Strengthening Religious Moderation in Islamic Religious Education Through Multidisciplinary, Interdisciplinary, and Transdisciplinary Approaches

Muhammad Fauzi Noor[1*], Mahyuddin Barni[2].

[1] Universitas Islam Negeri Antasari Banjarmasin, Banjarmasin, Indonesia

[2] Universitas Islam Negeri Antasari Banjarmasin, Banjarmasin, Indonesia

Correspondent muhammadfauzinoor.7@gmail.com

A B S T R A C T

This study exmines the strengthening of religious moderation in Islamic religious education through multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches. Religious moderation is an essential foundation for building harmony in a pluralistitc society, Islamic education often often remains centered on normative and doctrinal teaching that lacks contextual relevance. The qualitative library research method was used to analyze literature related to Islamic education, religious moderation, and integrated learning approaches. The multidisciplinary approach enriches religious understanding by involving various fields of knowledge. The interdisciplinary approach integrates concepts across disciplines into a unified framework, allowing moderation to be internalized conceptually. The transdisciplinary approach places learners directly in social interaction, enabling the practice and embodiment of moderation in real-life contexts. The findings indicate that the synergy of these three approaches contributes to the formation of open, critical, and tolerant learners who are able to interact harmoniously in diverse social settings. The study concludes that the transformation of Islamic education through these approaches is essential to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in addressing contemporary challenges

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the important agendas in strengthening national and state life in Indonesia, which is plural and multicultural, is the discourse of religious moderation. The rise of extremism, intolerance, and radicalism demands new, relevant, and contextual approaches in the field of education.(Primarni, 2024) Islamic religious education plays a central role in shaping the character of the Muslim community and is responsible for producing a moderate generation capable of appreciating differences. The challenges of globalization and the rapid flow of information often give rise to narrow and rigid understandings of religion. This condition emphasizes the urgency of developing more innovative strategies for strengthening religious moderation. Islamic education needs to transform both its approaches and practices (Fikriyah, 2024)

A multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approach serves as a strategic option in responding to these challenges (Hotami et al., 2025). The multidisciplinary approach provides space for various fields of knowledge to contribute to religious understanding. The interdisciplinary approach encourages conceptual dialogue between scientific fields to produce integrative perspectives (Abidin, 2022). The transdisciplinary approach directs education toward solving real problems in society through the involvement of community-based resources. The synergy of these three approaches can produce adaptive curricula and learning methods aligned with contemporary realities (Sonia, 2022). Islamic education is therefore positioned not only as doctrinal instruction but also as a foundation for building harmonious social life.

Strengthening religious moderation through these approaches helps learners understand Islam in a universal and applicable manner. Leaners explore religion normatively and also examine its relevance in social sciences, humanities, science, and cultural studies. This integration encourages open, critical, and tolerant thinking when responding to diversity (Ramadhan, 2025). For example, sociology and anthropology support awareness of pluralism, and psychology contributes to the formation of inclusive character. Through this process, religious moderation becomes internalized rather than rhetorical. The result is the emergence of a broad-minded and wise Muslim generation capable of navigating global dynamics.

The strengthening of religious moderation in Islamic education through multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches represents a concrete step toward building an inclusive and peaceful society. Collaboration between scientific fields enriches Islamic knowledge in dynamic and contextual ways (Pontoh, 2025). Islamic education that applies these approaches remains relevant to contemporary challenges and can respond to global issues such as intolerance and injustice. These approaches also encourage innovative learning that develops critical thinking and wise behavior in daily life. Religious moderation thus becomes an active practice in the educational system.

2. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a library research design. The method allows exploration of ideas and conceptual analysis regarding the application of multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches in strengthening religious moderation (Mizani et al., 2025). The qualitative approach supports in-depth interpretation of texts and scholarly discussions relevant to moderate Islamic education,

Primary data sources include books, journal articles, prior research, and official documents concerning Islamic education and religious moderation. Secondary data are derived from supporting publications such as research reports and scholarly essays. Sources were selected based on relevance and credibility. Data were collected through systematic documentation and review of literature. Concepts related to strengthening religious moderation were identified, classified, and analyzed critically within social and cultural contexts. The data were processed using content analysis, including reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Challenges of Islamic Religious Education in the Digital Era

Islamic education in the digital era faces increasinglu complex challenges as digital developments, technology, and information continue to advance. The rapid flow of information on social media often exposes students to narrow and decontextualized religious interpretations. This condition is intensified by the spread of transnational ideological propaganda that infiltrates digital spaces without critical filtration from either learners or educators. Such exposure contributes to the rise of intolerance, radicalism, and exclusive ways of understanding religion. This situation requires a reconstruction of Islamic educational strategies that are more adaptive and responsive to the dynamics of the times. Islamic education is therefore expected not only to transfer religious knowledge, but also to equip students with critical thinking skills to navigate global challenges (Ridwan, 2023).

The orientation of islamic education in many institutions still emphasizes normative-doctrinal aspects without balancing them with contextual understanding (Kurnia, 2023). Curricula frequently prioritize memorization of religious texts rather than developing students' analytical skills in relation to social realities (Alwathani, n.d.). As a result, students tend to adopt binary patterns of thinking, such as right–wrong, lawful–unlawful, or believer–non-believer, without acknowledging the complexity of social life. Such rigid patterns of thinking create fertile ground for intolerance and radicalism, stemming from narrow interpretations of religion. The central challenge for Islamic education is therefore to shift learning paradigms toward more comprehensive, moderate, and pluralistic forms of understanding.

A further challenge arises from technological disruption and global cultural shifts. Young Muslims today grow up in a digital culture characterized by instant, practical, and visually-oriented engagement, which contrasts with traditional learning models that are textual and in-depth. The unpreparedness of educators and Islamic educational institutions to address this cultural shift has created a gap between what is taught and the lived experiences of learners. If unaddressed, this gap risks causing

students to become alienated from Islamic teachings, viewing them as irrelevant to modern life. This contemporary reality requires a transformation of Islamic educational methods to ensure that they remain meaningful and relevant to the needs of the digital generation.

Constructing Moderate Religious Understanding through A Multidisciplinary Approach in Islamic Education

The multidisciplinary approach in Islamic education emphasizes the involvement of various academic disciplines to enrich religious understanding. Islam as a religion that embodies *rahmatan lil 'alamin* cannot be comprehended solely through a theological lens; it must also be examined through the perspectives of social sciences, humanities, and the natural sciences. For instance, the study of Islamic law can be deepened through sociological analysis in order to make it more applicable to contemporary societal needs. Likewise, discussions on Islamic ethics can be expanded using psychological insights to gain a more comprehensive understanding of human behavior. Through this multidisciplinary approach, learners are encouraged to view religion not merely as a set of doctrines, but as a dynamic guide to life that interacts with the development of knowledge (Sabara & Rohmaniyah, 2025)

The involvement of multiple disciplines supports the development of critical and comprehensive thinking among learners. When studying the concept of religious moderation, students not only refer to Qur'anic verses and Hadith but also analyze issues of intolerance through political, cultural, and media perspectives. This process trains students to place religion in a balanced position within a pluralistic society. Islamic education thus shifts from being a narrow space for indoctrination to becoming a platform for broad and inclusive intellectual development. This shift is essential for nurturing moderate attitudes that are vital in a nation characterized by ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity.

The multidisciplinary approach also strengthens the position of Islamic education within the wider context of global knowledge exchange. When Islamic education is able to collaborate with various fields of study, it is no longer viewed as a closed system confined to a particular community. Instead, it emerges as an open, progressive, and contributive educational framework that actively participates in shaping modern civilization. In this way, Islamic values can serve as solutions to pressing human problems such as moral degradation, social injustice, and environmental destruction. The adoption of a multidisciplinary approach therefore represents a strategic step in developing Islamic education that is both moderate and relevant across generations.

Integration of Knowledge for Religious Moderation: The Interdisciplinary Model in Islamic Religious Education in the Digital Era

The interdisciplinary approach in Islamic education emphasizes comprehensive integration between one field of knowledge and another. Unlike the multidisciplinary approach, which only brings together various disciplines without deep interaction, the interdisciplinary approach encourages substantial dialogue between fields of study. This process produces new understandings that are more unified, comprehensive, and contextual in addressing religious issues. For example, contemporary Islamic jurisprudence should not be analyzed solely from the perspective of Islamic law, but should also be connected with economic, political, and sociological dimensions. This integration allows Islamic teachings to be applied in a more moderate and realistic manner within society.

The implementation of the interdisciplinary approach aligns with the needs of young Muslim generations in facing increasingly complex modern challenges. Learners cannot rely on a single scientific perspective, but must be equipped with the ability to connect multiple viewpoints when solving problems. Through this integration, religion is understood within a broader, more open, and contextually relevant framework. For instance, when teaching religious moderation, educators may incorporate communication studies to strengthen dialogue skills and psychology to understand the roots of intolerant behavior. This approach transforms moderation from a conceptual discourse into a practical and functional skill in social life.

The interdisciplinary approach also strengthens social cohesion in a diverse society. Islamic education that employs this approach can produce graduates who serve as bridges between cultures and religious communities (Falah et al., 2024). They are not only proficient in understanding religious texts but also sensitive to social contexts and capable of fostering harmonious interaction. This aligns with the essence of religious moderation, which prioritizes balance, tolerance, and appreciation of diversity.

The interdisciplinary approach therefore enhances not only academic quality but also plays an essential role in shaping moderate individuals who are needed in both national and religious life.

Transdisciplinary Approach as a Learning Strategy for Religious Moderation in Islamic Education

The transdisciplinary approach advances beyond multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary frameworks by involving direct community engagement in the educational process. In the context of Islamic education, this approach signifies that Islamic values and religious moderation are not only taught theoretically in the classroom but are also internalized through real-life experience. Learners are encouraged to participate in addressing social issues such as interreligious conflict, poverty, and environmental problems by applying moderate Islamic perspectives. This approach makes Islamic education more contextual and socially impactful. Through this model, the gap between theory and practice in Islamic education can be effectively bridged.

This approach also highlights the importance of collaboration among educational institutions, communities, and various stakeholders. Islamic education cannot work in isolation in cultivating religious moderation. Cooperation with civil society organizations, government institutions, and local communities is necessary. Through such collaboration, learners can directly experience values such as tolerance, mutual cooperation, and appreciation for diversity. Community service programs involving students in multicultural environments, for instance, can serve as effective transdisciplinary learning practices. Religious moderation becomes a lived experience rather than merely an academic subject.

The transdisciplinary approach additionally provides space for innovation within Islamic education. Learners are trained to think critically, creatively, and solution-oriented when responding to real societal challenges. They do not only memorize concepts of moderation but also apply them in daily life. This experiential learning process makes the values of religious moderation more deeply internalized and contributes to character formation (Hidayati et al., 2021). Such outcomes align with the core goals of Islamic education, which extend beyond the transfer of knowledge to the cultivation of noble character. The transdisciplinary approach therefore represents a significant strategy for strengthening the role of Islamic education in addressing the challenges of the contemporary era.

4. CONCLUSION

Strengthening religious moderation in Islamic education is an urgent necessity amid the ongoing dynamics of social, cultural, and technological change. Islamic education can no longer be limited to the transmission of normative and textual knowledge, but must transform into a learning process that develops broad insight, critical thinking abilities, and social awareness among learners. Within this framework, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches provide a layered and complementary structure for cultivating religious moderation.

The multidisciplinary approach expands students' understanding by involving various scientific fields that enrich religious perspectives. This approach emphasizes that Islam is interconnected with all aspects of human life and does not stand apart from social realities. The interdisciplinary approach integrates knowledge across disciplines into a unified conceptual framework, allowing religious moderation to be understood not only as a theoretical construct but also in relation to contemporary social contexts. The transdisciplinary approach grounds these values in real-life experiences by linking educational processes with direct community engagement, ensuring that moderation is not only understood but also internalized.

The integration of these approaches shapes Islamic education to focus not only on knowledge transmission but also on character formation. An educational process that incorporates multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary dimensions is capable of producing Muslim learners who are open, critical, tolerant, and able to coexist harmoniously in diverse societies. Religious learning thus moves beyond the classroom into everyday social life, enabling the values of moderation to become embedded as attitudes and behaviors. Islamic education that follows this model is more relevant to contemporary needs and can contribute meaningfully to the strengthening of unity, peace, and social civility.

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