

Reconstructing Religious Moderation Education Based on Progressive Islam: An Integrative Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Religious moderation has become an important agenda in Islamic education in Indonesia amid social plurality, digital transformation, and the growing contestation of religious authority. However, some studies continue to position religious moderation as a set of normative indicators and have not sufficiently connected it with a transformative paradigm of Islamic education. Conceptual reconstruction is therefore needed so that religious moderation education does not remain limited to fostering tolerance and preventing extremism, but develops into a form of transformative education that is responsive to diversity, advances in knowledge, and social change. This study aims to identify the conceptual convergence between religious moderation and Progressive Islam, reconstruct the theoretical foundations of religious moderation education based on Progressive Islam, and formulate its implications for the educational ecosystem. The study employs library research using an integrative literature review design, examining publications from 2021 to 2026. The data were analysed through qualitative content analysis involving literature classification, open coding, comparison, and integrative synthesis. The findings demonstrate that religious moderation and Progressive Islam converge around the values of balance, justice, humanity, respect for diversity, openness to knowledge and change, and an orientation towards the common good and progress. This convergence provides the basis for reconstructing education through theological, epistemological, axiological, and pedagogical foundations. Its implementation is developed as an educational ecosystem encompassing an integrative-transformative curriculum, dialogical-critical pedagogy, moderate-transformative educators, an inclusive institutional culture, critical and ethical digital literacy, and multidimensional authentic assessment. The novelty of this study lies in the formulation of the Progressive Religious Moderation Education Reconstruction Model (RPMB), which shifts the orientation of religious moderation from a preventive paradigm towards formative, constructive, and transformative paradigms. The model is designed to cultivate progressive moderate Muslims who are religiously grounded, open to diversity, critical, committed to the nation, adaptive to developments in science and technology,

and capable of translating Islamic values into actions that contribute to the common good and the advancement of civilisation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a society characterised by religious, cultural, ethnic, and social diversity. This condition places considerable responsibility on religious education. Religious education not only plays a role in strengthening students' understanding of and commitment to their faith, but must also equip them with the capacity to live alongside others, respect differences, and build harmonious relationships with other groups in a plural society. The understanding of religious moderation still tends to be normative and cognitive, focusing on fostering tolerance, national commitment, non-violence, and acceptance of local culture, and therefore has yet to fully develop students' critical reasoning and transformative action. This condition calls for the reconstruction of religious moderation education through the paradigm of Progressive Islam (Islam Berkemajuan), integrating theological, epistemological, ethical, pedagogical, and digital-institutional dimensions. Such a construction contributes to the development of students as moral and intellectual agents who are critical, inclusive, adaptive, and oriented towards the common good in a plural society.

Within this framework, religious moderation needs to be understood as a pedagogical orientation that connects religious understanding with critical reasoning, ethical sensitivity, and social responsibility. Students need to be able to assess differences fairly, reject the legitimisation of violence in the name of religion, and understand national commitment as a shared civic space for people of diverse backgrounds. Studies of religious education textbooks indicate that the values of tolerance, justice, and non-violence can be translated into learning practices that respect students across religious backgrounds (Mulyana, 2023). At the Islamic higher education level, the development of religious moderation curricula has also been reported to support knowledge, skills, and attitudes relating to tolerance, national commitment, non-violence, and acceptance of local culture (Mukhibat et al., 2024). Thus, the success of religious moderation education requires alignment between educational content, learning experiences, and institutional practices.

The urgency of religious moderation education is increasing because religious understanding is now shaped not only in the classroom but also through social media, search engines, video platforms, and artificial intelligence. Such ease of access broadens the sources of religious knowledge, but may also lead to the fragmentation of authority, polarisation, and the dissemination of unverified religious information. This condition requires Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam, PAI) to equip students with the ability to understand and critically evaluate religious information. Research indicates that religious moderation needs to be strengthened through responsive curricula, enhanced teacher competence, and the appropriate use of technology and digital literacy (Jamaluddin, 2024). Digital literacy can also strengthen the understanding and practice of moderation in Islamic education (Machendrawaty et al., 2022). Religious moderation education therefore needs to be developed comprehensively through the integration of curriculum, dialogical pedagogy, an inclusive institutional culture, and strengthened digital literacy (Erliyana et al., 2025).

Progressive Islam (Islam Berkemajuan) can provide an important foundation for reconstructing Islamic Religious Education (PAI) to make it more responsive to contemporary developments. This concept positions Islamic teachings not only as a source of religious values but also as a force that promotes progress in education and social life. Islam Berkemajuan is rooted in Muhammadiyah's reformist tradition, which connects religious understanding and rationality with education, empowerment, and humanitarian action (Arifin et al., 2022). Within this framework, Islam, Indonesian identity, and modernity can be understood as mutually complementary elements in shaping education that is contextual and oriented towards progress. In Muhammadiyah higher education institutions, these values are developed through Al-Islam dan Kemuhammadiyahan (AIK). Research suggests that AIK can serve as an alternative model of PAI that integrates Muhammadiyah identity with the needs of contemporary higher education (Badriah et al., 2023). The integration of AIK with various fields of knowledge also has the potential to develop students who are religiously grounded, academically informed, and responsive to social change (Busahdiar et al., 2023).

Although research on religious moderation has developed rapidly, several conceptual gaps remain to be addressed. First, existing studies have largely focused on the values, indicators, and implementation of religious moderation, while the relationship between religious moderation and paradigms of Islamic educational reform has yet to be extensively formulated within an integrated theoretical framework. Studies indicate that religious moderation education requires integration between responsive curricula, teacher competence, policy, and community engagement (Jamaluddin, 2024). Second, Islam Berkemajuan has offered an orientation towards modernity and educational reform, but its potential as a framework for religious moderation education still needs to be developed more systematically. The Muhammadiyah curriculum itself demonstrates connections between Islam Berkemajuan, modernity, and moderate Islamic education (Sumiarti & Azizah, 2024). Third, digital literacy needs to be positioned as a core competence of religious moderation rather than merely as a medium of instruction, because students require critical capacities to engage with religious information and discourse in digital spaces (Lubis et al., 2025).

Based on these gaps in previous research, this study aims to develop a more integrative framework for religious moderation education using the paradigm of Islam Berkemajuan. Specifically, the study aims, first, to identify points of conceptual convergence between religious moderation and Islam Berkemajuan; second, to reconstruct the theoretical foundations of religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan; and third, to formulate its implications for curriculum, pedagogy, educator competence, institutional culture, digital literacy, and assessment.

The novelty of this study lies in the formulation of the Progressive Religious Moderation Education Reconstruction Model (Rekonstruksi Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama Berkemajuan, RPMB). The model does not limit religious moderation to the cultivation of tolerance, but connects it with five dimensions of transformation: theological, epistemological, civic-ethical, pedagogical, and digital-institutional. Through this approach, students are positioned not merely as recipients of values, but as moral and intellectual agents capable of thinking critically, respecting diversity, and contributing to the common good. This perspective is consistent with studies that position students as agents of change in strengthening religious moderation (Pratama et al., 2023).

In the global context, RPMB is also relevant to the agenda of quality, inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable education. Islamic moderation has been shown to be associated with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly quality education, reduced inequalities, and the development of peaceful societies, although challenges remain in the form of polarisation, digital radicalisation, institutional fragmentation, and resource disparities (Kusumastuti et al., 2024). RPMB is therefore proposed not as a local model to be applied uniformly, but as an Indonesian conceptual contribution to the development of moderate and contextually responsive religious education in plural societies.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs library research using an integrative literature review design. This design was selected because the study does not aim to quantify the magnitude of the effect of a particular intervention, but rather to integrate empirical findings and conceptual perspectives to produce a theoretical synthesis. The core literature was limited to publications from 2021 to 2026 to ensure that the discussion reflects developments over the past five years. The literature search focused on the themes of religious moderation, Islamic education, Progressive Islam (Islam Berkemajuan), Muhammadiyah, curriculum, pedagogy, and digital literacy. The primary sources comprised scholarly journal articles relevant to education, religious moderation, and the Islam Berkemajuan paradigm.

The data were analysed using qualitative content analysis through several stages. First, the literature was classified according to the concepts of religious moderation, Islam Berkemajuan, curriculum and pedagogy, institutional culture, and global digital challenges. Second, open coding was conducted to identify recurring concepts and group them into analytical categories. Third, comparative analysis and integrative synthesis were undertaken to identify similarities, differences, and research gaps. The selected literature was required to be relevant to the research objectives, have a clearly defined educational or socio-religious context, and provide information suitable for analysis. Literature that addressed religious moderation only superficially was excluded from the main synthesis. Accordingly, this study emphasises conceptual reconstruction and the mapping of its implications for education.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Convergence of Wasatiyyah Values and Progressive Islam (Islam Berkemajuan) within a Transformative Religious Paradigm

The findings indicate that religious moderation and Progressive Islamic education (Islam Berkemajuan) share several interconnected conceptual points of convergence. Both address not only how religion is understood normatively, but also how religious values are applied within social life, education, national life, and the development of modern society. These points of convergence demonstrate an alignment between the principles of religious moderation and the characteristics of Progressive Islamic education, particularly in efforts to foster religious life that is balanced, just, humane, open to diversity, responsive to advances in knowledge, and oriented towards the common good and progress.

The first point of convergence lies in the principle of balance (*wasatiyyah*). Within the framework of religious moderation, balance constitutes an important principle in understanding and practising religious teachings. Balance enables individuals to avoid extreme tendencies in both understanding and practising religion. The same principle can also be found in Progressive Islamic education. Suyatno et al. (2022) identified six important values characterising Progressive Islamic education: dynamism, *tawhid*, mercy for all creation, balance, nationalism, and justice. These findings demonstrate that balance occupies an important position within the paradigm of Progressive Islamic education. In this context, balance should not merely be understood as the ability to adopt a position between two extreme tendencies. Its meaning is broader, encompassing the capacity to integrate various dimensions of life that are often positioned separately. Religion and national identity, for example, need not be regarded as contradictory. The same applies to the relationship between religion, science, and modernity. Progressive Islamic education seeks to place these elements within a constructive relationship so that religious identity can develop alongside national responsibility and openness to advances in knowledge. This understanding is consistent with studies of *wasatiyyah* that position balance as an important element of Islamic education (Ichsan et al., 2024).

The second point of convergence concerns justice and humanity. Religious moderation education is insufficient if it is understood merely as education that teaches students to be tolerant

of differences. Tolerance is undoubtedly important, but the orientation of religious moderation education needs to be extended to include the development of an awareness of the need to treat every human being justly and with dignity. Religious moderation thus has a strong social dimension, as it encourages the development of interpersonal relationships founded upon respect for human dignity. This perspective is closely related to Islam Berkemajuan, which positions religion as a force for promoting the common good. Within this framework, religiosity does not end with individual piety, but also entails responsibility towards society. Studies of Progressive Islamic education demonstrate that tawhid, justice, and the principle of rahmatan lil 'alamin can be situated within an educational framework that connects Islamic identity with responsibility for addressing various societal issues (Suyatno et al., 2022). The interrelationship between balance, justice, and an orientation towards the common good has also been identified in studies of wasatiyyah-based Islamic education (Mubin et al., 2024).

The third point of convergence lies in tolerance, inclusivity, and respect for diversity. In Indonesian society, which is characterised by religious, cultural, ethnic, and social diversity, religious moderation education requires an approach capable of developing students' ability to live together amidst differences. Studies of religious moderation education indicate that inclusive curricula, interfaith dialogue, respect for diversity, and education that rejects radicalism are important elements in the implementation of religious moderation education (Khoiriyah, 2019). The implementation of these values depends not only on the content taught in the classroom, but also on pedagogical approaches and the educational environment. Other research indicates that integrating moderation values into Islamic education requires critical pedagogy, interfaith dialogue, curriculum reform, teacher capacity-building, and community engagement (Setiawan et al., 2024). Through such approaches, religious moderation education can be directed towards cultivating openness and the capacity to interact constructively with different groups. Research on wasatiyyah practices within Muhammadiyah educational settings also demonstrates the use of interfaith dialogue and the integration of Islamic values with Pancasila as part of the actualisation of wasatiyyah Islam (Busahdiar et al., 2023).

The fourth point of convergence lies in the positive relationship between Islam, Indonesian identity, and modernity. Islam Berkemajuan does not position these three elements within a dichotomous or mutually contradictory relationship. Islamic identity can coexist with national identity and openness to modernity. Historically, Muhammadiyah education has integrated religious education with modern knowledge as part of its endeavour to develop a progressive Muslim society (Hamami, 2021). Suyatno et al. (2022) also demonstrate that Progressive Islamic education has the potential to bridge Islam, Indonesian identity, and modernity. This orientation towards openness and progress is also evident in studies of Muhammadiyah's socio-religious practices, which associate Islam Berkemajuan with progressivism, rationality, and openness (Apriliana & Dartim, 2026).

The findings of this study therefore identify at least six conceptual points of convergence between religious moderation and Islam Berkemajuan: balance, justice, humanity, respect for diversity, openness to knowledge and change, and an orientation towards the common good and progress. These six points are interconnected and constitute a framework of Islamic education that emphasises not only the strengthening of religious identity, but also social, national, and humanitarian responsibilities. On this basis, Islam Berkemajuan can be positioned as a paradigmatic foundation for developing a more transformative form of religious moderation education: one capable of connecting Islamic values with the realities of a plural society and with developments in knowledge and modernity.

Theoretical Construction of Progressive Moderate Education: Integrating Tawhid, Tajdid, and Social Transformation

Based on the conceptual convergence between religious moderation and Islam Berkemajuan, this study reconstructs religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan through four

principal foundations: theological, epistemological, axiological, and pedagogical. These four foundations constitute an interconnected whole in developing religious moderation education that extends beyond the acquisition of knowledge towards shaping students' ways of thinking, attitudes, and actions. Within this framework, religious moderation education is positioned as an educational process rooted in Islamic values while remaining responsive to the realities of contemporary life.

First, at the theological foundation, tawhid is understood as extending beyond the doctrinal affirmation of the oneness of Allah. Tawhid also has ethical and social implications that must be manifested in everyday life. Education grounded in tawhid must therefore be capable of cultivating awareness of humanity, justice, responsibility, and the common good. Religious belief serves not only as the basis of the relationship between human beings and Allah, but also as a foundation for establishing just and dignified social relationships. Within this framework, moderate religiosity does not imply reducing or weakening an individual's commitment to religious teachings. Rather, moderation represents the actualisation of such commitment through behaviour that is just, balanced, and capable of bringing mercy to life (Khoiriyah, 2023). The wasatiyyah approach to Islamic education similarly positions tolerance, dialogue, justice, and the common good as values that can be integrated into various areas of religious learning (Ichsan et al., 2024).

Second, at the epistemological foundation, religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan rejects a rigid dichotomy between religious and general knowledge. Religious knowledge needs to be placed in productive dialogue with the social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, technology, and the various empirical realities emerging within society. Muhammadiyah's educational tradition itself demonstrates an integrative orientation towards religion and modern knowledge (Hamami, 2021). A multidisciplinary approach is also regarded as a potential epistemological foundation for Islamic education oriented towards moderation (Waston & Suwartini, 2022). Students therefore need not only to know and understand religious texts, but also to develop the capacity to understand context, critically evaluate information, examine issues from multiple perspectives, and connect religious teachings with various contemporary challenges.

Third, at the axiological foundation, education is directed towards developing individuals who are religiously grounded while also capable of contributing positively to society. The religious dimension is not separated from social responsibility. This orientation positions tolerance, justice, peace, social responsibility, respect for human dignity, and concern for collective well-being as intended educational outcomes. The values of balance, justice, and inclusivity are likewise important elements within a wasatiyyah-based Islamic educational framework (Mubin et al., 2024). Consequently, the success of religious moderation education should not be measured solely by students' ability to explain the concept of moderation, but, more importantly, by their capacity to actualise these values within their relationships and social lives.

Fourth, at the pedagogical foundation, education needs to move away from an indoctrinative model of teaching towards learning that is dialogical, critical, contextual, and transformative. Problem-solving, inquiry-based learning, and discussion can help students develop the capacity to consider issues from different perspectives while respecting the ideas of others (Ichsan et al., 2024). The literature on Progressive Islamic education also indicates a shift from cognitively and doctrinally oriented learning towards holistic, contextual, student-centred approaches that emphasise critical thinking and social responsibility (Apriliana & Dartim, 2026).

On the basis of these four foundations, religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan can be constructed as a transformative educational process grounded in tawhid, employing an integrative and contextual approach to knowledge and oriented towards justice and the common good. This process is implemented through critical-dialogical pedagogy so that education produces students who not only understand moderation conceptually, but are also capable of actualising it in their lives. Through this construction, education is directed towards developing Muslims who are moderate, knowledgeable, open-minded, responsible, and progressive..

A Progressive Moderate Educational Ecosystem: Transforming Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Educational Culture

This theoretical reconstruction has implications for educational design. The synthesis undertaken in this study identifies six interconnected dimensions of implementation.

a. Integrative Transformative Curriculum

The curriculum needs to position religious moderation not as a separate supplementary subject, but as a cross-curricular value. The values of balance, justice, tolerance, humanity, social responsibility, national commitment, and openness to progress can be integrated into educational objectives, content, learning experiences, and assessment. A systematic study of religious education curricula indicates that moderation can be integrated through learning objectives, learning experiences, methods, and assessment systems (Muis, 2025).

Within the context of Muhammadiyah education, this integration can be developed through PAI/Al-Islam dan Kemuhammadiyah (AIK), as well as through other subjects, so that Islam Berkemajuan does not remain merely a body of knowledge about the organisation, but becomes a perspective through which contemporary issues are understood. Research on the Muhammadiyah curriculum demonstrates an orientation towards modernity, contemporary knowledge, and social issues as characteristics of progressive Islamic education (Sumiarti & Azizah, 2024).

b. Dialogical, Critical, and Contextual Pedagogy

This model requires a shift in the position of students from objects receiving knowledge to active subjects who construct their own religious understanding. Learning can incorporate case discussions, problem-based learning, inquiry-based learning, social projects, collaborative learning, and dialogue across different perspectives.

Such approaches are important because the internalisation of moderation is unlikely to be effective if it relies solely on normative lectures. Research demonstrates the importance of dialogical pedagogy, multicultural learning environments, and students' active engagement in strengthening moderation (Novianti & Jermisittiparsert, 2026). Learning through discussion, inquiry, and problem-solving also provides students with opportunities to examine issues from different perspectives (Ichsan et al., 2024).

c. Educator Competence as Role Models and Facilitators of Moderation

A further implication concerns educator competence. Teachers need not only to master religious subject matter, but also to possess, at a minimum, competence in moderate religious understanding, dialogical pedagogy, multicultural social interaction, critical thinking, and digital literacy.

Educators must be able to manage differences of opinion proportionately, facilitate dialogue, distinguish legitimate differences from hate speech or intolerance, and connect religious content with contemporary issues. This is important because research indicates that uneven levels of understanding among educators and limitations in teacher competence remain challenges to the implementation of religious moderation education (Rahayu et al., 2022). Studies of the transformation of Islamic education have also identified gaps in teachers' digital competence and discrepancies between policy and practice as barriers to implementation (Rahayu et al., 2022).

d. An Inclusive and Progressive Institutional Culture

Religious moderation cannot be assigned solely to particular subjects or teachers. The values of moderation must become part of the institutional culture. This means that relationships among institutional leaders, teachers, educational staff, students, parents, and communities need to reflect respect, justice, openness, deliberation, and social responsibility.

From this perspective, educational institutions are positioned as social laboratories for the practice of Islam Berkemajuan. The exemplary conduct of leaders and educators is important because the internalisation of moderation occurs not only through the formal curriculum, but also through everyday experiences and organisational culture. Research in Islamic educational institutions indicates that the integration of wasatiyyah values occurs through the curriculum,

exemplary leadership, teaching methods, and institutional engagement with societal issues (Nisa & Ahmad, 2026).

e. Critical and Ethical Digital Literacy

Another important finding is that the digital sphere must become an integral component of religious moderation education. Ideological polarisation and the influence of digital media remain challenges for moderation education (Novianti & Jermisittiparsert, 2026). Digital literacy within this model therefore cannot be understood merely as the ability to use technological devices.

Digital literacy needs to encompass the ability to verify religious information, evaluate the authority and credibility of sources, recognise misinformation and intolerant narratives, understand the diversity of perspectives circulating in digital spaces, communicate ethically, and produce educational and constructive religious content. Students thus become not merely consumers of religious information, but critical and responsible digital citizens.

f. Authentic and Multidimensional Assessment

The final implication concerns assessment. Since the objectives of religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan encompass knowledge, attitudes, social skills, and action, assessment is inadequate if it relies solely on cognitive tests. Assessment needs to cover three domains. First, the cognitive domain, encompassing an understanding of moderation, wasatiyyah, diversity, national commitment, Islam Berkemajuan, and contemporary issues. Second, the affective domain, encompassing openness, empathy, respect for differences, justice, and responsibility. Third, the behavioural-praxis domain, encompassing the ability to engage in dialogue, resolve conflicts, collaborate with different groups, verify digital information, and participate in social activities.

Assessment instruments can therefore be developed through a combination of case-based tests, observation rubrics, reflective journals, portfolios, social projects, self-assessment, and peer assessment. This approach is consistent with the proposition that the integration of moderation should comprehensively encompass objectives, learning experiences, methods, and assessment (Muis, 2025).

Formulation of the Progressive Religious Moderation Education Model

Based on the overall findings, the resulting model can be formulated through the following conceptual sequence:

Tawhid → Wasatiyyah → Islam Berkemajuan → Transformative Education → Progressive Moderate Muslim.

Tawhid serves as the theological foundation; wasatiyyah as the ethical principle of religiosity; and Islam Berkemajuan as the transformative paradigm, while curriculum, pedagogy, educators, institutional culture, digital literacy, and assessment constitute the domains of educational implementation. The entire process is directed towards developing students with the profile of progressive moderate Muslims.

This profile is characterised not merely by the capacity to accept differences, but by the integration of several characteristics: religiously grounded yet open-minded; steadfast in faith while respectful of diversity; critical yet ethical; possessing a strong Islamic identity alongside national commitment; adaptive to developments in science and technology; and concerned with humanity and the common good.

The conceptual novelty of this model therefore lies in shifting religious moderation education from a predominantly preventive paradigm towards a progressive-transformative paradigm. Religious moderation education is directed not only towards preventing intolerance, extremism, and radicalism, but also towards developing Muslim subjects capable of responding constructively to social change, advances in knowledge, digital technology, diversity, and humanitarian challenges (Khoiriyah, 2023). This perspective is consistent with the characteristics of Progressive Islamic education, which integrates Islam, Indonesian identity, and modernity (Suyatno et al., 2022).

Ultimately, this study affirms that religious moderation based on Islam Berkemajuan should not be understood merely as the transmission of a set of tolerance values to students. Rather, the

model constitutes a process of shaping ways of thinking, attitudes, and actions that integrate depth of faith, breadth of knowledge, openness to differences, the capacity to respond to change, and a commitment to human welfare. Through this construction, Islamic educational institutions can function not only as spaces for the transmission of religious knowledge, but also as environments for developing a generation of Muslims capable of making religion a force for peace, justice, progress, and civilisation.

DISCUSSION

Convergence of Religious Moderation and Progressive Islam: From Shared Values to a Unified Orientation

The findings demonstrate that religious moderation and Progressive Islam (Islam Berkemajuan) share strong conceptual connections in terms of balance, justice, tolerance, humanity, openness, renewal, and an orientation towards the common good. These points of convergence indicate that the relationship between the two should not be understood merely in terms of terminological similarity or compatibility of values, but rather as a convergence of religious orientations. Religious moderation provides an ethical framework for understanding and practising religion proportionately within a plural society, while Islam Berkemajuan provides a transformative orientation for actualising Islamic values in response to social change and for advancing civilisation. This argument is reinforced by the findings of Suyatno et al. (2022), who identify dynamism, tawhid, rahmatan lil 'alamin, balance, nationalism, and justice as important values of Progressive Islamic education. At the same time, studies of wasatiyyah Islam from a Muhammadiyah perspective identify justice, balance, moderation, tolerance, deliberation, renewal, exemplary conduct, and civic responsibility as principles associated with Islam Berkemajuan (Rozak et al., 2026). Thus, moderation and progress need not be positioned as two separate orientations: the former maintains balance in religious life, while the latter directs religious life towards transformation.

These findings also broaden the meaning of religious moderation. Moderation should not be understood merely as occupying a middle position or avoiding extremes. From the perspective of Islam Berkemajuan, moderation acquires a more active and transformative character. An individual is considered moderate not merely because they are able to coexist with different groups, but also because they are able to make their religiosity a source of justice, humanity, empowerment, and solutions to social problems (Khoiriyah, 2019). This orientation has strong roots in the Muhammadiyah tradition. Khoirudin et al. demonstrate that Muhammadiyah education is grounded, among other principles, in the theology of al-Ma'un, which connects religious consciousness with a humanitarian ethos and social action (Khoirudin et al., 2020). Studies of Ahmad Dahlan's thought also demonstrate that *tajdid* does not end with the purification of beliefs and religious practices, but extends towards transformation through education, healthcare, philanthropy, and community empowerment (Yaman et al., 2026). This study therefore understands the relationship between religious moderation and Islam Berkemajuan as operating in two mutually complementary directions. Religious moderation provides an ethical orientation for Islam Berkemajuan, ensuring that the pursuit of progress remains grounded in balance, justice, respect for diversity, and humanity. Conversely, Islam Berkemajuan provides religious moderation with a transformative orientation so that moderation does not remain confined to passive tolerance, but develops into productive social praxis. This relationship can be formulated as follows: Religious Moderation provides an ethical foundation for religious life, while Islam Berkemajuan provides a transformative direction. Together, they constitute a form of religiosity that is both moderate and transformative.

This interpretation is important because religious moderation education has tended to risk being overemphasised in terms of its preventive function, namely preventing intolerance, radicalism, extremism, and conflict. Within the framework of Islam Berkemajuan, however, education should move beyond a preventive function towards constructive and transformative

functions: developing students who are capable of using religious values to promote the common good.

Reconstructing the Foundations of Religious Moderation Education: From Tolerance Education to Transformative Moderate Education

The second finding demonstrates that religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan can be reconstructed through theological, epistemological, axiological, and pedagogical foundations. This finding is significant because it indicates that religious moderation should not merely be positioned as learning content, but rather as an educational paradigm.

At the theological level, this study positions tawhid as the starting point of religious moderation education. However, tawhid does not remain merely a doctrine concerning the relationship between human beings and Allah. It must also be translated into social responsibility. Within this framework, individual piety has consequences for social piety. Faith should generate respect for human beings, concern for vulnerable groups, justice, and the common good. It is here that the theology of al-Ma'un becomes particularly relevant. Studies of Ahmad Dahlan's thought demonstrate the relationship between spirituality, rationality, and social concern, with the theology of al-Ma'un serving as one of the foundations connecting individual piety with social responsibility (Yaman et al., 2026). From this perspective, the indicators of successful religious education lie not only in the extent to which students master religious knowledge, but also in the extent to which such knowledge develops social awareness and action.

At the epistemological level, the findings affirm the need to integrate revelation, reason, scientific knowledge, and empirical experience. This orientation is consistent with the character of tajdid in Muhammadiyah education, which connects the renewal of Islamic values with educational modernisation. Studies of tajdid and Muhammadiyah progressive education emphasise the integration of religious and general knowledge, critical thinking, technological literacy, character formation, and social responsibility (Setyaningrum & Istanto, 2026). Consequently, religious moderation education should not produce students who are merely capable of memorising definitions of tolerance, wasatiyyah, or Islam Berkemajuan. Students need the capacity to engage in contextual religious reasoning, compare perspectives, examine evidence, distinguish facts from opinions, and connect religious texts with social realities. This dimension is increasingly important in digital society. Contemporary religious understanding is no longer shaped solely by teachers, families, or religious institutions, but also by social media algorithms, short-form video content, online religious figures, and rapidly circulating information. Critical rationality and digital literacy are therefore not external elements of religious education, but integral components of the religious capacities that students need to develop.

The axiological foundation, meanwhile, directs education towards the common good, justice, humanity, and progress. This means that the ultimate objective of religious moderation education is not simply to produce students who are 'non-radical' or 'tolerant', but individuals who are capable of contributing positively to collective life. This orientation is consistent with Islam Berkemajuan, which regards Islam as a moral, intellectual, and social force for advancing civilisation (Aljamaedi et al., 2025). At the pedagogical level, the findings call for a shift from predominantly transmissive and indoctrinative teaching towards dialogical, reflective, critical, contextual, and transformative learning. Studies of Progressive Islamic education indicate a similar direction, namely a shift in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) from a cognitive-doctrinal orientation towards holistic and contextual learning that emphasises critical thinking, ethical awareness, social responsibility, dialogical pedagogy, and active learning (Apriliana & Dartim, 2026). This reconstruction therefore produces an important shift in orientation: from 'teaching moderation' towards 'educating through a paradigm of moderation and progress'.

The distinction is substantive. In the first model, moderation becomes an object of knowledge to be studied by students. In the second, religious moderation and Islam Berkemajuan become frameworks for thinking, developing attitudes, and acting throughout the entire educational

process.

Implications of the Model: Religious Moderation as an Educational Ecosystem

The third finding demonstrates that the success of religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan cannot depend upon a single subject. Curriculum, pedagogy, educator competence, institutional culture, digital literacy, and assessment are interconnected elements. The findings of this study therefore lead to a conception of religious moderation education as an educational ecosystem. This perspective is consistent with frameworks of religious moderation education that position curriculum, teacher competence, learning strategies, school culture, and digital literacy as interconnected dimensions in a process of internalisation through dialogue, reflection, habituation, experience, and collaborative learning (Padedeng & Dos, 2026). Weakness in one component may therefore reduce the effectiveness of the others.

At the curricular level, the values of religious moderation and Islam Berkemajuan need to be integrated transversally. In other words, religious moderation does not necessarily need to be introduced as a new subject. The values of justice, balance, tolerance, *tajdid*, humanity, national commitment, knowledge, and social responsibility can be incorporated into learning objectives, content, learning experiences, projects, and assessment. Within Muhammadiyah education, such integration already has an institutional basis through ISMUBA. Fitri et al. demonstrate that the values of religiosity, tolerance, balance, *tajdid*, and innovation can be internalised through formal ISMUBA learning, non-formal activities, and the habituation of school culture (Fitri et al., 2025). Other findings indicate that the Muhammadiyah curriculum, which is grounded in Progressive Islam, pays particular attention to modernity, contemporary knowledge, and social issues (Sumiarti & Azizah, 2024). However, curricular integration will have limited impact without corresponding pedagogical transformation. Religious moderation education requires opportunities to encounter differences, discuss problems, examine arguments, engage in reflection, and solve problems collaboratively. Case-based learning, multi-perspective discussion, problem-based learning, social projects, and collaborative learning are therefore particularly relevant. Students need to experience moderation, rather than merely hear explanations about it.

A further implication concerns educator competence. Within this model, teachers are not merely transmitters of religious knowledge, but also function as moderation facilitators and role models. Teachers must be capable of explaining differences fairly, managing sensitive dialogue, presenting multiple perspectives without compromising scholarly foundations, and connecting religious teachings with contemporary social issues. Teacher professional development therefore needs to integrate substantive religious competence, dialogical pedagogy, critical thinking skills, sensitivity to diversity, and digital literacy.

Institutional culture also occupies a strategic position. Students will experience a contradiction if tolerance is taught in the classroom while institutional practices are exclusive, discriminatory, or resistant to dialogue. The values of moderation must therefore be reflected in leadership, school regulations, teacher–student relationships, student organisations, religious activities, social services, and community relations. Historically, Muhammadiyah education has indeed been directed not only towards the transmission of knowledge, but also towards social reconstruction and the development of a humanitarian ethos (Khoirudin et al., 2020).

Digital literacy, meanwhile, represents an extension of the sphere of moderation that cannot be overlooked. In the digital era, students encounter highly diverse forms of religious information that do not always possess clearly identifiable scholarly authority. Religious moderation education therefore needs to develop students' ability to evaluate the credibility of sources, verify information, recognise information manipulation, distinguish facts from opinions, understand the context of religious content, and develop ethical digital communication. Strengthening literacy, continuing education, community empowerment, and the evidence-based use of social media have also been identified as relevant components of Muhammadiyah's response to the challenges of the post-truth era (Hanafiah & Humaidi, 2025).

Finally, assessment needs to shift from measuring knowledge alone towards multidimensional assessment. If religious moderation represents an integration of knowledge, attitudes, reasoning, and action, written examinations alone are insufficient to measure its success. Assessment needs to capture students' ability to understand differences, construct proportionate arguments, demonstrate empathy, resolve conflicts, verify information, collaborate with others, and translate religious values into social action.

These six components therefore do not operate as independent variables, but form a systemic relationship: the curriculum provides values and learning experiences, which are subsequently internalised through pedagogy. Within this process, educators serve as both facilitators and role models, while institutional culture habituates these values in everyday life. Digital literacy extends the practice of these values into digital spaces, while assessment determines the extent to which the entire process produces transformation within students. This relationship demonstrates that religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan is more appropriately constructed as a progressive-moderate educational ecosystem than merely as an instructional programme.

Theoretical Construction of the Religious Moderation Education Model Based on Progressive Islam

Based on the dialogue between the findings of this study and the existing literature, this study proposes that religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan operates across four dimensions. The first dimension comprises the foundations: tawhid, the Qur'an and Sunnah, wasatiyyah, tajdid, and the orientation of rahmatan lil 'alamin. This dimension provides the normative-theological foundation. The second dimension comprises the value orientations, including balance, justice, tolerance, humanity, openness, national commitment, rationality, progress, and the common good. This dimension translates the theological foundations into educational values. The third dimension comprises the implementation system, consisting of an integrative curriculum, critical-dialogical pedagogy, moderate-transformative educators, an inclusive institutional culture, critical digital literacy, and authentic multidimensional assessment. The fourth dimension concerns the graduate profile, namely the development of progressive moderate Muslims: individuals who possess strong religious convictions while remaining open to diversity, are capable of critical thinking, demonstrate national commitment, adapt to advances in science and technology, and are capable of translating religious values into actions oriented towards the common good. Within this construction, the relationship between the components of the model can be formulated as follows:

Theological foundations → progressive-moderate values → educational ecosystem → internalisation and habituation → progressive moderate Muslims → the common good and the advancement of civilisation.

This constitutes the conceptual contribution of the study. Religious moderation education is no longer positioned solely within the framework of deradicalisation and the prevention of intolerance, but is reconstructed as education that is formative, constructive, and transformative. Moderation represents a quality of religious understanding and practice, while Islam Berkemajuan provides the direction through which this quality of religiosity can generate beneficial social transformation. Religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan can therefore be defined as a transformative educational process that integrates the values of wasatiyyah and the orientation of tajdid to develop students whose religiosity is balanced, just, tolerant, critical, open to knowledge and change, and capable of actualising Islamic values through humanitarian action and the advancement of civilisation.

This construction also distinguishes the model from approaches to religious moderation education that focus solely on tolerance. Tolerance is one of the characteristics to be developed, but it is not the ultimate objective. The broader objective is the development of progressive moderate Muslim subjects who are capable of connecting piety with knowledge, religiosity with humanity, Islamic identity with national commitment, and religious conviction with transformative action.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings demonstrate that religious moderation and Progressive Islam (Islam Berkemajuan) exhibit a conceptual convergence that forms a mutually complementary orientation towards religious life. Religious moderation provides an ethical foundation through the values of balance, justice, tolerance, humanity, and openness, while Islam Berkemajuan provides a transformative direction through *tajdid*, rationality, the common good, and progress. The integration of the two affirms that moderate religiosity should not be limited to tolerance and the avoidance of extremes, but should also be manifested in actions oriented towards addressing social problems, empowerment, humanity, and the advancement of civilisation.

Religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan needs to be reconstructed from an education oriented primarily towards tolerance into a form of transformative moderate education. This reconstruction rests upon a theological foundation that connects *tawhid* with social responsibility; an epistemological foundation that integrates revelation, reason, scientific knowledge, and empirical experience; an axiological foundation oriented towards justice, humanity, the common good, and progress; and a pedagogical foundation that emphasises dialogical, reflective, critical, contextual, and transformative learning. Religious moderation thus becomes not merely content to be taught, but a paradigm that shapes ways of thinking, developing attitudes, and acting throughout the educational process.

The implementation of religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan needs to be developed as an educational ecosystem integrating curriculum, pedagogy, educators, institutional culture, digital literacy, and assessment. The values of religious moderation and Islam Berkemajuan need to be integrated transversally across the curriculum and actualised through critical-dialogical learning, educators' exemplary conduct, an inclusive institutional culture, and critical digital literacy. Assessment also needs to be multidimensional in order to evaluate students' knowledge, attitudes, reasoning, and actions. This integration affirms that the success of religious moderation education cannot depend upon a single subject or particular programme, but rather upon the consistency of the entire educational environment in internalising and habituating progressive-moderate values.

The religious moderation education model based on Islam Berkemajuan is constructed through a systemic relationship between theological foundations, progressive-moderate values, the educational ecosystem, processes of internalisation and habituation, and the profile of progressive moderate Muslims. The model is designed to develop students who possess strong religious convictions while remaining open to diversity, are capable of critical thinking, demonstrate national commitment, adapt to developments in science and technology, and are able to actualise Islamic values through social action. Religious moderation education based on Islam Berkemajuan is therefore a formative, constructive, and transformative educational process whose ultimate aim is to develop progressive moderate Muslims capable of connecting piety with knowledge, religiosity with humanity, Islamic identity with national commitment, and religious conviction with concrete action for the common good and the advancement of civilisation.

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