

Implementation of Religious Moderation Values in Shaping the Social Behavior of Elementary School Students

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the implementation of religious moderation values in shaping the social behavior of elementary school students from the perspective of sixth-grade teachers at SDN 2 Cisandawut, West Bandung. The research highlights the importance of character education in fostering tolerance, respect, and balanced attitudes among students in a diverse social context. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews focusing on teachers' understanding of religious moderation, its application in school activities, its impact on students' behavior, and the factors influencing its success. Data were analyzed through reduction, narrative presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that teachers understand religious moderation as a non-extreme and balanced religious attitude reflected in everyday interactions. Its implementation occurs through classroom learning, teacher role modeling, habituation of respectful behavior, and integration into school culture. The values positively influence students' social behavior, including increased empathy, cooperation, emotional control, and respect for differences. Supporting factors include teacher awareness and universal moral values, while limited interfaith understanding remains a challenge. Continuous collaboration between schools and families is essential for sustaining these values.

Keywords: Religious Moderation, Social Behavior, Elementary School, Tolerance

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INTRODUCTION

Elementary school education plays a crucial role in shaping students' character and social behavior (Rivai & Mana, 2025). At this stage, students are in the early stages of development, determining how they think, behave, and interact with their surroundings. Therefore, education is not only oriented towards academic achievement but also towards instilling moral and social values. Schools serve as the primary space for students to learn to live together, respect others, and develop positive social attitudes (Wanudyastuti et al., 2025). In the context of Indonesia's diverse society, character education is an essential foundation for fostering mutual respect and harmony. Through appropriate basic education, students are expected to grow into individuals with character, responsibility, and social awareness. A

comprehensive education will equip students with the social and emotional skills that will support their future success. Furthermore, character education also encourages the creation of a harmonious, inclusive school environment that supports the development of each student. Thus, elementary education serves as the foundation for developing individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also possess high social and moral sensitivity.

Religious moderation is a concept that emphasizes moderation and non-extremism, while upholding the values of balance and justice in practicing religious teachings (Ikhwan et al., 2023). The values of religious moderation are highly relevant to be applied in a pluralistic society (Sunariyah & Mawardi, 2024), including in education (Hasibuan, 2023). The application of religious moderation aims to shape individuals who are able to appreciate differences, act fairly, and avoid social conflict. In the context of education, religious moderation plays a role as part of character education that instills the values of tolerance, mutual respect, and wise attitudes in religion (Ananda & Marno, 2023). Instilling these values from an early age is expected to shape healthy and harmonious religious attitudes in students. Thus, religious moderation is an important concept that needs to be understood and implemented in the elementary school environment. The application of these values supports the creation of schools that are safe, comfortable, and conducive to social growth and character development of students. In addition, religious moderation education also prepares students to face the increasingly complex and diverse challenges of social life.

Elementary schools play a strategic role in implementing the values of religious moderation through various learning activities and behavioral habits. Teachers, as educators, play a crucial role in instilling these values by serving as role models for students. The way teachers understand and implement religious moderation will influence students' attitudes and social behavior in their daily lives. The application of religious moderation in elementary schools is not only related to religious differences, but also to fairness, courtesy, and moderation in behavior. In a religiously homogeneous school environment, the value of religious moderation remains relevant as an effort to foster wise and responsible religious attitudes (Sunaryati et al., 2025). This demonstrates that religious moderation has a broad meaning in shaping students' social behavior. The implementation of these values encompasses various aspects, from classroom learning and extracurricular activities to daily interactions between teachers and students.

Although the values of religious moderation play a crucial role in character education, their implementation in elementary schools still requires further study. Each school has different conditions, characteristics, and strategies for implementing these values, resulting in a lack of a comprehensive understanding of the actual practice of religious moderation at the elementary school level. Furthermore, some previous research has focused more on theory or policy, while the perspectives of

religious moderation, its implementation, its impact on students' social behavior, and supporting and inhibiting factors. Analysis was conducted through data reduction, narrative presentation, and gradual drawing of conclusions based on emerging patterns and themes. Data validity was maintained by cross-checking and ensuring consistency between the data, the research focus, and the presented results, so that the research findings reflect the reality of the application of religious moderation in depth.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

This study presents the findings of in-depth interviews with sixth-grade elementary school teachers regarding the implementation of religious moderation values in shaping students' social behavior. The data presented are sourced from the teachers' direct experiences in learning activities and students' daily social interactions. The research findings are presented objectively, reflecting field conditions. The interview results are systematically organized based on the focus of the research questions. This focus includes teachers' understanding of religious moderation and its implementation in schools. Furthermore, the impact of implementation on students' social behavior is explained. Supporting and inhibiting factors are also part of the research findings. Direct quotations from informants are used to strengthen the validity of the data. Further analysis of the findings will be discussed in the discussion section.

Teachers' Understanding of the Values of Religious Moderation

Based on the interview results, the sixth-grade teacher has a fairly good understanding of the values of religious moderation. The teacher defines religious moderation as a religious attitude that is not excessive and avoids extreme ideologies or behavior in practicing religious teachings. This is reflected in the teacher's statement that "*the values of religious moderation can be understood as an attitude of not being excessive or avoiding violence in religious practices, which is implemented through instilling the values of tolerance, balance, and justice in religion.*" This understanding shows that the teacher does not only view religious moderation as a normative concept or theoretical discourse, but as a concrete attitude that must be reflected in everyday behavior. The teacher recognizes that religious moderation plays a crucial role in shaping students' character, especially in facing the reality of diversity that exists in the school environment. Therefore, the teacher's understanding of the concept of religious moderation is the main foundation for instilling the values of tolerance and mutual respect in students from an early age.

Furthermore, the teacher explained that an understanding of religious moderation needs to be instilled through a continuous and integrated coaching process within school activities. This coaching process takes place not only in formal classroom learning but also through students' social interactions in their daily lives within the school environment. The teacher stated that "*its application in coaching sixth-*

grade students at school can be done by increasing students' understanding of religious moderation and encouraging students to respect differences across ethnicities, races, groups, and religions." This statement indicates that the teacher views religious moderation as an important foundation for building mutual respect and harmonious coexistence. By instilling the value of religious moderation from elementary school, students are expected to be able to understand differences as something normal and to act fairly and balanced in interacting with others. This confirms that religious moderation plays a strategic role in shaping students' social behavior in a diverse school environment.

Implementation of Religious Moderation Values in School Activities

The implementation of religious moderation values in elementary schools is carried out through various activities and habits integrated into daily school life. The teacher emphasized that the application of religious moderation values is not only conveyed through theory in classroom learning, but also manifested in the form of real practices that can be directly observed by students. This shows that religious moderation education emphasizes the aspect of habituating attitudes and behavior, not just cognitive understanding. The teacher explained that "*examples of the application of religious moderation values include respecting the beliefs of others, not imposing beliefs, and not disrupting others' worship processes.*" This statement illustrates that the value of religious moderation is applied through an attitude of mutual respect and maintaining boundaries in social life. With this approach, students are expected to be able to understand differences in beliefs as part of a social reality that must be respected and its harmony maintained.

The implementation of the values of religious moderation is reflected in various interactions between students, both during teaching and learning activities, religious activities, and other social activities within the school environment. Teachers play an active role in instilling mutual respect by directly modeling behavior and reminding students when behavior does not align with the values of religious moderation. This effort is carried out consistently so that students become accustomed to being tolerant in all situations. The application of the values of religious moderation is also part of the formation of an inclusive and harmonious school culture, where every student feels safe, comfortable, and valued regardless of their religious background or beliefs. Thus, the implementation of religious moderation not only shapes individual student behavior but also strengthens a conducive school social climate oriented toward shared values.

Impact of Implementation on Students' Social Behavior

Interview results indicate that the implementation of religious moderation values has a positive impact on the social behavior of sixth-grade students. The teacher observed changes in students' attitudes and ways of thinking after these values were consistently applied in school life. These changes were not only evident in students' understanding of the concept of religious moderation, but also in how they behaved and interacted with their surroundings. The teacher stated that "*the impact of the*

implementation is a change in students' behavior, becoming more mature in their understanding of religious moderation, increasing respect for differences, and avoiding extreme attitudes." This statement indicates that the implementation of religious moderation can shape students' mindsets that are more balanced and less easily influenced by excessive views. This is an indicator that the values of religious moderation are well-accepted and internalized by elementary school students.

Changes in students' social behavior are evident in their greater openness to differences, including differences of opinion, background, and beliefs. Students are better able to collaborate with peers from diverse backgrounds and demonstrate empathy and tolerance in their daily lives at school. Furthermore, students appear wiser in addressing differences of opinion and less easily provoked by attitudes or behaviors that could potentially lead to conflict. This demonstrates that the application of religious moderation values contributes to creating positive and harmonious social interactions within the school environment. Thus, religious moderation plays a crucial role in shaping students' social behavior, which is balanced, tolerant, and capable of peaceful coexistence within diversity.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Religious Moderation

In an interview, a sixth-grade teacher revealed that various factors influence the successful implementation of religious moderation values in elementary schools, both supporting and inhibiting factors. The main supporting factor stems from increased awareness and understanding of the importance of religious moderation among teachers and students. The teacher stated that "*the main supporting factors are an increased understanding of the importance of religious moderation among students and teachers, as well as the availability of literature and interfaith dialogue activities.*" This statement indicates that a good understanding is the initial capital in instilling the value of religious moderation in the school environment. In addition, the availability of reading resources and dialogue activities provide space for students to recognize and understand diversity more broadly. Another supporting factor also comes from the universal values taught in religion, which are inclusive and can be applied in everyday life.

These universal values include honesty, compassion, and peace, which serve as a strong foundation for the implementation of religious moderation. The teacher emphasized that "practical religious values such as honesty, compassion, and peace, along with interfaith dialogue activities, can strengthen relations between religious groups." However, the teacher also conveyed the existence of inhibiting factors that require serious attention. The teacher stated that "*inhibiting factors can include a lack of understanding of other people's religions and beliefs, as well as excessive attitudes in expressing beliefs that can trigger conflict.*" These obstacles demonstrate the importance of interfaith education and ongoing mentoring.

Hopes and Efforts to Increase Religious Moderation in Elementary Schools

A sixth-grade teacher expressed strong hopes that the values of religious moderation could be consistently and sustainably implemented within the school environment. The teacher emphasized that the application of religious moderation should not be limited to classroom learning activities but should be integrated into all school activities. This was reflected in the teacher's statement, *"I hope the values of religious moderation can be consistently implemented at school, not only during classroom learning but also in daily activities."* This statement indicates that the teacher views religious moderation as a value that needs to be cultivated through direct experience and real-life practice. Consistency in the application of these values is believed to help students understand the meaning of religious moderation more deeply and make it part of their daily behavior. Thus, schools have a strategic role in creating an environment that supports the development of moderate attitudes in students from an early age.

In addition to consistency, the teacher also emphasized that theoretical understanding alone is not enough without instilling these attitudes in students' daily lives. The teacher stated that *"I want students to not only understand the theory, but also to cultivate attitudes of mutual respect, fairness, and moderation in their behavior. Hopefully, these values can become habits that are ingrained in students from an early age."* To achieve this, the teacher believes that cooperation between various parties is essential. The teacher emphasized that *"for the implementation of religious moderation values to run smoothly, there needs to be cooperation between teachers, schools, and parents."* Furthermore, the teacher also recognized the importance of developing personal competencies to be able to convey the values of religious moderation in a way that is easily understood by students. Synergy between teachers, schools, and parents is expected to strengthen the process of internalizing religious moderation values on an ongoing basis.

DISCUSSION

The discussion section analyzes the results of interviews with sixth-grade teachers regarding the implementation of religious moderation values in shaping the social behavior of elementary school students. The previously presented descriptive data are now examined to understand their meaning and implications for character education. Teachers play a strategic role as educators, mentors, and role models. Religious moderation is important in building attitudes of tolerance, justice, and social balance. The discussion focuses on five aspects: teacher understanding, implementation of values in school activities and culture, impact on student behavior, supporting and inhibiting factors, and expectations for strengthening moderation. Each aspect is analyzed by linking field findings to the context of learning and social interaction. Thus, the discussion provides a comprehensive picture of the implementation of religious moderation, the challenges faced, and its contribution to character education and the formation of students' social behavior from an early age.

Teachers' Understanding of Religious Moderation

Teachers' understanding of the concept of religious moderation is a key foundation for the successful implementation of these values in elementary schools (Dwi et al., 2023) . Based on interviews, sixth-grade teachers defined religious moderation as a religious attitude that is moderate and avoids extremism, both in attitude and behavior. This understanding indicates that teachers have a perspective that aligns with the goals of religious moderation education, namely creating a balance between personal beliefs and respect for differences. In the context of elementary education, teacher understanding is crucial because teachers act as role models and facilitators in the formation of students' character (Azizah et al., 2023) . Teachers who fully understand religious moderation will be able to convey the values of tolerance, justice, and balance appropriately according to the students' developmental stage (Ravico et al., 2023) . Furthermore, this understanding also enables teachers to integrate the values of religious moderation into various subjects and school activities. This demonstrates that religious moderation is not understood narrowly as merely religious material, but as a social value relevant to everyday life. Thus, a good understanding of teachers becomes the initial capital in forming tolerant and inclusive social behavior in students from an early age.

Implementation of Religious Moderation in School Environments

Implementing the value of religious moderation in elementary schools requires a contextual and sustainable approach. Research shows that teachers implement the value of religious moderation by cultivating mutual respect, not imposing beliefs, and maintaining tolerance in religious practices. This practice reflects that religious moderation is implemented not only through classroom learning (Desnita & Salminawati, 2024) but also through social interactions between students in daily school life (Rochmah & Marno, 2023) . The school environment is a strategic social space for instilling the value of religious moderation because students interact with peers from diverse backgrounds (Sunariyah & Mawardi, 2024) . Consistent implementation will help students understand that differences are natural and should be addressed with mutual respect. Furthermore, the role of teachers as role models is crucial for the successful implementation of these values. Teachers' exemplary behavior in being fair and respecting differences will be more easily imitated by students. Therefore, the implementation of religious moderation in schools needs to be supported by an inclusive and conducive school culture so that these values can be effectively instilled.

The Impact of Religious Moderation on Students' Social Behavior

The application of religious moderation values has a significant impact on the development of elementary school students' social behavior. Based on interviews, teachers observed changes in students' behavior, leading to them becoming more mature, tolerant, and able to appreciate differences. This impact indicates that religious moderation plays a significant role in developing positive social attitudes in students. Students accustomed to religious moderation values tend to be better able

to control their emotions, respect the opinions of others, and avoid extreme attitudes in responding to differences. This is particularly important in a pluralistic social context such as Indonesia. Furthermore, the application of religious moderation also contributes to creating a harmonious school climate with minimal conflict (Ningtias, 2024) . Positive student social behavior will result in increased cooperation, empathy, and a sense of togetherness within the school environment. Thus, religious moderation serves not only as a religious value but also as a means of developing students' balanced and civilized social character.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Religious Moderation

The successful implementation of religious moderation in elementary schools is influenced by supporting and inhibiting factors (Maharani & Rahmani, 2023) . Supporting factors include increasing teacher and student understanding of the importance of religious moderation, as well as universal religious values such as honesty, compassion, and peace. Dialogue and interaction activities between students also strengthen mutual respect. However, inhibiting factors such as a lack of interfaith understanding and excessive expression of beliefs can lead to misunderstandings and conflict (Alwan et al., 2024) . Therefore, systematic and sustained efforts through education and mentoring are needed to minimize obstacles. By optimizing supporting factors and addressing inhibiting factors, the implementation of religious moderation can be more effective and have a positive impact on the development of students' social behavior.

Hopes and Strategies for Strengthening Religious Moderation in Elementary Schools

Teachers' expectations regarding the implementation of religious moderation demonstrate the importance of consistency and sustainability in values education in elementary schools (Mahfuda, 2025) . Teachers hope that the value of religious moderation will not only be taught theoretically in the classroom but also implemented in all school activities. This expectation emphasizes that the formation of students' social behavior requires a continuous process of habituation. Strategies to strengthen religious moderation can be implemented through collaboration between teachers, schools, and parents. Synergy between these parties will create an environment that supports the holistic formation of student character (Lubis, 2023) . Furthermore, improving teacher competence in conveying the value of religious moderation using engaging and age-appropriate methods is also essential. Habitual activities, role models, and strengthening an inclusive school culture are important strategies in instilling the value of religious moderation (Sulistiyowati et al., 2024) . Thus, the values of religious moderation are expected to be firmly embedded in students and shape tolerant, just, and balanced social behavior from an early age.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of religious moderation values in elementary schools plays a strategic role in shaping students' tolerant, fair, and balanced social behavior, although the success of its implementation is influenced by teacher understanding, consistency of habituation, and existing supporting and inhibiting factors. Teachers play a crucial role as role models and facilitators in the internalization of religious moderation values, while an inclusive school environment and parental support are supporting factors for the success of this process. It is recommended that schools continue to integrate religious moderation into all learning activities and students' daily lives, strengthen collaboration between teachers, parents, and the school, and improve teachers' competence in conveying these values through methods appropriate to children's developmental stages. Thus, religious moderation can be deeply and sustainably embedded, and these findings are important as a basis for developing strategies and strengthening character education and students' social behavior in elementary schools.

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