

STRENGTHENING RELIGIOUS MODERATION THROUGH PANCASILA-BASED CHARACTER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation and supporting and inhibiting factors of strengthening religious moderation through Pancasila-based character education in students of the Islamic Religious Education S1 Study Program at Darul Ulum Islamic Center Sudirman University. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design and a socio-legal approach. Data was obtained through in-depth interviews, lecture observations, focus group discussions, and analysis of curriculum documents and Semester Learning Plans. The results of the study show that the integration of Pancasila values in the curriculum, dialogical pedagogical approaches, community service activities, and strengthening digital literacy are the main factors in strengthening students' religious moderation. An inclusive academic culture and lecturer role models also support the internalization of the values of tolerance and national commitment. However, the limitations of the character evaluation system that are not yet longitudinal, the variation in lecturers' pedagogical competencies, and the challenges of digital polarization are obstacles that need to be overcome. This study concludes that Pancasila-based character education has strategic potential in forming prospective religious educators who are moderate and inclusive, noting that it is necessary to strengthen a more systematic assessment system and digital literacy strategy for the sustainability of long-term impacts.

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis implementasi serta faktor pendukung dan penghambat penguatan moderasi beragama melalui pendidikan karakter berbasis Pancasila pada mahasiswa Prodi S1 Pendidikan Agama Islam di Universitas Darul Ulum Islamic Centre Sudirman. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus dan pendekatan socio-legal. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi perkuliahan, diskusi kelompok terarah, serta analisis dokumen kurikulum dan Rencana Pembelajaran Semester. Hasil penelitian

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menunjukkan bahwa integrasi nilai Pancasila dalam kurikulum, pendekatan pedagogis dialogis, kegiatan pengabdian masyarakat, serta penguatan literasi digital menjadi faktor utama dalam memperkuat moderasi beragama mahasiswa. Budaya akademik yang inklusif dan keteladanan dosen turut mendukung internalisasi nilai toleransi dan komitmen kebangsaan. Namun demikian, keterbatasan sistem evaluasi karakter yang belum longitudinal, variasi kompetensi pedagogis dosen, serta tantangan polarisasi digital menjadi hambatan yang perlu diatasi. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pendidikan karakter berbasis Pancasila memiliki potensi strategis dalam membentuk calon pendidik agama yang moderat dan inklusif, dengan catatan diperlukan penguatan sistem asesmen dan strategi literasi digital yang lebih sistematis untuk keberlanjutan dampak jangka panjang.

Kata kunci:

Moderasi Beragama;
Pendidikan Karakter; Pancasila;
Literasi Digital; Pendidikan
Tinggi Keagamaan.

INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation has emerged as a strategic agenda in the context of Indonesia's increasingly complex plurality. The archipelago is made up of hundreds of ethnic groups and adherents of various religions and streams; Demographics show that young age groups (15–29 years old) make up a large part of the socially and digitally active population, so their behaviors and value patterns greatly determine the future of social cohesion (Central Statistics Agency, 2023). On the other hand, national internet penetration continues to increase close to 78–80% of users, so that the digital space becomes the main field for opinion formation, social mobilization, and the dissemination of both moderate and extreme narratives (APJII, 2024). These demographic and digital conditions make Pancasila-based character education a strategic intervention to instill systemic moderation values from an early age (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2023; UNDP, 2024).

Empirically, attention to religious moderation is not without reason. Tolerance indicators show significant regional variations: some cities and regions recorded an increase in the tolerance index due to local initiatives, while others remained vulnerable to intolerance and identity conflicts (Setara Institute, 2024). In addition, data from conflict handling agencies and public complaints illustrate that cases of intolerance, religion-based discrimination, and symbolic harassment still occur periodically (Komnas HAM; Komnas Perempuan, 2023). These facts indicate that normative efforts and policies alone are not enough, there is a need for the formation of social character and habits that affirm the attitude of *tawasuth* (balance), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *i'tidaal* (justice) which are important aspects of religious moderation.

Pancasila as the basis of the state provides a strong normative foundation for moderate value education. Since strengthening the curriculum through the Pancasila Student Profile program and strengthening character education, various education policies have been directed to instill national competencies: mutual cooperation, critical thinking, ethics, and respect for differences (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2023). Initial implementation evaluations show that schools that adopt Pancasila-based character education practices (e.g., student involvement in decision-making, transparency of school activities, and value modules) show increased attitudes of tolerance and social concern among students, although long-term effects still need to be monitored through longitudinal surveys (Curriculum and Learning, 2024).

The role of teachers and the school environment as agents of value socialization cannot be ignored. Field studies indicate that integrated anti-corruption education programs, civic education, and religious education are able to produce affective changes, namely empathy, social responsibility, and respect for differences more strongly than factual teaching approaches alone (KPK, 2022; Maghfiroh, Choiri, & Sul-ton, 2025). This emphasizes that moderation education must integrate three dimensions: cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitude), and psychomotor

(behavioral), so that students not only know about tolerance but also practice it in daily interactions.

The main challenge that hinders the effectiveness of moderation education is the flow of disinformation and polarization in the digital space. Future communication research shows how platform algorithms tend to strengthen the echo chamber and virality of sensational content, which can accelerate the spread of intolerant discourse if not balanced with adequate digital literacy (Lim, 2022; Nasrullah, 2021). Therefore, strengthening religious moderation through character education must also contain components of media literacy and digital ethics so that students are able to become critical and responsible users and producers of information.

Furthermore, implementation in the field encounters contextual barriers: differences in teacher capacity, access to educational infrastructure in remote areas, and local cultural variations that sometimes view certain patronage or cultural practices as the norm. A "one-size-fits-all" strategy will be less effective; on the contrary, the curriculum and learning materials need to be contextualized using local languages, involving local religious and traditional leaders, and combining the Pancasila narrative with local moral norms so that moderation can be accepted and internalized (Sari & Nugroho, 2021; Hidayat, 2022).

From a policy perspective, continuity and synchronization between levels of government are important. Policies to strengthen moderation in the education sector must be supported by consistent regulations and budgets, as well as a clear evaluation monitoring mechanism to measure changes in attitudes and practices, not just program outputs. Recommended performance indicators include: changes in tolerance scores in school surveys, frequency of interfaith dialogue activities at the school/regional level, and reporting rates of intolerance incidents that have been successfully dealt with restoratively (OECD, 2022; UNDP, 2024).

With this empirical and theoretical background, this research departs from the premise that Pancasila-based character education is a strategic instrument to strengthen religious moderation but will only be effective if it is designed holistically (cognitive-affective-practice), contextualized according to local culture, equipped with digital literacy, and supported by adequate policies and resources. Therefore, this study aims to (1) map best practices for the integration of religious moderation in Pancasila-based character education; (2) evaluate implementation barriers in various contexts; and (3) formulate policy and practice recommendations to strengthen religious moderation through sustainable education.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design and a socio-legal approach to analyze the strengthening of religious moderation through Pancasila-based character education in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) S1 Study Program at Darul Ulum Islamic Center Sudirman University (UNDARIS). This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore in depth the implementation of the value of religious moderation in the context of religious higher education, as well as examine the relationship between national policies, institutional curricula, and learning practices at the study program level.

The location of the research is focused on the S1 Study Program of PAI UNDARIS with the consideration that this study program has a strategic role in producing prospective Islamic religious educators who are expected to become agents of religious moderation in the community. The subjects of the study include the head of the study program, lecturers in Pancasila courses, Islamic Religious Education, and courses related to religious moderation, as well as active students in the middle and final semesters. The selection of informants was carried out by purposive sampling based on their involvement in the learning process and academic activities related to character education and religious moderation.

Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews, observation of lecture processes, and directed group discussions (FGD) with students. The interviews focused on understanding the concept of religious moderation, strategies for integrating Pancasila values into the curriculum, learning practices that encourage tolerance, and challenges faced in implementation. Observations were carried out to observe classroom dynamics, learning methods, lecturer-student interaction, and student activities that reflect the value of moderation.

Secondary data were obtained from the curriculum documents of the PAI S1 Study Program, Semester Learning Plans (RPS), lecture modules, academic guidelines, and institutional policies related to character education and religious moderation. The scientific literature of the last five years is also used to strengthen theoretical frameworks and conceptual analysis.

The data analysis technique uses thematic analysis, with stages of data reduction, categorization, pattern identification, and interpretation of meaning. The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation of sources (lecturers, students, documents), triangulation of methods (interviews, observations, documentation), and *member checking* to ensure the accuracy of the interpretation of research results.

Through this method, the research is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of the implementation of Pancasila-based character education in strengthening religious moderation within the S1 PAI UNDIRIS Study Program, as well as formulate strategic recommendations for the development of sustainable curriculum and learning practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of Pancasila-based character education in strengthening religious moderation in S1 PAI Study Program students at Universitas Darul Ulum Islamic Centre Sudirman

The implementation of Pancasila-based character education in the context of religious moderation cannot be understood simply as integrating material into the formal curriculum. It is a process of socializing values that involves structural dimensions (policies and curriculum), cultural (academic culture), and praxis (real student behavior). Religious moderation in prospective PAI teacher students has strategic urgency, because they will later become agents of value transmission to the wider community.

Nationally, strengthening religious moderation has become a priority agenda for human resource development, in line with the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile which emphasizes the dimensions of faith, global diversity, and mutual cooperation ([Ministry of Education and Culture, 2023](#)). In addition, the national report on digital literacy shows the high exposure of the young generation to digital information flows which has the potential to strengthen identity polarization if it is not balanced with critical literacy ([APJII, 2024](#)). In this context, Pancasila-based character education in religious universities is a preventive and constructive instrument in building a moderate, inclusive, and nationally oriented religious attitude.

Based on the results of field research at the S1 PAI UNDIRIS Study Program, the implementation of religious moderation through character education shows a fairly progressive dynamic, although it still faces challenges in the aspects of evaluation and strengthening pedagogical capacity.

- 1) Integration of Religious Moderation Values in Curriculum and RPS

The results of the document analysis show that the curriculum of the PAI S1 Study Program has integrated Pancasila values in various courses, both normative (Pancasila Education, Civic Education) and substantive Islamic (Social Fiqh, Contemporary Islamic Thought, Multicultural Studies). Graduate learning outcomes (CPL) include attitude competencies in the form of tolerance, national commitment, and respect for diversity.

A project-based approach is used to relate the value of Pancasila to actual issues, such as identity conflicts and digital radicalism. The character education literature shows that experiential learning significantly increases the internalization of values compared to conventional lecture methods (UNESCO, 2021). At UNDIRIS, students not only learn the concept of religious moderation, but also prepare critical reflections and moderation learning modules for field practice.

However, the attitude evaluation system is still qualitative-descriptive and has not used longitudinal measurement instruments. In fact, character strengthening requires continuous monitoring to see the consistency of behavior changes.

2) Pedagogical Strategy and Academic Culture

Lecture observations show that lecturers try to build a dialogical atmosphere in discussing diversity issues. Cross-perspective discussions and case analysis are the dominant methods in learning. This approach is effective in developing students' critical thinking skills and social empathy.

Social communication research confirms that open dialogue spaces can reduce the tendency to exclusivism and strengthen deliberative attitudes (Lim, 2022). At UNDIRIS, students revealed that discussion forums provide a safe space to express opinions without fear of being stigmatized. An inclusive academic culture is also reflected in national seminars, thematic studies, and discussions across student organizations. A relatively conducive campus environment is the main supporting factor in the internalization of moderation values.

3) Student Affairs and Community Service Activities as a Praxis Space

Religious moderation is not only taught, but also practiced through student activities. The KKN and community service program is a vehicle for students to interact directly with heterogeneous communities. The results of the interviews showed that the experience of cross-community interaction increased students' social sensitivity to the reality of diversity.

An OECD study (2022) states that experiential learning strengthens civic values and social cohesion more effectively than theoretical learning. The findings at UNDIRIS show a similar pattern: students who are active in social activities show a higher level of critical reflection on the issue of intolerance.

4) Digital Challenges and Religious Literacy

With high national internet penetration (APJII, 2024), students are in a complex information environment. Some informants admitted that they had been exposed to exclusive religious narratives on social media. This shows that strengthening religious moderation must be accompanied by digital literacy and critical analysis skills on online content.

In the S1 PAI UNDIRIS Study Program, lecturers began to integrate social media content analysis tasks as part of learning. This strategy helps students distinguish between moderate da'wah and provocative narratives.

| Implementation Dimensions | Form of Practice | Impact on Students |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------------|

| | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| Curriculum | Integration of Pancasila in RPS and CPL | Normative understanding of moderation increases |
| Pedagogical | Dialogue discussions & case studies | Empathy and inclusive attitudes develop |
| Service | Community KKN & cross-community activities | Internalize value in real action |
| Digital Literacy | Online religious content analysis | Resistance to digital polarization |

Table 1. Implementation and Impact Summary

The findings of this study show that the implementation of Pancasila-based character education in strengthening religious moderation in the S1 PAI Study Program, Universitas Darul Ulum Islamic Centre Sudirman cannot be understood as a linear process that only relies on a formal curriculum. It is a social construct that involves the interaction between institutional policies, pedagogical practices, academic culture, and students' social experiences. In other words, religious moderation grows through a continuous process of value habituation, not just the internalization of normative concepts.

Theoretically, the results of this study reinforce the view that character education is effective when it integrates three main dimensions: cognitive (knowledge of the values of Pancasila and moderation), affective (the formation of an attitude of empathy and tolerance), and praxis (real experience in social interaction). The integration of these three dimensions can be seen in dialogical learning practices, community service activities, and students' critical reflection. When students not only understand the concept of religious moderation but also practice it in concrete situations, these values transform into part of their identity.

From an institutional perspective, the implementation at UNDARIS shows that curriculum policy support and lecturer commitment are important prerequisites. However, value transformation does not automatically occur just because of regulations or RPS that contain attitude achievements. The effectiveness of internalization is largely determined by the quality of pedagogical interaction and lecturer example. This emphasizes that religious moderation education requires value-oriented academic leadership and ongoing pedagogical training.

In a broader social context, the synthesis of these findings also shows that religious moderation in higher education has a preventive function against identity polarization, especially in the digital era. Students who have an adequate foundation in Pancasila values and digital literacy tend to be more critical of exclusive narratives and more open to dialogue across differences. Thus, Pancasila-based character education not only contributes to the formation of individual attitudes, but also plays a role in maintaining social cohesion at the community level.

Nevertheless, the study also identifies structural and cultural challenges that require attention. Unstandardized character evaluation, limitations of longitudinal measurement instruments, and variations in lecturers' pedagogical capacity are obstacles in ensuring the sustainability of impact. Therefore, strengthening religious moderation needs to be positioned as a long-term institutional agenda supported by a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system.

Overall, this study emphasizes that Pancasila-based character education in the S1 Study Program of PAI UNDARIS has shown a constructive direction in strengthening

students' religious moderation. An implementation model that combines curriculum, dialogical pedagogy, social praxis activities, and digital literacy has the potential to become a best practice that can be replicated in similar study programs. By strengthening the evaluation system and developing the capacity of lecturers, Pancasila-based character education can be a solid foundation in building a generation of religious educators who are moderate, inclusive, and committed to national unity.

2. **Supporting and inhibiting factors in strengthening religious moderation through Pancasila-based character education in the PAI S1 Study Program at Darul Ulum Islamic Center Sudirman University**

Strengthening religious moderation through Pancasila-based character education is a process that does not stand alone, but is influenced by various structural, cultural, and personal factors. In the context of the PAI S1 Study Program at Darul Ulum Islamic Centre Sudirman University (UNDARIS), these dynamics can be seen in the interaction between institutional policies, lecturer competence, academic culture, and student social conditions.

Nationally, strengthening religious moderation has become a strategic agenda in the development of religious higher education (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2023). However, the literature shows that the effectiveness of implementation is largely determined by the readiness of institutions and the capacity of human resources (OECD, 2022). Therefore, the analysis of supporting and inhibiting factors is important to understand the sustainability of the program at the study program level.

1. Supporting Factors

a. The Institution's Commitment to National Values

The results of the study show that the S1 PAI UNDARIS Study Program has a strong commitment to integrating the values of Pancasila and religious moderation in the vision and curriculum. Academic documents and institutional activities reflect a national orientation and tolerance. A relatively inclusive campus environment is a cultural foundation that supports the internalization of values.

The Pancasila Student Profile integration policy (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2023) has helped strengthen the legitimacy of the implementation of character education at the university level. This regulatory support creates a clear normative framework for the development of religious moderation.

b. The Role of Lecturers as Role Models

Lecturers in the S1 PAI Study Program have a central role in instilling the value of moderation through a dialogical and reflective approach. The example of lecturers in being open to differences is a key factor in building a moderate academic culture.

Character education research shows that educator figures have a significant influence on the formation of students' moral attitudes (UNESCO, 2021). At UNDARIS, students stated that open discussions and non-exclusive lecturers strengthened their understanding of the importance of tolerance.

c. Social Praxis and Service Activities

The KKN program and community service are a real space for students to practice the value of moderation. Direct interaction with heterogeneous societies broadens students' perspectives and reduces stereotypes.

This experiential learning model is in line with the findings of the OECD (2022) that social experiences directly increase civic engagement and social cohesion. Thus, field activities are the main supporting factor in the internalization of values.

d. Digital Literacy Integration

The high internet penetration in Indonesia (APJII, 2024) makes digital literacy an important part of character education. The PAI S1 Study Program began to integrate social media content analysis in learning, so that students have the ability to be critical of intolerant narratives.

2. Inhibiting Factors

a. Limitations of Character Evaluation Instruments

Although moderation values have been integrated into the curriculum, the character evaluation system still does not use quantitative or longitudinal indicators. Attitude assessments tend to be descriptive and have not been able to measure behavior change in a sustainable manner.

The character education literature emphasizes the importance of behavioural indicator-based assessments to ensure sustainability of impacts (UNESCO, 2021). The absence of a structured evaluation system is an obstacle in optimizing program results.

b. Variations in Lecturers' Pedagogical Capacity

Not all lecturers have the same ability to manage diversity discussions dialogically. Some still use a less participatory normative approach. This has the potential to reduce the effectiveness of value internalization.

According to Lim (2022), dialogical pedagogy requires special competence in managing differences in perspectives without triggering polarization. Therefore, continuous training is an important need.

c. The Influence of Digital Polarization

Students as a digital generation are vulnerable to exposure to exclusive and provocative religious content. Social media algorithms can strengthen the echo chamber that narrows perspectives (Nasrullah, 2021). Without strong digital literacy, the process of internalizing the value of moderation can be hampered by contradictory information flows.

d. Limitations of Collaboration Across Study Programs

The strengthening of religious moderation is still dominant in the scope of the PAI Study Program and has not been fully integrated across faculties. In fact, an interdisciplinary approach can broaden students' perspectives and strengthen an inclusive campus culture.

| Category | Supporting Factors | Inhibiting Factors |
|---------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Struktural | Pancasila curriculum integration | Character evaluation is not yet longitudinal |
| Pedagogis | Dialogical & reflective lecturer | Variations in pedagogical capacity |
| Social-Praxis | KKN & community service | Limitations of collaboration across study programs |
| Digital | Digital literacy integration | Polarization and echo chamber of social media |

Table 2. Synthesis of Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Based on the overall findings, the strengthening of religious moderation through Pancasila-based character education in the S1 PAI Study Program, Universitas Darul Ulum Islamic Centre Sudirman shows that the success of implementation is not determined by a single variable, but by a simultaneous interaction between structural, pedagogical, cultural, and socio-digital factors. Religious moderation in this context is not just the result of normative learning, but is an identity construction process formed through students' academic and social experiences.

Structurally, the existence of a Pancasila-based curriculum and national policy support provide formal legitimacy for the implementation of religious moderation. However, the findings of the study show that regulation alone does not guarantee a transformation of value. The value of moderation is only truly internalized when it is translated into dialogical, reflective, and participatory pedagogical practices. This strengthens the thesis that character education is effective when there is an alignment between written policy and practice culture.

From the pedagogical side, the role of lecturers as role models has a significant influence on the formation of student attitudes. Inclusive academic exemplary creates a safe deliberative space for students to express their views without fear of being stigmatized. The dialogue process encourages students to develop empathy and critical thinking skills. Thus, religious moderation is not taught as a doctrine, but is built through the experience of continuous dialogue.

In the social-practical dimension, KKN activities and community service are important vehicles in transforming values into actions. Direct interaction with heterogeneous communities allows students to experience the reality of diversity in a concrete way. This process strengthens the integration between Pancasila values and social practices. These findings suggest that internalizing values is more effective when students are faced with real-world situations that demand a tolerant and collaborative attitude.

However, this synthesis also confirms that strengthening religious moderation faces significant challenges. Unsystematic character evaluations hinder the institution's ability to measure long-term impacts. Without longitudinal assessment instruments, attitude changes are difficult to verify empirically. In addition, variations in lecturers' pedagogical capacity in managing diversity discourse have the potential to create inequality in the quality of learning.

An equally important challenge is the influence of digital polarization. College students live in a highly dynamic information ecosystem, where social media algorithms can reinforce identity exclusivism. If not balanced with strong digital literacy, the process of internalizing the value of moderation can be disrupted by massive intolerant narratives. Therefore, Pancasila-based character education must be expanded to critical literacy education that equips students with the ability to sort information and build a moderate narrative in the digital space.

Conceptually, this synthesis shows that religious moderation in higher education can be understood as a model of the value ecosystem. The ecosystem consists of: (1) a normative policy framework; (2) an inclusive academic culture; (3) dialogical pedagogy; (4) social praxis; and (5) digital literacy. These five elements are interrelated and determine the success of value internalization. When one of the elements is weak, the effectiveness of moderation reinforcement becomes less than optimal.

Thus, strengthening religious moderation in the S1 PAI UNDARIS Study Program must be positioned as a long-term institutional agenda oriented towards character building, not just curriculum fulfillment. An evaluation system based on behavioral indicators, pedagogical training for lecturers, collaborative integration across study programs, and strengthening structured digital literacy is needed.

Overall, this study shows that Pancasila-based character education has strong potential as a foundation for strengthening religious moderation in religious universities. However, its sustainability is highly dependent on the consistency of implementation and the collective commitment of the entire campus ecosystem in making the value of Pancasila a living proxy, not just a normative discourse.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that strengthening religious moderation through Pancasila-based character education in the S1 PAI Study Program, Universitas Darul Ulum Islamic Center Sudirman shows a constructive and progressive direction. The integration of Pancasila values in the curriculum, dialogical pedagogical approach, and student involvement in community service activities are the main foundations in building a tolerant, inclusive, and nationally oriented attitude. Religious moderation is not only understood as a normative concept, but is internalized through ongoing academic and social experience.

However, the effectiveness of implementation still faces challenges, especially in the aspect of character evaluation that has not been systematic, variations in lecturers' pedagogical capacity, and the influence of digital polarization on students. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the assessment system based on behavioral indicators, moderation pedagogy training for lecturers, and a more structured integration of digital literacy. With consistent institutional commitment and comprehensive strategy development, Pancasila-based character education in the S1 PAI UNDARIS Study Program has the potential to be a model for strengthening religious moderation that is sustainable and relevant in maintaining social cohesion in the midst of the diversity of Indonesian society.

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