

Religious Moderation Literacy: A Study of Christian Religious Education at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School

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Abstract

This study analyzes religious moderation literacy in Christian Religious Education at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School. Focusing on the context of diversity in Indonesia, this study aims to evaluate students' understanding and the effectiveness of teaching methods that promote the values of tolerance, inclusivity, and moderation. With a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and analysis of curriculum documents. The results of the study show that religious moderation literacy has been applied through the teaching of peaceful values and respect for differences. However, there are challenges, including limited resources and a lack of a deep understanding of religious moderation. These findings confirm the importance of effective teaching strategies to improve students' moderate attitudes in daily life. This study makes a significant contribution to building a tolerant and harmonious generation, especially in a multicultural environment such as Papua, through strengthening the role of Christian religious education as a means of religious moderation literacy.

Keywords: Religious Moderation Literacy, Christian Religious Education, YPPGI Sentani Junior High School, Learning Strategies

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a country with a wide diversity of ethnicities, cultures, languages, and religions. This diversity is seen as a destiny and a gift that must be received and cared for. However, in the context of globalization and technological advancement, the spread of exclusive extreme ideologies often threatens interreligious harmony (Kabanga, Malatuny, Siahaan, & Pardomuan, 2024). Seeing this threat, religious moderation literacy is an important solution in maintaining social harmony, encouraging tolerance, and mutual understanding among various religious groups.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia has intensified a religious moderation campaign to strengthen human values, avoid conflicts, and strengthen Indonesianness in diversity. In the heterogeneous context of Indonesia, religious moderation is a cultural strategy to maintain unity in the country based on Pancasila (Abror, 2020). At the same case Wibowo (2019) explained that religious moderation campaigns through digital, especially Facebook, are based

on an ideologically oriented approach that can change attitudes and behaviors, besides that the moderation campaign approach is also based on communicative and persuasive interactions that prioritize tolerance and religious values. Thus, the values of religious moderation are tolerance, respect for differences, and harmony, which can be strengthened through education that teaches the values of peace and love.

In line with those, religious moderation can be concluded into a concept that teaches about balance, middle ground, and inclusive teaching in order to create harmonious interaction between religious communities. Moderation literacy means teaching, instilling, and learning the concepts of inclusivism to learners to understand and create a tolerant, harmonious, and balanced life. Moderation teaching in terms of literacy moderation in schools is one of the strategic methods that needs attention so that students are educated to act inclusively. One of the schools that has an important role in instilling the value of religious moderation is YPPGI Sentani Junior

High School, which is based on Christianity in Papua. Christian Religious Education in this school teaches the principles of inclusiveness and respect for differences, as well as integrating the values of religious tolerance and moderation in learning. However, there are challenges in its implementation, such as limited teaching resources, a lack of in-depth understanding of religious moderation, and a lack of relevant learning materials.

It is important to explore how education at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School can effectively implement religious moderation literacy, so that students can practice tolerance and harmony in daily life. Studying religious moderation literacy in schools is expected to contribute to a pluralistic Papuan society and create a generation that respects diversity.

Some of the research related to moderation education was carried out by Boiliu, (2022) who explained the importance of religious moderation, especially from a Christian perspective. He stemmed from a problem where there is a lack of correct understanding in living life in a multicultural society, which can trigger conflicts and misunderstandings between religious communities. Therefore, the importance of implementing religious moderation in Christian Religious Education (PAK) needs to be emphasized in order to prevent radical understanding and instill the values of tolerance. The research aims to educate the public, especially students, about the importance of a moderate religious life, as well as instill positive values such as love, peace, and openness to the opinions of others. The results of the research achieved show that the application of religious moderation in PAK can strengthen harmonious life in a multicultural society by equipping individuals with inclusive and stable religious insights, thereby reducing the potential for conflict and misunderstanding between religions.

The benefits of reading literacy on religious modesty, Wulan & Fajrussalam (2022) also have a positive impact on PGSD students on the UPI Purwakarta campus. This research was conducted and focused on the importance of understanding religious moderation among students, by highlighting the relationship between reading literacy and understanding of religious moderation at the UPI Purwakarta Campus. The main problem identified is the need to build a strong understanding of religious moderation, given the limited understanding that may be influenced by various factors, including social media and information delivery methods. The purpose of this study is to assess the reading literacy ability of level I students, measure their understanding of religious moderation, and analyze how reading literacy can affect this understanding. The results showed that students' reading literacy skills were quite good with an average score of 66.2, while the understanding of religious moderation was at a good level with a cumulative percentage of 85.28%. The study also found that there was a significant influence between reading literacy ability and religious moderation comprehension by 17.39%, while the rest was influenced by other factors that were not studied. These findings confirm that increasing reading literacy can contribute to the understanding of religious moderation, which is very important for building a positive attitude and commitment to nationality among students.

Sawan & Payong (2023) identified a lack of student understanding of religious moderation, especially among the younger generation, which has the potential to cause conflict and intolerance. Existing religious education practices often underemphasize the importance of moderation, so students are not used to living together harmoniously with those who have different beliefs. This research

aims to increase awareness of the importance of religious moderation, especially in Christian teachings, as well as develop the character of students to have a tolerant attitude, mutual respect, and positive behavior in a diverse society. In addition, this research encourages the implementation of social activities that strengthen social solidarity and sensitivity. The results of the study showed an increase in students' tolerance and ability to interact with people from different backgrounds, strengthening the character of moderation through teacher example and active participation in activities, as well as the success of social activities that foster solidarity, such as friendship and fundraising. Thus, this study confirms that education that emphasizes religious moderation can have a positive impact on shaping students' character and attitude towards diversity.

From the background that the importance of religious moderation literacy to build students' knowledge and attitudes and the existence of several researches that reveal that teaching moderation through literacy brings a very important urgency for students to behave in an inclusive and moderate manner. Therefore, this study aims to analyze students' understanding, and the effectiveness of Christian Religious Education teaching methods in implementing religious moderation among YPPGI Sentani Junior High School students which will contain students' understanding of religious moderation and inclusive attitudes possessed by students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method to explore Religious Moderation Literacy in Christian Religious Education at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to describe in depth and thoroughly the practice of religious moderation in the

school environment, while maintaining the authenticity of the data obtained in the field (Sugiyono, 2018). Researchers refer to the philosophy of postpositivism, where researchers become the main instruments in data collection and analysis. The data collection process involves several techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis. Through interviews, researchers get direct information from teachers and students about their views and experiences related to the values of religious moderation. Participatory observation allows researchers to directly observe interactions and activities in schools that reflect the values of religious moderation, such as interfaith mutual respect and the application of tolerant teachings. Document analysis was carried out on the curriculum, teaching materials, and school policies, in order to assess the extent to which the principles of religious moderation have been integrated into the Christian Religious Education curriculum. The data obtained were analyzed qualitatively and descriptively analytically, by systematically compiling findings to improve the researcher's understanding and present them as informative findings for readers. The final results of this analysis are expected to be able to describe the implementation of religious moderation in YPPGI Sentani Junior High School, providing insight into its relevance and impact in forming moderate attitudes in students in the context of religious education.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

There are 2 things that will be an in-depth discussion related to religious moderation literacy at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School. These two things are the cognitive realm of religious moderation and the teaching strategy of religious moderation played by teachers. The cognitive realm refers to students'

understanding and how to behave after understanding the concept of religious moderation. Furthermore, it is related to the method used by teachers to instill the concept of religious moderation which is related to religious moderation literacy at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School.

1. YPPGI Sentani Students' understanding of Religious Moderation

There are 4 things that are of concern to students at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School regarding religious moderation, as outlined in the table below..

No.	Understanding on Moderation	How to understand and how to implement
1	The concept of religious moderation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respecting religious and cultural diversity, which is manifested through tolerance and mutual respect. 2. Students consider religious moderation as an effort to maintain harmony in schools and communities.
2	The importance of religious moderation in daily life	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students recognize that religious moderation helps them practice tolerance, respect differences, and coexist. 2. The teachings of religious moderation are in accordance with the Christian values they adhere to about the importance of living in peace and mutual respect.
3	Moderate attitude towards differences in beliefs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Showing a moderate attitude by respecting differences and showing concern and a sense of brotherhood. 2. creating good relationships without allowing differences in beliefs to be a source of conflict.
4	Efforts to Improve Understanding and Practice of Religious Moderation	Propose practical measures such as respecting the beliefs of friends, avoiding offensive actions, and being active in social activities involving various religions

The results of the study show that the understanding of YPPGI Sentani Junior High School students about the concept of religious moderation is very important to create a harmonious environment in a multicultural society. In the school, students understand religious moderation as an attitude of respecting religious and cultural diversity, as well as showing

tolerance and mutual respect. Lessy, Widiawati, Himawan, Alfiyaturrahmah, & Salsabila (2022) revealed that instilling the values of faith, worship, and morals is a way to teach religious moderation, principles, and how to implement them in the environment. The same thing is also explained by Prayitno & Wathoni (2022) that teaching children to understand

differences is the right way to respect differences while avoiding them from extremes. So teaching religious moderation in schools is an effort to form positive student understanding and character and support students in applying attitudes so that harmony is created among students of different faiths.

Students realize the importance of religious moderation in their daily lives because it helps them respect differences, coexist peacefully, and live Christian values that teach peace. In interaction with friends who have different beliefs, students show a moderate attitude by respecting differences, caring, and maintaining brotherhood. Mustafa (2023) revealed the importance of religious moderation from an early age to form a generation that respects differences and tolerance, in line with "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika." Values such as tolerance and mutual respect are considered vital in preventing conflicts and creating harmony between religious communities.

In addition, students set an example of religious moderation at school by respecting friends of different faiths, both in worship and daily activities, and avoiding all forms of religion-based ridicule. In line with Prasetiawati (2017), the role and benefits of religious moderation is to help create a harmonious atmosphere in society where every individual feels valued and accepted, regardless of existing differences. To deepen understanding, students commit to steps such as respecting the beliefs of friends, avoiding actions that may offend, and participating in community activities involving different religions. This strengthens unity and harmony, making diversity a strength in their lives.

2. Strategies used in implementing religious moderation literacy

Some of the methods taught at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School are related to teaching religious literacy. This method is seen as successful and is able to shape students' understanding and character. Here are some of the methods used by educators in teaching religious moderation;

- a) **Storytelling:** Teachers use stories about interfaith harmony, both from local and international stories. This method makes it easier for students to understand the concept of religious moderation because real stories illustrate the value of tolerance and harmony concretely. Kurdi (2024) explained that the benefits of applying storytelling in learning in addition to increasing knowledge are the transmission of values, increasing morale, empathy, and social students. This is seen as relevant to the teaching of religious moderation.
- b) **Discussion:** Students are encouraged to discuss diversity issues in small groups. These discussions help them get to know different points of view, practice open dialogue, and build mutual respect for friends from different religious backgrounds. Humairoh (2023) argues that the root of group discussions is to unite different opinions. From these differences, participants in the discussion can be more trained in understanding the differences.
- c) **Role Playing:** In this method, students play characters who face the dilemma of religious diversity or moderation. Role-playing allows students to experience the experiences of others firsthand, thus strengthening empathy and tolerance.

- d) **Interactive Teaching (Quizzes and Games):** Quizzes or games related to religious diversity are created to stimulate students' interest in learning. With fun games, students can more easily understand the concept of religious moderation and be motivated to apply it in their daily lives.
- e) **Teacher Example:** Teachers become real examples for students by showing a moderate, fair, and wise attitude in dealing with differences. Teachers' attitudes that reflect religious moderation can provide a direct example to students. Teachers who show an open attitude, respect differences, and are able to manage the classroom well will inspire students to adopt a moderate attitude (Nahdly & Fahman, 2024). Thus, teachers' exemplary behavior in moderate behavior can help students understand and internalize the values of moderation in their daily lives
- f) **Integration of Moderation Values in Curriculum and Evaluation:** Teachers associate the value of religious moderation with the subject matter, such as linking the teaching of love in Christianity to the importance of tolerance and peace. This is in line with Darson, Monika, Haner, & Karang (2024) who revealed that the integration of moderation values in Christian Religious Education (PAK) is carried out by inserting tolerance and love in the material, encouraging interfaith dialogue, using experiential learning, and teachers as role models. Technology is also used to create interactive and relevant learning. It shows students that religious moderation is an integral part of religious teachings. Assessment of

students' understanding of religious moderation can be carried out through tests, surveys, or observations. By evaluating changes in students' behavior and understanding, teachers can see the effectiveness of the methods used.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of religious moderation literacy at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School plays an important role in shaping attitudes of tolerance and inclusivity among students. The school teaches moderate Christian religious values, which emphasizes the importance of coexistence in religious diversity. In addition to learning about their own religious beliefs, students are also given an understanding to appreciate religious differences and live a harmonious life in a pluralistic society. Students at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School show an open attitude and are not easily provoked by religious differences. They are able to have a dialogue with friends who have different beliefs without any hostility. This attitude reflects their understanding of the importance of religious moderation to maintain peace in diversity. The involvement of students in various social activities involving different religious groups is also clear evidence of the implementation of religious moderation in schools.

The role of teachers at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School uses an approach based on Christian values, such as love, peace, and justice, to teach mutual respect between religious people. Teaching methods that involve discussions, social activities, and hands-on experience enrich students' understanding of the importance of religious moderation. Teachers also teach the importance of maintaining harmonious relationships despite differences in beliefs. Thus, religious moderation literacy at YPPGI Sentani Junior High School has succeeded in forming students who are tolerant and respect diversity. This is very relevant in the context of

Indonesia, which has various religions, ethnicities, and cultures. Moderate Christian religious education in these schools contributes to the formation of a more inclusive and ready young generation to face social challenges.

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