized that religious moderation means a fair, balanced, and non-extreme approach, and prioritizes the values of tolerance, humanity, and respect for differences. He encouraged these values to be inserted into all subjects, such as PPKn and IPS, accompanied by reinforcement through training and development of teaching materials. The deputy principal of the madrasah who is also a Mathematics teacher added that although the majority of students at the madrasah are Muslim, the concept of diversity is still introduced through relevant learning materials and media.

Some teachers have different understandings but still lead to the foundation of wasathiyah (balance). Rahmatatul Aula (a Craft teacher) sees religious moderation as an effort to build tolerance in the classroom, emphasizing that all teachers—not just religious teachers—are responsible for inserting this value. He highlighted the importance of not being extreme and respecting every difference, including other cultures and beliefs. Dahri (a Mathematics teacher) mentioned four core values of religious moderation: human dignity, the

welfare of the people, justice, and balance. The four are references in building national commitment, tolerance, and acceptance of local culture.

In the field of Physical Education, Firdaus tries to instill social practices that foster an attitude of cooperation and reject discrimination. Although the material on religious moderation is not specifically listed, he uses it in sports activities to build tolerance values. Mrs. Aminah (teacher of the Qur'an and Hadith) emphasized that the basic foundation of religious moderation is brotherhood—among Muslims, fellow countrymen, and fellow human beings—by teaching equality of morals and piety as the main differentiators. She believes that religious moderation is not just a theory, but must be realized in daily interactions in the classroom through tolerance, justice, and mutual respect.

Interviews with various teachers showed that religious moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya is applied across subjects and school activities. Values such as inclusiveness, cooperation, respect for differences, and instilling wasathiyah attitudes are integrated into learning and social interactions. This effort is expected to be able to shape the character of students who are moderate, open, and competitive without abandoning Islamic principles that emphasize brotherhood and humanity.

The following is a specific summary of the understanding of religious moderation of teachers at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya.

1. The principal of the madrasah understands religious moderation as a fair, balanced, and non-extreme approach. He emphasized the importance of integrating the values of religious moderation in all subjects, both religious and general. The principal also assessed that religious moderation serves to build tolerance, respect differences, and prevent radicalism.
2. Rahmatatul Aula views religious moderation as a way to build a sense of tolerance among students. She believes that religious moderation is the responsibility of all teachers, not just religious teachers. In practice, she integrates values such as tolerance and respect for differences in craft classes. Rahmatatul Aula also emphasizes the importance of a wasathiyah (balanced) attitude in religion and respecting cultural and religious diversity.
3. Dahri identified four main values in religious moderation: human dignity, public welfare, justice, and balance. He sees moderation as a universal principle that can be applied in mathematics lessons. In his learning, he measures success through indicators such as national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and acceptance of local culture. For him, religious moderation also helps students understand diversity of views in a positive way.
4. Firdaus supports religious moderation through sports activities that teach cooperation, tolerance, and respect for differences. Although there is no specific material on religious moderation in sports lessons, he implements it according to the direction of the Ministry of Religion. He emphasizes the importance of building students' awareness of diversity through social practices in the classroom and sports activities.
5. Aminah understands religious moderation as an effort to build brotherhood among the nation, fellow Muslims, and humanity. She teaches values such as tolerance, justice, and respect for differences, both in interfaith relations and among fellow Muslims. In learning the Qur'an and Hadith, she uses a dialogue approach and deep understanding to instill the values of moderation. According to her, religious moderation is the foundation for creating a peaceful and harmonious environment in the madrasah.

Factors Influencing the Understanding of Religious Moderation

Teachers' understanding of religious moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya is influenced by several internal and external factors. Internally, the religious education background of teachers is a key aspect. Those who have a strong religious foundation, either from formal channels or local traditions such as religious studies in the village, find it easier to absorb and apply the values of moderation. The principal emphasized the importance of training and workshops to align teacher perceptions, in line with the character of the Acehnese people who are known to be religious. In addition, support in the form of modules and learning materials on moderation also helps the process of internalizing this concept in various subjects.

Externally, social environmental factors in Pidie Jaya also influence teachers' understanding. The majority of the population who are Muslim and follow the Syafii school of thought create cultural and traditional uniformity. This condition supports the instillation of strong religious values, but challenges teachers to introduce wider diversity to students. Mr. Dahri (Mathematics teacher) emphasized that differences in khilafiyah fiqh do not cause major conflicts, but teachers need to provide insight so that students do not behave anarchically or intolerantly. On the other hand, limited interaction with groups of different religions and cultures limits students' understanding of plurality.

Madrasah policy support is a significant factor that strengthens teachers' understanding of religious moderation. The principal and deputy principal of the madrasah integrate moderation values into the curriculum, provide regular training, special modules, and online seminars initiated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Teachers utilize digital media to obtain various supporting content. This support is proof of the institution's commitment to instilling the values of inclusivity and tolerance. However, obstacles remain. Some teachers still lack literacy and teaching materials related to moderation, so it takes extra time and effort to align perceptions. The influence of social media has the potential to strengthen extreme narratives that influence teachers and students if not managed with adequate digital literacy. In addition, limited time in delivering material and students' minimal experience with cultural diversity outside Pidie Jaya also reduce the effectiveness of teaching moderation values. However, with a combination of institutional support, local religious traditions, and teacher awareness, efforts to implement religious moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya can still be optimized through further training and more diverse learning approaches.

Table 1 Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for Strengthening Religious Moderation

No	Supporting Factors	Inhibiting Factors
1	Strong religious educational background of teachers, both formal and informal.	Lack of literacy and references regarding religious moderation among some teachers.
2	Support from the head of the madrasah in providing relevant training, modules and policies.	The negative influence of social media often gives rise to extreme narratives.
3	Religious traditions in Acehnese society, such as religious studies in village halls.	The uniformity of religion, culture and tradition in Pidie Jaya limits exposure to diversity.
4	Online seminars and training from the Ministry of Religion that broaden teachers' horizons.	Lack of time in learning to deepen the values of moderation.
5	Free internet access in madrasahs makes it easier to search for moderated materials.	Not all teachers have specific training in religious moderation.

Strengthening Religious Moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya

Strengthening teachers' understanding of religious moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya is carried out through several planned strategies. First, the head of the madrasah emphasizes training and workshops as the main effort. Teachers are encouraged to take part in religious moderation training, both organized by the madrasah and the Ministry of Religion. Through the official Kemenag online platform, teachers can access materials, complete evaluations, and obtain certificates. This step makes it easier for teachers to understand the concept of moderation systematically without additional costs. In addition, the head of the madrasah provides a special module to support the application of moderation values in the learning design of various subjects.

Second, madrasahs synergize with local religious figures and utilize online seminars facilitated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs to broaden their horizons. Meetings with *teungku/ustaz* provide local perspectives on moderation, while online seminars open up

opportunities for discussion between teachers across regions. Third, teachers maximize the free internet access provided by madrasas to search for and share religious moderation content on social media. This activity increases the diversity of learning resources while encouraging collaboration in developing materials. Fourth, collaboration between teachers is another important element. They routinely discuss and share experiences about techniques for inserting moderation values into the daily learning process, including integrating them into non-religious subjects. This collaborative approach strengthens moderation practices in madrasas as a whole, fully supported by the principal who provides space for innovation and ensures adequate facilities.

Table 2 Strategies for Strengthening Religious Moderation

Strategy	Description
<i>Training and Workshops</i>	Regular training and workshops are held to improve teachers' understanding of religious moderation. Teachers are given the opportunity to participate in training with instructions and support from the head of the madrasah. Modules are provided as official guidelines.
<i>Integration of Moderation Values in the Curriculum</i>	The head of the madrasah ensures that the value of religious moderation is integrated into the curriculum and learning design, including teaching modules. Teachers who have attended the training are given instructions to insert the value of moderation into teaching materials.
<i>Ministry of Religion Training Platform</i>	The Ministry of Religious Affairs provides an online training platform that can be accessed by all ASN. This training has an independent evaluation and produces a certificate for those who graduate. Teachers can follow the training to completion with the support of the madrasah principal.
<i>Synergy with Local Religious Figures</i>	Madrasahs often invite local religious figures, such as teungku or ustaz, to share their views and experiences on religious moderation. This synergy enriches teachers' insights on the value of moderation.
<i>Online Seminar</i>	The online seminar organized by the Ministry of Religion is a space for discussion and learning between teachers from various regions. This seminar strengthens teachers' networks and knowledge about religious moderation.
<i>Utilization of Social Media</i>	Teachers use social media to find religious moderation content. This media is used as a tool to spread the values of moderation in a modern and relevant way to the times.

Collaboration and Discussion Between Teachers

Group discussions are regularly held in the madrasah, allowing teachers to share ideas and experiences on implementing moderation. This collaboration helps teachers find effective steps.

Provision of Free Internet Access Facilities

Madrasahs provide free internet access to make it easier for teachers to search for materials or take online training related to religious moderation.

MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya teachers' understanding of religious moderation shows the internalization of wasathiyah values in educational practices. wasathiyah, which includes the principles of tawassuth (middle way), tawazun (balance), and tasamuh (tolerance), is the basis of teachers' understanding. Theoretically, this concept emphasizes the balance between extremism and liberalism, which is very important in the context of Indonesia's diversity.

1) Moderation as an Inclusive Principle in Learning

Teachers at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya understand that religious moderation is not only the responsibility of religious teachers, but is also relevant to all fields of study. This reflects the implementation of the tawassuth value which views religious moderation as a universal value. The wasathiyah theory of Imam As-Syatibi supports this view, where Islamic law prioritizes justice and balance in all aspects of life (As-Syatibi, 2003), including education. In practice, teachers try to integrate the values of religious moderation into general learning materials, such as mathematics and crafts. This shows that religious moderation can serve as a basis for forming the character of students who respect differences and work together in diversity.

2) Balance in Instilling the Values of Moderation

The concept of tawazun is reflected in the way teachers balance religious values with social skills. Education at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya instills the values of tolerance and respect for differences, which are in line with the characteristics of i'tidal (straight and firm) in religious moderation. Religious education is taught comprehensively without abandoning the basic principles of sharia, but still prioritizing common sense to solve problems. The theory of wasathiyah by Al-Ghazali underlines the importance of balance between the two extremes (Al-Ghazali, 2003). In this context, MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya teachers avoid an approach that is too rigid or liberal, but instead instill an inclusive understanding of religion.

3) Implementation of Deliberation Values in School Life

The principle of deliberation (shura) is an important part of religious moderation taught at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya. Teachers engage students in open and inclusive dialogue, both in learning and extracurricular activities. Pancasila, as the foundation of national and state life, is the conceptual framework that guides the implementation of religious moderation at this madrasah. As in the history of the formulation of Pancasila, deliberation is used to reach consensus in resolving differences, as well as in school life.

4) Facing the Challenge of Social Uniformity

Although the majority of people in Pidie Jaya have a uniform religious, cultural, and traditional background, teachers at this madrasah try to introduce the value of diversity to students. This is a reflection of the concept of tasamuh (tolerance), which teaches that diversity is a divine necessity. Religious moderation in this context serves to shape students' understanding of the importance of respecting differences outside their social environment.

Teachers' understanding of religious moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya reflects the implementation of the wasathiyah principle in education. By prioritizing the values of moderation as stated by Hilmy such as tawassuth, tawazun, i'tidal, and tasamuh, teachers strive to create an inclusive and harmonious educational environment (Hilmy, 2013). These principles of religious moderation are not only relevant in the local context, but also contribute to stability and harmony at the national level. The integration of religious moderation into

learning and school life is evidence of the application of this concept in accordance with the regulations of the Ministry of Religion and the philosophical foundations of the Indonesian nation.

In addition to teachers' understanding of religious moderation in accordance with the mandate of the Ministry of Religion legally to ASN, and also based on several Islamic principles, teachers' understanding is also based on various strategies that have been implemented so far. The strategy for strengthening religious moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya reflects a systematic effort to internalize wasathiyah values in the educational environment. This is in line with national policies, such as Presidential Regulation No. 18 of 2020 and Presidential Regulation No. 7 of 2021, which emphasize the importance of religious moderation as an approach to strengthening tolerance, harmony, and social harmony.

1) Teacher Training and Capacity Development:

This training is not only oriented towards increasing theoretical knowledge, but also on strengthening the practice of moderation learning. Thus, teachers are able to integrate values such as *tawassuth* (middle way), *i'tidal* (fair), and *tasamuh* (tolerance) in the teaching and learning process. This strategy is reflected in the increase in teacher certification in religious moderation and their ability to apply the concept in various subjects.

2) Integration of Religious Moderation in the Curriculum:

Integrating the values of religious moderation into the curriculum is a strategic step to build a culture of moderation in madrasahs. This concept is in line with the indicators of national commitment in religious moderation, which emphasizes the importance of harmony between Islamic and national values. Teachers at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya not only teach tolerance through religious subjects, but also through general subjects such as mathematics and crafts. For example, the value of *i'tidal* is integrated into learning materials to show that different approaches or methods can produce the same solution, as long as it is based on the principle of justice.

3) Utilization of Technology and Social Media:

Technology is an effective tool in spreading the values of religious moderation. The use of social media by teachers, such as searching for and sharing moderated content, shows the application of the principle of *tahawwur wa ibtikar* (dynamic and innovative) (Hasyim, 2015). This strategy allows the dissemination of the values of religious moderation in a way that is more relevant and interesting to students. In addition, internet access provided in madrasahs supports teachers to take online training and search for relevant teaching materials. This supports the creation of an inclusive learning environment that is responsive to the needs of the times.

4) Collaboration with Religious and Community Leaders:

Synergy between madrasahs and local religious figures is one important strategy to strengthen religious moderation. The principle of *shura* (deliberation) is applied through dialogue involving religious figures in sharing insights and experiences about religious moderation. This provides additional perspectives for teachers and students, while strengthening the relationship between the school and the surrounding community.

5) Discussion and Collaboration Between Teachers:

Regular group discussions serve as a platform for sharing experiences and strategies in integrating religious moderation into learning. This approach reflects the values of *muwathanah* (respect for nationality) and *qudwah* (exemplary) demonstrated by teachers in building cooperation. This collaboration not only strengthens teachers' understanding but also creates a professional culture that supports the creation of madrasahs as centers of inclusive learning. Teachers share innovations and effective approaches to teaching the values of moderation.

6) Monitoring and Evaluation of Strategy:

Periodic evaluations are carried out to assess the effectiveness of the strategies implemented. This monitoring is in line with the principle of *i'tidal*, which is to put everything in its place proportionally. The evaluation results are used to improve and develop more relevant and impactful strategies. The training and workshop strategy implemented at MTsN 1 Pidie

Jaya is one of the concrete steps in strengthening teachers' understanding of religious moderation. This training is carried out directly or through an online platform provided by the Ministry of Religion, as explained in the 2020-2024 RPJMN concerning increasing the capacity of human resources in the field of education. This strategy reflects the principle of i'tidal (fair and proportional) in religious moderation, which aims to ensure that every teacher has equal access to understanding the values of moderation. In line with the theory that religious moderation involves a tawassuth attitude (middle way), this training provides guidance for teachers to understand the concept of moderation as a whole, while also being a preventive measure against extremism.

- 7) Integrating the values of religious moderation into the curriculum is another strategy that reflects the RPJMN policy.

The principal of the madrasah ensures that every subject, both religious and general, includes values such as tolerance, justice, and respect for diversity. This strategy demonstrates the application of the value of tawazun (balance) in learning, as stated in Kamali's theory of religious moderation, which emphasizes the importance of balance between the worldly and the hereafter. With this integration, teachers not only deliver subject matter but also shape students' characters to be inclusive and tolerant. As-Syathibi's theory of sharia as a fair middle way is also relevant, where this approach supports students' understanding of Islamic values without extreme tendencies.

4. Conclusions and Suggestions

Based on the results of the study at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya, it is known that teachers' understanding of religious moderation is quite good, including the principles of tolerance, balance, justice, and respect for diversity. The majority of teachers realize that religious moderation is the responsibility of all educators, not just Islamic Religious Education teachers, and they strive to integrate these values into various subjects. This level of understanding is influenced by internal factors, such as the teacher's religious education background, and external factors, including support from the madrasah principal, training and workshops, and learning resources such as modules and online seminars. However, teachers still face obstacles in the form of time constraints, lack of easily accessible literature, and homogeneous social conditions in Pidie Jaya, which limit students' exposure to socio-cultural diversity. Several strategies have been implemented to strengthen teachers' understanding, including regular training and workshops, provision of moderation modules, utilization of social media, and synergy with local religious figures. Group discussions and online seminars are also utilized to share experiences and good practices. These efforts have helped teachers internalize the values of religious moderation, although the process of continuous evaluation and application of these values in more complex real situations still needs to be developed. The program to strengthen religious moderation at MTsN 1 Pidie Jaya has been running relatively well, but a more comprehensive strategy is needed so that the values of moderation can truly be internalized and reflected in the attitudes and behavior of all members of the madrasah.

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