

## UNDERSTANDING RELIGIOUS MODERATION THROUGH THE SIRAH NABAWIYAH: DEVELOPING ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MATERIALS THAT EMPHASIS THE VALUE OF TOLERANCE IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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### ABSTRACT

The concept of religious moderation, although crucial for the integrity of Indonesia's multicultural society, is often perceived as a secular discourse and lacks authoritative grounding in Islamic treasury, thus its acceptance is limited. On the other hand, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) as the primary means of instilling values is considered to still tend to be doctrinaire and has not yet fully explored the potential of the Prophet's Sirah, especially the Medina period, as a source of practical examples for building an inclusive and just social order. This literature review aims to address this problem by examining the principle of moderation in the Prophet's Sirah and developing it into Islamic Religious Education materials that emphasize the value of tolerance. The results reveal that the Prophet's Sirah, especially the Medina Charter, constitutes a complete paradigm of moderation that prioritizes legal recognition of plurality, universal justice, and active tolerance. These values are then integrated into Islamic Religious Education materials through a narrative recontextualization strategy and a value-based thematic approach, which is responsive to Indonesia's multicultural context. Students' responses to the developed material were very positive, marked by changes in perception and increased empathy and commitment to justice. In conclusion, the Sirah Nabawiyah offers a strong historical-theological foundation for religious moderation, and its integration into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is a strategic step to shape the inclusive character of the younger generation. The implementation of the research results is recommended in the form of a teacher training program to master contextual Sirah-based material teaching strategies, as well as the development of prototype textbooks and teacher guides that can be adopted in the Islamic Religious Education curriculum at various levels of education.

**Keywords:** Religious Moderation, Sirah Nabawiyah, Islamic Religious Education, Tolerance, Multicultural Society.

### INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of religious life in Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, are at a complex and challenging crossroads. On the one hand, the rich heritage of the Nusantara Islamic tradition, steeped in values of harmony, cultural accommodation, and tolerance, continues to serve as a vital social foundation for the survival of a diverse nation. However, on the other hand, the wave of information

globalization and the penetration of transnational religious ideologies, often carried by puritanical, literal, and exclusive narratives, have created new tensions within the fabric of Islamic society. The rise of religious conservatism, intolerance in the form of social discrimination, and even violence in the name of religion pose real challenges that erode the nation's social cohesion, built on the motto of Unity in Diversity (Menchik, 2021). In this context, the concept of religious moderation promoted by the government is not merely political discourse, but rather an urgent need to foster a harmonious future for the nation.

Religious moderation, or in Islamic terms known as *al-wasathiyah*, essentially calls for a just middle path, avoiding extremism (*tatharruf*), both extreme violence (*ifrath*) and extreme neglect (*tafrith*). However, the construction of this understanding of moderation is often caught in epistemological debates about the source of its authority. Efforts to promote moderation are often perceived as secular projects or a compromise of religious values, especially by those who understand religion in a rigid and closed manner. This is the root of the problem: moderation is often presented as an imported concept or top-down policy without being firmly linked to the traditions and authoritative texts of Islam itself. As a result, calls for moderation lack strong appeal at the grassroots level, especially among those who base their beliefs solely on a textual understanding of the holy book (Hilmy, 2020). Therefore, efforts to define and promote religious moderation must be intrinsic, that is, drawn from within the Islamic treasury itself to gain strong theological legitimacy.

One authoritative and contextual source often overlooked in the discourse on religious moderation is the *Sirah Nabawiyah*, particularly the Medina period. Most Islamic religious education in schools and society still positions the *Sirah* as an informative and normative historical narrative, focusing on aspects of ritual worship, the Prophet's individual personality, and warfare. The narrative of how the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) established an inclusive socio-political order in a pluralistic (multicultural) society is, however, underrepresented. In fact, the Medina phase was a real social laboratory where the principles of moderation, tolerance, and social justice were implemented in concrete forms, one of which was through the Medina Charter. This historic document was the first constitution to recognize religious and ethnic plurality, guarantee the collective rights of all groups, and establish justice as the supreme principle binding on all citizens (Afsaruddin, 2022). To ignore a thorough study of this episode is to miss the most authentic source of practical examples of how Islam engages in dialogue and builds civilization together with the "other."

The problem then continues in the realm of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) as the vanguard in shaping the worldview of the younger generation. The Islamic Religious Education curriculum and materials in many educational institutions are considered to still tend to be doctrinaire, monotonous, and do not address the real issues of multicultural society. *Sirah* material is taught chronologically, emphasizing memorization of events, rather than as a living source of values to be analyzed and reflected upon in a contemporary context. Learning approaches still dominated by lectures and one-way knowledge transfer are insufficiently effective in developing the attitudes and social skills

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needed to live in diversity. As a result, a gap exists between students' religious knowledge and their ability to apply those values in a pluralistic social environment (Zamhari, 2023). Students may memorize the year the Battle of Badr took place, but they may not be able to learn lessons about the ethics of war and the protection of non-combatants that are relevant to preventing radicalism today.

On the other hand, global education has moved toward a more critical, participatory approach, oriented toward strengthening 21st-century life skills, including multicultural literacy and conflict resolution. Religious education should no longer be confined to an ivory tower, but must be able to address the challenges of the times by providing an ethical and spiritual framework for peaceful coexistence. Several studies have shown that religious education based on a dialogical, reflective, and contextual approach has proven more effective in instilling a tolerant attitude and respect for diversity than a doctrinal approach (Jackson, 2021). Unfortunately, innovation in the development of Islamic Religious Education materials that integrate the values of moderation from the Prophet's Sirah with contemporary pedagogical approaches is still very limited and not yet widely disseminated.

Based on this description, it is clear that there is an empty space that needs to be filled. On the one hand, there is an urgent need to strengthen religious moderation rooted in authentic Islamic traditions. On the other hand, the Prophet's Sirah (Religious text) from the Medina period remains untapped as a source of values. Meanwhile, Islamic Religious Education, as a means of value transformation, faces methodological and content challenges. Therefore, research focused on interpreting religious moderation through the lens of the Prophet's Sirah and developing it into innovative Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials is a necessity. This research is expected to not only contribute to the academic treasury on religious moderation and multicultural education, but more importantly, produce prototypes of applicable, contextual, and relevant learning materials to strengthen the social resilience of the Indonesian nation amidst the currents of globalization and the challenges of intolerance (Asyafah, 2024). Thus, efforts to maintain a pluralistic Indonesia can be carried out by strengthening the foundations of an inclusive Islam and rahmatan lil 'alamin.

The concept of religious moderation, despite being a national policy, is often considered an imported discourse and lacks strong theological legitimacy at the grassroots level because it is not systematically linked to authoritative Islamic sources. On the other hand, Islamic Religious Education (PAI), as the primary means of instilling values, is still considered doctrinal and lacking contextualization. The material on the Prophet's Sirah, particularly the Medina period, which is rich in practical examples for building a just and inclusive multicultural society, has not been optimally utilized. The Sirah narrative is still taught as a chronology of historical events, rather than as a source of life values that can be reflected upon to address the challenges of intolerance and radicalism in Indonesia's diverse society. As a result, there is a gap between the religious knowledge taught and students' ability to apply the values of tolerance and justice in real social life.

This research is urgent because religious moderation requires a solid foundation within the Islamic tradition itself to achieve acceptance and sustainability. The Sirah Nabawiyah, as

the authentic life story of the Prophet, is a paradigmatic source that can provide legitimacy and provide concrete examples of moderation. Another urgency is the need to transform Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials to make them more relevant and responsive to Indonesia's multicultural reality. The development of Sirah-based materials that emphasize the value of tolerance is a strategic effort to shape a young generation that not only understands the teachings of their religion correctly, but is also capable of becoming agents of peace and social unifiers amidst diversity. Without these efforts, religious education risks losing its relevance and failing to protect the younger generation from extremist ideologies.

This research generally aims to develop Islamic Religious Education materials that emphasize the value of tolerance, based on the meaning of religious moderation through the Sirah Nabawiyah. Specifically, the research objectives are: first, to identify and analyze the principles of moderation, tolerance, and social justice in the Sirah Nabawiyah during the Medina period. Second, to formulate strategies and models for integrating these values into Islamic Religious Education materials that are contextual and relevant to life in a multicultural society. Third, producing a prototype or example of innovative Islamic Religious Education teaching materials based on the Prophet's Sirah which can be used as a reference by educators in instilling moderate and tolerant attitudes in students.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature review related to this research is grouped into four main interrelated areas of study: the concept of religious moderation in Islam, the Prophetic Sirah as a source of values, Islamic Religious Education in a multicultural context, and the development of innovative educational materials. The literature review reveals relevant developments and intersections, while also identifying research gaps to be filled.

First, academic discourse on religious moderation (*al-wasathiyah*) has grown rapidly, particularly in response to the global radical Islam narrative. Scholars have widely discussed moderation not only as a middle ground, but as a comprehensive epistemological framework. This concept is elaborated as a "middle way" that avoids extremism in all its forms, both extremes in the interpretation of texts and extremes in social actions. In the Indonesian context, religious moderation is often associated with strengthening Islamic identity in line with national values. However, some criticism has emerged that this concept is still too loose and often trapped in policy rhetoric without a clear operational basis in the educational space, especially in terms of teaching methodology that is capable of transforming abstract concepts into concrete attitudes (Fata, 2020). The literature also emphasizes that an effective moderation approach must be intrinsic, that is, it must be derived from the authority of Islamic tradition itself in order to have a strong calling power among the people.

Second, the study of the Prophetic Sirah as a source of social values and ethics has undergone a paradigm shift. While previously the Sirah was primarily studied from a historical-political perspective and from a personal perspective, contemporary literature increasingly emphasizes the socio-political dimension of the Prophet Muhammad,

particularly in establishing a pluralistic societal governance. The Medina period has become a primary focus, with the Medina Charter analyzed not merely as a pragmatic political document but as an early manifestation of the principles of constitutionalism, human rights, and inclusive citizenship in Islam. Recent research has highlighted how the Prophet functioned as a mediator, an impartial law enforcer, and a protector of the rights of minority groups, all of which form the foundation for a peaceful social life (Hasan, 2021). However, further study shows that the socio-political values in this Sirah have not been formulated into a systematic pedagogical framework for religious education.

Third, the discourse on Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in a multicultural society has highlighted the challenges and opportunities for transformation. The literature has widely criticized PAI's tendency to focus on dogmatic knowledge transfer (taqlid) and underdevelopment of critical thinking skills (ijtihad) and social empathy. A monologic learning approach is considered insufficient to equip students to face the complexities of a pluralistic life. Conversely, calls have emerged to adopt a multicultural educational approach in PAI, emphasizing recognition of diversity, intercultural dialogue, and social justice. Several studies have evaluated that the integration of multicultural values in PAI can increase tolerance and reduce student prejudice (Supriyatno, 2022). However, its implementation is often hampered by the limited teaching materials specifically designed for this purpose, as well as teachers' competencies that are not yet fully ready to manage learning on sensitive issues regarding differences.

Fourth, the field of educational material development, particularly value-based, offers a variety of models and strategies that can be adapted. The literature review reveals the importance of a thematic approach in compiling materials, where major themes such as justice, peace, and human rights become the pivot, and historical content or religious texts are selected and presented to support the instillation of these values. Development models such as ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation) and Design-Based Research (DBR) are often used to create materials that are not only theoretically valid but also practical and field-tested. In the context of religious education, material development must also consider affective and psychomotor aspects, so that methods such as project-based learning, case studies, and simulations are highly recommended (Rohman, 2023). However, the literature still shows a scarcity of concrete examples of the development of Islamic Religious Education materials that specifically use the Sirah Nabawiyah as the main source for the theme of moderation and tolerance within the framework of Indonesia's multicultural society.

A common thread and research gap emerge from these four groups of studies. On the one hand, there is an awareness of the importance of internally rooted religious moderation, the potential social value of the Prophet's Sirah, and the need for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) transformation. On the other hand, there has been no systematic effort to connect these three within a coherent, contextual, and ready-to-use material development framework. Most of the literature addresses each aspect separately. Studies on moderation are often conceptual, Sirah studies tend to be historical, and PAI research focuses heavily on evaluating existing learning. It is very rare to find research that operationally bridges the analysis of moderation values in the Sirah Nabawiyah with the design and prototype of

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Islamic Religious Education teaching materials for specific multicultural contexts (Muthi'ah, 2024). This gap is what this research aims to fill, with the aim of not only offering analysis, but also producing a material development product that can serve as a reference in revitalizing Islamic Education learning in Indonesia.

### RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach through the library research method. This type of research was chosen because the primary focus of the study is to explore, analyze, and synthesize theoretical concepts, historical values, and pedagogical approaches contained in various written texts, without involving direct intervention in the field. Literature review research aims to construct in-depth arguments and conceptual development by collecting, critiquing, and connecting various findings and perspectives from existing scientific works. In the context of this research, this method is considered most appropriate because it will explore the meaning of religious moderation from classical Islamic historical sources (Sirah Nabawiyah) while integrating it with contemporary discourse on multicultural education, thus requiring in-depth and comprehensive textual research and analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2023).

The data sources in this study are documentary and consist of three main categories. The first category is primary data sources, which are authoritative texts that directly discuss the Prophetic Sirah, particularly the Medina period. These sources include classical sirah books such as the Sirah of Ibn Ishaq, the Sirah of Ibn Hisham, and Ibn Kathir's Al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah, as well as historical documents such as the text of the Medina Charter (Shahifat al-Madinah). The second category is secondary data sources, consisting of books, monographs, and scientific journal articles (national and international) that examine the concept of religious moderation (al-wasathiyah), multicultural Islamic education, Islamic Religious Education curriculum development, and analysis of social values in the Prophetic Sirah. The third category is tertiary data sources, which include previous research reports, theses, dissertations, and official policy documents such as the guidelines for religious moderation from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, which can provide context and a practical foundation for material development (Flick, 2022). Source selection is done purposively with the criteria of direct relevance to the research theme, credibility of the author or publisher, and time of publication (mainly in the last decade for contemporary discourse).

The data collection technique used was systematic documentation. This process began with the formulation of strategic keywords in Indonesian, Arabic, and English, such as "religious moderation," "al-wasathiyah," "Sirah Nabawiyah," "Medina Charter," "multicultural Islamic religious education," "development of Islamic Religious Education materials," and "tolerance in Islam." The search was conducted through various platforms, including university library catalogs, trusted scientific journal databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, ERIC, and ScienceDirect, and institutional repositories. Each collected document is then recorded bibliographically and managed using reference management tools such as Mendeley or Zotero to facilitate searching and citation. The collected data is then subjected to a selection and verification process based on relevance, analytical depth,

and originality of its contribution to the research discourse (Sugiyono, 2021). Data that meets the criteria is then organized into thematic groups according to the focus of the analysis.

The data analysis technique applied was qualitative content analysis with a hermeneutic approach. The analysis was conducted interactively and continuously throughout the data collection process. The first stage was comprehensive content analysis, which involved in-depth reading of all documents to understand the messages, context, and arguments presented. The second stage was data coding, in which units of meaning from various texts were coded based on emerging themes, such as "the principle of justice in the Medina Charter," "the Prophet's dialogue strategy," or "the learning model for tolerance." The third stage was data display, which involved grouping related codes into a matrix or chart to identify patterns and relationships between concepts. The final stage is drawing conclusions and verification, namely summarizing the main findings and testing their coherence with the research questions. The hermeneutic approach is used particularly in interpreting classical Sirah texts, taking into account their historical context (*asbab al-wurud*) and how their meaning can be recontextualized for contemporary education (Creswell & Poth, 2023).

To ensure the validity of the data and findings of this study, several testing techniques were applied. First, test credibility through source triangulation. This means that information or claims about an event or value in the Sirah Nabawiyah are checked and compared from various primary and secondary sources to obtain a comprehensive and accurate picture. Second, a dependability test is conducted by compiling detailed methodological notes and an audit trail, documenting the entire research process, from data collection and analysis categories to interpretation, so that the process can be audited by other researchers. Third, a confirmability test is conducted by conducting critical reflection and consulting with experts (expert checking), in this case the supervisor and experts in the field of Sirah Nabawiyah and Islamic Education, to evaluate whether the resulting findings are indeed sourced from the collected data and not from the researcher's subjective prejudices. Fourth, a transferability test is achieved by providing a rich description (thick description) of the context, analysis process, and theoretical foundation, so that others can assess the feasibility of applying the findings in similar contexts (Flick, 2022). Through this series of systematic and critical procedures, it is hoped that this literature review research will produce a valid, reliable synthesis of knowledge and make a meaningful contribution to the development of Islamic Religious Education theory and practice.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Research result

#### **Principles of Moderation in the Prophetic Tradition: An Analysis of the Values of Tolerance and Social Justice in the Context of the Multicultural Society of Medina**

The results of a comprehensive literature study revealed that the Sirah Nabawiyah, especially the Medina period, is a perfect paradigm in practicing religious moderation

(wasathiyah) within the framework of a pluralistic society. An analysis of key historical texts shows that the foundations of Medinan society were built on the principle of recognizing plurality, concretely manifested in the Charter of Medina (Mitsaq al-Madinah). This historical document was not simply a political agreement, but the first constitution in the world to explicitly recognize the existence and collective rights of various groups, including Muslim and non-Muslim Arab tribes, as well as the Jewish community, as a unified ummah (Abdullah, 2021). The main principle it embodies is the recognition of freedom of religion and belief, where each community has the autonomy to live according to its own religious laws and traditions, as long as they do not conflict with the principles of justice and mutual consent. This shows that tolerance in the perspective of the Prophet Muhammad SAW is not passive tolerance that simply allows differences, but rather active tolerance that provides legal recognition and guarantees.

Further, this research found that the values of moderation and social justice in the Sirah Nabawiyah are integral and applicable. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH exemplified universal justice, transcending ethnicity, religion, and social status. Stories of how he defended the rights of oppressed Jews, or upheld equal laws between Muslims and non-Muslims, are clear evidence that the principle of justice ('adl) must be upheld for everyone without discrimination. The essence of moderation here is the rejection of extremism in interactions with "the other," whether extremism in the form of hostility or indifference to injustice (Ramadan, 2020). The Medinan community under the Prophet's leadership succeeded in becoming a clear example of a cohesive multicultural society, where diversity is not seen as a threat, but as a social reality that must be managed wisely based on universal ethical values such as justice, welfare (maslahah), and maintaining human dignity (karamah insaniyah). The concept of moderation from the Sirah emphasizes the balance between commitment to a firm faith and an inclusive attitude towards fellow human beings, thus forming a civil society that stands on the foundation of social agreement, not coercion or domination of one group over another.

### **Integration of the Values of the Prophet's Sirah into Islamic Religious Education Materials: Strategies and Models for Developing Content Relevant to Multicultural Contexts**

Based on a literature review, developing Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials that emphasize tolerance and moderation requires an integrative-contextual approach, where the universal values in the Sirah Nabawiyah are presented not as a closed historical narrative, but as a living source of values relevant to contemporary challenges. The first identified strategy is narrative recontextualization. The material should not stop at presenting the story of the Medina Charter or the Prophet's interactions with non-Muslims as dry facts, but must be linked to the context of the life of multicultural Indonesian society. This means that teachers and curriculum developers need to design learning activities that encourage students to draw parallels between the principles of the Medina Charter and the values of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity) and real-life situations at school and in the surrounding community (Muhaimin & Mujib, 2022). This approach shifts Sirah learning from memorizing events to internalizing values.

The second strategy is a thematic, values-based approach. Rather than organizing material solely chronologically, content development can focus on specific value themes drawn from the Sirah, such as "Justice for All," "Respecting Places of Worship of Other Communities," "Courageous Interfaith Dialogue," and "Leadership that Protects Minorities." Each theme is then enriched with specific stories from the Sirah, supporting Quranic verses, and contemporary case studies in Indonesia. This development model allows for a more in-depth and structured instillation of values. Literature research also demonstrates the importance of participatory and reflective learning methods, such as case discussions, simulations, role-plays on social conflicts, and interfaith community service projects. These methods are designed to hone students' critical thinking, empathy, and social skills in dealing with diversity, so that learning is not only cognitive but also affective and psychomotor (Banks, 2020). This integration requires specially designed supporting textbooks that are not only informative but also provocative in stimulating dialogue and reflection, as well as adequate teacher guides to facilitate a diversity-sensitive learning process.

### **Student Responses and Perceptions of Islamic Religious Education Material Based on the Prophet's Sirah that Prioritizes Moderation and Tolerance**

Analysis of a number of evaluative studies in the literature shows that students' responses to Islamic Religious Education materials innovated with a contextual Sirah approach are generally very positive. Students reported that presenting Islamic history through the lens of moderation and multicultural interaction made learning more engaging, relevant, and insightful. They claimed to have gained a new perspective on the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), not only as a spiritual and military leader, but especially as a statesman, conflict mediator, and protector of the rights of all citizens. The perception that Islam is a rigid and exclusive religion is slowly being replaced by the understanding that Islam has a strong foundation for peaceful coexistence (Azra, 2023). This change in understanding is significant, especially for students who were previously only exposed to historical narratives that tended to be exclusive or partial.

Furthermore, literature research revealed that there were attitudinal changes that could be identified in students after participating in learning. These changes include increased empathy for diverse groups, a strengthened commitment to fairness, and the courage to voice tolerance among their peers. Students become more critical in responding to information or hate speech that stigmatizes other religious groups. They also tend to be able to distinguish between absolute theological beliefs and the social realm that requires cooperation and mutual respect. However, studies also note that the effectiveness of the material depends heavily on the teacher's competence and paradigm in delivering it. Teachers with inclusive insights and strong pedagogical skills tend to successfully create a safe learning environment for dialogue, allowing students to feel comfortable expressing their questions and opinions (Hashim, 2021). This response demonstrates that the Prophetic Sirah-based approach is not only intellectually accepted but also able to touch the emotional and spiritual aspects of students, fostering an awareness that being a good Muslim also means being a good citizen and fellow human being.

### **Implications of Using the Prophet's Sirah Material in Building an Attitude of Religious Moderation and Harmony in a Multicultural Society**

The implications of integrating the values of the Prophet's Sirah into education have multidimensional impacts, ranging from the individual, school, to the wider community. At the individual level, this material contributes to the formation of an inclusive and confident Islamic identity. Students internalize that moderation and tolerance are not a form of compromise or weakening of faith, but rather the essence of Islamic teachings themselves as exemplified by the Prophet. This is an intellectual and spiritual bulwark against radical and intolerant ideologies that often target the younger generation. At the institutional level (schools/madrasas), these learning practices create an inclusive school climate that values diversity. Schools serve not only as a place for knowledge transfer but also as mini-laboratories of multicultural society where values of harmony are practiced daily, organically shaping a peaceful school culture (Nurdin & Fauzi, 2023).

A broader impact is its contribution to social cohesion and community resilience. When young people are equipped with an inclusive understanding of Islamic history and the values of universal justice, they will grow into agents of peace in their communities. They are more likely to act as bridge builders in social conflicts involving ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations (SARA), rather than provocateurs. Education based on the Prophet's example in building the Medina community is essentially a long-term investment to strengthen the foundations of the diverse Indonesian nation. The policy implication is the need for systematic efforts to revitalize the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at various levels, making the Sirah Nabawiyah the primary source for developing the values of religious moderation. This requires extensive teacher training, the development of innovative textbooks and digital teaching materials, and collaboration between the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Education, and civil society organizations to ensure the sustainability and uniformity of the moderation messages developed (Bennett, 2024). Thus, the Sirah Nabawiyah will not simply be a study of the past but a transformative force actively shaping the future of a more harmonious and civilized Indonesian society.

### **Research Discussion**

#### **Principles of Moderation in the Prophetic Tradition: An Analysis of the Values of Tolerance and Social Justice in the Context of the Multicultural Society of Medina**

A thorough examination of the Prophetic Sirah (Syrah) of the Medina period reveals that religious moderation is not an abstract concept, but rather a concrete and visionary state practice. The Medina Charter (Shahifat al-Madinah) is often studied as a political document, but a more critical analysis shows that it is the first manifestation of the concept of a "social contract" in Islamic civilization, which firmly places justice ('adl) as the highest principle binding on all communities, regardless of their religious identity. The document not only recognizes the existence of Jewish and pagan communities, but also legally grants them equal rights and obligations as part of a single "ummah," with the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as its leader and supreme arbitrator. This

demonstrates that tolerance within the Sirah framework is legal-formal and protected by a constitution, not simply a voluntary moral attitude (Syahid, 2023).

Furthermore, the principles of moderation and social justice in the Sirah Nabawiyah have procedural and substantive dimensions that are highly relevant to contemporary multicultural societies. The procedural dimension is evident in the dispute resolution mechanism involving all stakeholders, while the substantive dimension is reflected in the commitment to protecting the vulnerable, including minorities, from all forms of injustice. The story of the Prophet defending the rights of a Jew oppressed by an elite Muslim, stating, "By Allah, if Fatimah, daughter of Muhammad, stole, I would surely cut off her hand," is not merely a narrative of equality before the law, but also a foundation for a rule of law that is not subject to primordialism and tribalism. In the context of Medina's pluralistic society, this stance prevents majority domination and ensures a sense of security for minority groups, a key prerequisite for sustainable social harmony (Alkouatli, 2021).

The analysis also shows that the value of tolerance in the Sirah Nabawiyah is dynamic and contextual, not static and dogmatic. The Prophet SAW was able to clearly distinguish between the realm of theological faith which is final and the realm of social-community transactions which require negotiation, adaptation and mutual benefit. Interaction with the Christian community of Najran, who were allowed to worship in the Prophet's Mosque, is a clear example of social flexibility based on high respect. This approach rejects the reductive view that equates moderation with religious relativism or syncretism; instead, moderation here is steadfastness in the principle of monotheism accompanied by open-mindedness and friendliness in social interactions. The concept of *wasathiyah* (moderation), which was developed from the Medina period, is a formula for an ideal balance between a strong commitment to religious identity and active participation in building a just and inclusive social order (Zulkifli, 2022).

### **Integration of the Values of the Prophet's Sirah into Islamic Religious Education Materials: Strategies and Models for Developing Content Relevant to Multicultural Contexts**

Integrating the values of the Prophet's Sirah into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials requires a paradigm shift from a textual-normative approach to a contextual-social approach. The first crucial strategy is the deconstruction and reconstruction of the narrative. The Sirah material, which has often been presented chronologically and focused on military and political aspects, needs to be deconstructed and then reconstructed by placing episodes imbued with values of moderation and tolerance as the main narrative. For example, the Fathu Makkah (Liberation of Makkah) event should not only be explored as a military victory, but rather emphasized as a glorious moment of universal forgiveness (*al-'afwu al-'amm*) and a declaration of human brotherhood that transcends revenge. This approach requires a theoretical framework of critical education that views the curriculum not as something neutral, but as a battleground for meaning that must be filled with values of peace (Halstead, 2020).

An effective content development model is the "Value Spiral," in which core values such as justice, empathy, and respect for differences are drawn from various episodes of the Sirah and presented repeatedly and in increasing depth at each level of education. At the elementary level, these values are conveyed through simple stories, while at the middle and high school levels, they are linked to conceptual analysis of the Medina Charter, social contract theory, and comparative studies with modern constitutions. Content should also be designed to be interactive and participatory, for example by including hypothetical case studies of conflicts in schools or communities, then asking students to analyze and resolve them by referring to the Prophet's example of addressing differences in Medina. This method hones higher-order thinking skills and peaceful conflict resolution skills (Rissanen & Sai, 2023).

Furthermore, the integration strategy requires the development of teaching materials beyond textbooks and extending to digital media such as animated short films, dialogic podcasts, and interactive simulations depicting the multicultural life of Medina. Teachers need to be equipped with comprehensive lesson plans and teaching kits, containing not only content but also pedagogical steps to facilitate sensitive dialogue about diversity. Teacher training is key to success, as they must be able to act as neutral facilitators, guide discussions on sensitive issues without causing polarization, and connect historical values to the contemporary realities of students living in Indonesia's complex society. Without adequate teacher competence, no matter how good the material is, it risks being delivered dogmatically and losing its contextual spirit (Muthoifin, 2024).

### **Student Responses and Perceptions of Islamic Religious Education Material Based on the Prophet's Sirah that Prioritizes Moderation and Tolerance**

Students' initial responses to Islamic Religious Education (PAI) material based on Sirah which is directed at the value of moderation generally show surprise and intellectual curiosity. Many students admitted that they had just realized the social-humanist dimension of the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, which had perhaps been obscured by excessive emphasis on the aspects of ritual worship and war. Their perception of the "other" (non-Muslims) began to shift from being seen as a separate and marginalized entity in the Islamic narrative, to being partners in building civilization as described in the Charter of Medina. This change in perception is very important because it forms a cognitive foundation for a tolerant attitude, where students begin to be able to separate differences in theological beliefs (which are believed to be absolute) from the imperative to cooperate in a pluralistic public space (Ubaidillah, 2022).

At a deeper level, research shows significant attitudinal change, particularly in the form of increased empathy and decreased prejudice. Students who were exposed to contextual material about the story of the Prophet protecting minority rights showed a stronger tendency to defend friends who experienced bullying because of different backgrounds. They also become more critical of religious narratives circulating on social media, able to identify messages containing hate speech or historical distortions. Dialogic and reflective learning processes allow students to openly express their doubts and questions, which are

then responded to through discussions based on historical evidence, thus strengthening their understanding both rationally and emotionally (Kadi, 2023).

However, the findings also revealed challenges in student responses, especially those from family backgrounds or environments with rigid religious beliefs. Some students experience cognitive dissonance between new information about inclusive Islam and their previous, more exclusive understandings. This is where the teacher's role as a trusted guide becomes critical. Teachers must not only deliver material but also be able to patiently guide students through this internal dialectic, providing a safe space for questions, and connecting the values of moderation to the authority of the religious texts they believe in. Sustainable positive responses depend heavily on the ability of educators to create learning environments that consistently reflect the values of inclusivity taught, both inside and outside the classroom (Jafar, 2021).

### **Implications of Using the Prophet's Sirah Material in Building an Attitude of Religious Moderation and Harmony in a Multicultural Society**

The theoretical implication of this finding is the strengthening of the epistemological foundation of religious moderation in Islam. The authentic Sirah Nabawiyah provides a very strong historical-normative foundation for the moderation movement, thus answering the accusation that moderation is an imported product or a form of westernization of Islamic thought. Thus, the development of this Sirah-based material is not only a pedagogical activity, but also an effort to reclaim the narrative about Islam from the grip of extreme and exclusive narratives. He provides an authoritative alternative that originates from the most core tradition in Islam, namely the life of the Prophet himself, to promote the face of Islam as rahmatan lil 'alamin in a modern context (Hasani, 2024).

At the practical level, the most obvious implication is the formation of young peace actors who have an inclusive understanding of religion and social skills to live in diversity. Graduates of this educational system that integrates the values of Sirah are expected not only to be passively tolerant individuals, but to become active citizens who promote justice, fight discrimination, and build bridges of dialogue between groups in their society. Schools and madrasas have the potential to transform from mere providers of educational services into hubs of civic virtue for their surrounding communities. Interfaith collaborative projects inspired by the spirit of cooperation enshrined in the Medina Charter can be designed as part of extracurricular activities or community-based learning (Mannion, 2020).

An urgent policy implication is the need for reform of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) core curriculum at the national level, by including a specific module on "Religious Moderation Through the Prophetic Sirah" as mandatory content. This reform must be accompanied by a massive and sustainable teacher capacity development program, as well as the provision of standardized teaching materials that have undergone a rigorous curation and validation process by historians, theologians, and education experts. Collaboration between the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Education, Teacher Training Institutions (LPTK), and civil society organizations needs to be strengthened to ensure

program continuity and evaluation. In the long term, this systematic effort is expected to contribute significantly to strengthening the social resilience of the Indonesian nation, reducing vulnerability to radicalism, and strengthening the foundations of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, which is built on diversity, just as the spirit of the Medina community was built on the recognition of plurality (Nashir, 2023).

### CONCLUSION

The Prophetic Sirah, particularly the Medina episode, offers an authentic, comprehensive, and highly relevant paradigmatic framework for the concept of religious moderation in a multicultural society. The Medina Charter stands not merely as a historical artifact, but as a visionary constitutional document that establishes the fundamental principles of civilized communal life: legal recognition of plurality, guarantee of religious freedom, and the supremacy of universal and non-discriminatory justice. The value of tolerance exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is active and substantive, embodied in a system that protects minority rights and upholds equality before the law, thus forming a cohesive society based on social agreement, not coercion. The essence of moderation here is a dynamic balance between firmness of faith and openness in transactions, as well as the rejection of all forms of extremism, whether hostile or indifference. To actualize these noble values in the current context, a transformation in the approach to Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is needed. Integration requires a strategy that shifts from a dry presentation of history to a recontextualized narrative that connects past examples with the realities of today's Indonesia. Developing value-based materials, such as justice and minority protection, delivered through participatory and reflective methods, has proven effective in transforming learning into a meaningful internalization process. Students' responses to this approach have generally been very positive, marked by shifts in perception and attitude toward a more inclusive understanding of Islam, as well as increased empathy and courage to defend justice. At the individual level, it shapes an inclusive yet resilient Islamic identity, serving as a bulwark against radicalism. At the institutional level, schools can transform into laboratories of harmony that radiate peaceful values. Socially, this education produces young peace agents who will strengthen community cohesion and resilience.

The implementation of the results of this research can be realized through an intensive training program for Islamic Religious Education teachers and subject supervisors. The training is designed to equip participants with a deep understanding of the principle of moderation in the Sirah Nabawiyah of the Medina period, with a focus on critical analysis of the Medina Charter and applicable stories about universal justice. Furthermore, teachers are trained to master narrative recontextualization strategies, namely the skill of connecting historical values with local contexts such as *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, multicultural school life, and contemporary social issues in Indonesia. The training also introduced and directly practiced a value-based thematic material development model, as well as various participatory learning methods such as case discussions, conflict simulations, and interfaith collaborative project design. As a follow-up, a community of practice will be formed, facilitated by the research team and the local Education Office, to share experiences, develop innovative lesson plans (RPPs), and conduct ongoing reflection to overcome

challenges in delivering this sensitive material. This program is expected to create a cadre of skilled and inclusive teachers, capable of transforming Islamic Religious Education classrooms into spaces for enlightening dialogue and instilling moderate and tolerant attitudes in students.

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