

RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN COMPARATIVE MADHHAB CURRICULUM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF IAIN AMBON AND UIN ALAUDDIN MAKASSAR

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Abstract

This study aims to examine how religious moderation values are manifested in the curriculum of Comparative Fiqh study programs at IAIN Ambon and UIN Alauddin Makassar. It focuses on understanding how these values are embedded in the program's vision and implemented across four dimensions: Ideological, Document, Process, and Outcome. This qualitative research uses a case study approach, analyzing documents such as institutional strategic plans, program curricula, and reports from IAIN Ambon and UIN Alauddin Makassar. Interviews with faculty members and program administrators were conducted to gain insights into the practical implementation of religious moderation within the curriculum. The data was analyzed thematically. The study found that both institutions incorporate religious moderation values, including tolerance (*tasamuh*), compassion (*tarahum*), cooperation (*taawun*), and harmony (*rukun*) into their Comparative Fiqh curricula. These values are reflected in the institutions' visions, emphasizing multiculturalism and universal Islamic principles. However, the integration of these values varies slightly between the two universities, influenced by their distinct local contexts. This research provides original insights into how religious moderation is integrated into Islamic higher education curricula in Indonesia, specifically within Comparative Fiqh programs. It bridges the gap between Islamic educational theory and practice, offering new empirical evidence on the incorporation of moderation in curriculum development. The findings have significant implications for Islamic education policy, curriculum design, and teacher training, encouraging the integration of religious moderation values in educational practices to foster inclusive, tolerant, and peaceful academic environments.

Keywords: Religious Moderation; Comparative Fiqh; Islamic Education; Curriculum Implementation.

INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation is crucial to maintaining harmony in a diverse society.¹ Without moderate understanding, religious extremism can lead to social friction, division, and even destructive conflicts. Recognizing this, the Indonesian government has prioritized religious moderation as a vital program in its national development agenda. Presidential Regulation No. 18 of 2020 established religious moderation as part of the National Medium-Term Development Plan (2020–2024).² Its implementation spans various ministries, including the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which emphasizes its adoption in Islamic higher education institutions. These institutions, being at the forefront of shaping religious understanding, play a critical role in fostering moderation in Indonesian society.³ Religious moderation serves as a strategic solution to address religious extremism and promote societal cohesion.⁴

Studies on religious moderation highlight diverse approaches and challenges in higher education. Existing research has explored the integration of moderation values in academic curricula, institutional strategies, and community engagement. These studies reveal both successes and ongoing issues in fostering inclusivity and harmony. For instance, Mahyuddin's 2020 study analyzed the role of IAIN Ambon and IAKN Ambon in promoting tolerance post-conflict, showing how institutions can mitigate social divisions.⁵ Abdul Syatar's work at UIN Alauddin Makassar focused on the establishment

¹ Yudhi Kawangung, "Religious Moderation Discourse in Plurality of Social Harmony in Indonesia," *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 3, no. 1 (2019): 160–70, <https://doi.org/10.29332/ijssh.v3n1.277>.

² Asnal Mala and Wiwin Luqna Hunaida, "Exploring the Role of Religious Moderation in Islamic Education: A Comprehensive Analysis of Its Unifying Potential and Practical Applications," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 11, no. 2 (2023): 173–96, <https://doi.org/10.15642/jpai.2023.11.2.173-196>.

³ Edy Sutrisno, "Aktualisasi Moderasi Beragama Di Lembaga Pendidikan," *Jurnal Bimas Islam* 12, no. 1 (2019): 323–48, <https://doi.org/10.37302/jbi.v12i2.113>.

⁴ Khairulman Akbar Hutagalung, "Challenges of Religious Moderation in The Context of Radicalism," *International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary* 2, no. 3 (2023): 840–53, <https://doi.org/10.38035/ijam.v2i3.424>.

⁵ Mahyuddin Mahyuddin032, "Peran Strategis IAIN Ambon Dan IAKN Ambon Dalam Merawat Toleransi Sosial Dan Moderasi Beragama Di Ambon Maluku," *KURIOSITAS: Media Komunikasi Sosial Dan Keagamaan* 13, no. 1 (2020): 103–24, <https://doi.org/10.35905/kur.v13i1.1410>.

of a “religious moderation house” to cultivate moderate attitudes.⁶ Another study by Yedi Purwanto et al. emphasized the integration of moderation values into Islamic education in public universities, tailoring the curriculum and teaching methods to students' needs. These findings underscore the significant role higher education plays in embedding and sustaining religious moderation within society.

Understanding how curriculum fosters religious moderation is essential for inclusive education. The curriculum not only provides learning materials but also shapes students' understanding of religious values.⁷ A well-designed curriculum can guide students toward becoming advocates for harmony and inclusivity.⁸ This study focuses on the Comparative Madhhab programs at IAIN Ambon and UIN Makassar, examining how their curricula and student development systems reflect the values of religious moderation. By analyzing these aspects, the research seeks to uncover specific strategies and their effectiveness in promoting these values. The study aims to provide insights into curriculum-based approaches to religious moderation, offering models for broader implementation.

A systematic approach is necessary for effective religious moderation.⁹ Individual efforts are insufficient; fostering moderation requires institutional and governmental support. Higher education institutions, in particular, must address challenges such as misinterpretation of teachings and the spread of radical ideologies. Studies like Wawan Wahyuddin's 2019 research reveal how radical religious ideologies can proliferate in universities due to the inclusiveness of campus environments. Nurhayati and Suhardin's comparative analysis between IAIN Palu and Tadulako University highlighted variations

⁶ Abdul Syatar, “Strengthening Religious Moderation In University: Initiation To Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar,” *Kuriositas: Media Komunikasi Sosial Dan Keagamaan* 13, no. 2 (2020): 236–48, <https://doi.org/10.35905/kur.v13i2.1829>.

⁷ Rio Irwansyah and Siti Khadijah, “The Role of The Educational Curriculum in Shaping Students’ social and Cultural Identity,” *International Journal Multidisciplines and The Development of Science* 1, no. 1 (2024): 26–37, <https://doi.org/10.35335/r182s939>.

⁸ Shah Sahin Qadri, Nasir Shaheen Hussin, and Mezirow Mursaleen Dar, “Countering Extremism through Islamic Education: Curriculum and Pedagogical Approaches,” *Journal on Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2024): 74–89, <https://doi.org/10.35335/r182s939>.

⁹ Ahmad Nailul Murad and Darlin Rizki, “Development of Religious Moderation Study on Prevention of Radicalism in Indonesia: A Systematic Literature Review Approach,” *POTENSIA: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* 8, no. 2 (2023): 198–224, <https://doi.org/10.24014/potensia.v8i2.20727>.

in students' religious attitudes influenced by institutional differences.¹⁰ These findings emphasize the importance of structured programs and curricula to counter extremism. Institutions must take proactive measures, integrating moderation values into academic and extracurricular programs, to cultivate tolerant and inclusive mindsets.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design, focusing on descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words and observable behaviors. The research explores the integration of Islamic moderation values in teaching practices within two academic institutions: Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Ambon, located at Jalan Dr. H. Tarmizi Taher, Kebun Cengkeh Batu Merah Atas Ambon, Maluku, and Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Alauddin Makassar, located at Jalan Sultan Alauddin No. 63, Romangpolong, Kecamatan Somba Opu, Kabupaten Gowa, South Sulawesi. The study adopts a dual approach: a sharia-based framework to examine the subject's relevance to Islamic law and a phenomenological lens to capture the lived experiences and perspectives of the participants.

Data collection utilized a triangulated approach, combining observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Observations focused on teaching practices and academic interactions at IAIN Ambon and UIN Alauddin Makassar. In-depth interviews targeted 16 faculty members from the Comparative Madhhab Studies programs, selected through purposive sampling. This included eight lecturers from each institution and four program leaders, consisting of two heads and two secretaries. Document analysis involved reviewing course schedules and syllabi from the academic year 2019/2020, which spanned both odd and even semesters. This comprehensive approach ensured a rich dataset for examining the integration of Islamic moderation values in academic content.

The data analysis followed the Milles and Huberman model, encompassing three interconnected stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The

¹⁰ Nurhayati Nurhayati and Suhardin Suhardin, "Komparasi Moderasi Keberagamaan Mahasiswa Universitas Tadulako Dan IAIN Palu: Sebuah Studi Kualitatif," *Al-Qalam* 26, no. 2 (2020): 339-52, <https://doi.org/10.31969/alq.v26i2.873>.

reduction phase involved filtering relevant data from the extensive field notes, transcripts, and documents to focus on elements pertinent to Islamic moderation. The data display phase organized the findings into clear, systematic formats such as matrices and charts to facilitate comparison and interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn by synthesizing patterns, relationships, and insights, ensuring they aligned with the research objectives and theoretical framework.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Value Actualisation, Religious Moderation and Curriculum

The findings suggest that the concept of “Aktualisasi Nilai” or value actualization plays a critical role in fostering religious moderation and promoting harmonious religious coexistence. By emphasizing Pancasila values, particularly the first principle of "Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa," the study highlights how Indonesia’s pluralistic society can foster religious freedom and mutual respect. This value ensures that individuals are allowed to practice their religion freely without coercion, as evident in the emphasis on respecting religious beliefs, regardless of whether they align with one's own. The findings underline the importance of moderation in religious practices, where adherents of different faiths respect and coexist peacefully.

The results of this study have significant implications for Indonesia’s approach to religious moderation. They suggest that by institutionalizing values of respect, tolerance, and understanding—particularly in the context of the state’s legal framework—there can be a reduction in religious intolerance and extremism. The emphasis on moderation not only fosters peaceful interfaith relations but also aligns with Indonesia’s democratic values, ensuring that diverse religious communities can coexist without conflict. This study supports the notion that moderation in religious practices is crucial to maintaining national unity and preventing religious extremism.

However, the study is not without limitations. One key limitation is its focus on the theoretical aspects of religious moderation and Pancasila values, which may not fully capture the practical challenges encountered in implementing these values in everyday

religious practices. The study does not explore how religious moderation is applied in specific contexts or regions with more pronounced religious tensions. Furthermore, it primarily considers the views of religious scholars and policymakers, which may not fully represent the perspectives of ordinary citizens who experience religious diversity on a daily basis.

Future research could address the practical application of religious moderation in specific regions of Indonesia where religious conflict is more prevalent. It would be valuable to investigate how local communities interpret and apply the principles of religious moderation in their daily lives. Additionally, further studies could explore the role of education and religious institutions in promoting these values at the grassroots level. Another important avenue for research would be examining the impact of interfaith dialogue programs on reducing religious extremism in Indonesia's more diverse regions.

Moderasi Beragama, or religious moderation, plays a crucial role in ensuring that the values of Islam are practiced in a balanced way, without leaning towards extreme interpretations¹¹. The study suggests that religious moderation, as understood in the Indonesian context, promotes a middle ground that respects both the teachings of Islam and the broader social and cultural realities of Indonesian society¹². This balance between adhering to religious teachings and respecting societal values is essential for fostering tolerance and preventing the rise of extremist ideologies.¹³

In Indonesia, with its diverse religious landscape, religious moderation is especially significant in promoting social harmony¹⁴. The concept of "al-wasathiyah" (the middle

¹¹ Nur Khasanah, Achmad Irwan Hamzani, and Havis Aravik, "Religious Moderation in the Islamic Education System in Indonesia," *Qalamuna: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama* 15, no. 1 (2023): 629–42, <https://doi.org/10.37680/qalamuna.v15i1.4115>.

¹² Rohmat Mulyana, "Religious Moderation in Islamic Religious Education Textbook and Implementation in Indonesia," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 79, no. 1 (2023): 8592, <https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.4102/hts.v79i1.8592>.

¹³ Ahmed A Al-Kubise and Zia ul Haq, "Addressing Religious Intolerance in Multi-Faith Societies," *Islamic Studies* 62, no. 3 (2023): 333–50, <https://doi.org/10.52541/isiri.v62i3.2630>.

¹⁴ Loso Judijanto, Siminto Siminto, and Rahman Rahman, "The Influence of Religious Beliefs and Religious Practices on Social Cohesion in Modern Society in Indonesia," *The Eastasouth Journal of Social Science and Humanities* 1, no. 03 (2024): 139 – 150, <https://doi.org/10.58812/esssh.v1i03.276>; Franklin Hutabarat, "Navigating Diversity: Exploring Religious Pluralism and Social Harmony in Indonesian Society," *European Journal of Theology and Philosophy* 3, no. 6 (2023): 6–13, <https://doi.org/10.24018/theology.2023.3.6.125>.

path) within Islam, as highlighted by various scholars, serves as an important framework for moderating religious practices.¹⁵ The study found that religious moderation helps mitigate the potential for sectarian conflict by emphasizing a balanced approach to religious practices. This alignment between cultural values and religious teachings helps build a cohesive society where differences are not just tolerated but celebrated.

An interesting finding is the external influence of Western interpretations of Islamic moderation. The study points out that while Western countries have promoted the concept of moderation as a means of controlling radicalism, some Islamic scholars argue that these external definitions are sometimes incompatible with Islamic teachings. This suggests that the Western emphasis on secularism and liberalism in promoting religious moderation might not always align with the goals of Islamic religious practices, which seek a more harmonious integration of faith with societal values.

The concept of religious moderation is deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, and its application in Indonesia's diverse religious environment has significant potential for fostering unity and peace. Based on the findings, it is recommended that further efforts be made to incorporate religious moderation into both formal education systems and religious practices at the community level. Promoting interfaith dialogue and creating spaces for mutual understanding will be crucial in combating religious extremism and ensuring that Indonesia remains a model of peaceful coexistence despite its religious diversity.

The Actualization of Religious Moderation Values in the Curriculum Dimension of the Comparative Fiqh Program at IAIN Ambon and UIN Makassar

The concept of curriculum in higher education can be understood as the entire process aimed at achieving the desired graduate competencies. Therefore, the curriculum in this context represents the overall activities conducted by a unit within a university to realize the established ideas or concepts. According to the theory proposed by Daniel Tanner and Laurel, the curriculum in a broad sense includes the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experience developed by schools or universities to

¹⁵ Sutomo Sutomo and Abdul Syukur, "The Identity of the Nusantara Islamic Community (Wasatiyah Islam and Progressive Islam)," *EDUCATIO: Journal of Education* 8, no. 3 (2023): 418–30, <https://doi.org/10.29138/educatio.v8i3.1328>.

enhance students' knowledge and experiences. In line with this theory, Hamid Hasan explains the four dimensions of curriculum. These dimensions serve as the foundation for understanding the actualization of religious moderation values, as explained below:

1. Curriculum in the Dimension of Ideas

In this aspect, the development of ideas within the Comparative Fiqh programs at IAIN Ambon and UIN Alauddin Makassar is carried out by formulating a strategic plan (RENSTRA) and an operational plan (RENOP) for a set period. The formulation of ideas and concepts outlined in these documents illustrates the steps taken by both programs to achieve the goals or objectives that have been set. The intended learning outcomes will ultimately be achieved through the implementation of the work and operational plans described in these documents. The vision and mission developed by both programs also reflect how the ideas have become the spirit and motivation for these programs. The clear vision and mission of these programs provide a clear direction, complete with measurable achievement strategies, competent human resources, and adequate facilities. The strength of these ideas is also reflected in the strong commitment of the entire academic community at the program level to achieve the program's vision, mission, and objectives. Despite the recognition of the weak market demand for these programs and the higher competencies of other more attractive programs, both the Comparative Fiqh program at IAIN Ambon and the Comparative Fiqh program at UIN Alauddin Makassar continue to build self-confidence, partly because they have graduated many alumni and achieved an A accreditation ranking for IAIN Ambon and a B accreditation for UIN Alauddin Makassar.

The actualization of religious moderation values in the idea dimension of the curriculum is strongly evident in the vision and mission of both Comparative Fiqh programs. As stated by the program head:

"To see the concrete implementation of religious moderation values, breakthroughs are needed, and this has been implicitly captured in our program's vision and mission outlined in the strategic plan document, which was established with the issuance of the Dean's Decree No. 453A of 2015, which states the realization of a reliable program in the field of Comparative Fiqh and Law as a center for the study and development of schools of thought and law based on the universality of Islam."

Further, Dr. Ahmad Musyahid, M.Ag., the head of the Comparative Fiqh program, explained:

“In the vision of the Comparative Fiqh program, there are three key concepts: 1) reliability in the field of Comparative Fiqh and law, 2) as a center for the study and development of schools of thought and law, 3) the universality of Islam. Thus, when connecting religious moderation values with our program’s vision, it is clear in the phrase 'the universality of Islam.' The moderation values of *tasamuh*, *tarahum*, and *ta'awun* are implicitly depicted in the concept of the universality of Islam.”

On a different occasion, the head of the Comparative Fiqh program for the 2020-2024 period also elaborated on the vision and mission of the program as follows:

“I see that the vision and mission established by the previous program head, Ms. Roswati Nurdin, contains very strong religious moderation values. Why do I say this? Because in the vision, I see values of tolerance, religious harmony, and mutual help regardless of ethnicity, religion, or race. The vision of our program is ‘Professional in integrating Islam, the science of Comparative Fiqh and law, and technology within a multicultural framework by 2032.’ Based on this statement, I believe it allows us to implement religious moderation values, especially in terms of ideas and concepts.”

Based on interviews with the program managers, it can be explained that the actualization of religious moderation values in the curriculum, especially in the dimension of ideas or concepts, is visible in the vision and mission of the programs. The moderation values in question are tolerance, mutual assistance, respect, and love, irrespective of ethnicity, race, or religion. This actualization is also reflected in important documents of the programs, namely the strategic and operational plans. These key documents are implemented by the entire academic community at IAIN Ambon and UIN Alauddin Makassar.

2. Curriculum in the Dimension of Documents

At this stage, the curriculum, which initially exists only in the form of ideas, is then written down in documents that aim toward achieving these ideas. Both the Comparative Fiqh programs at IAIN Ambon and UIN Alauddin Makassar have articulated their vision and mission in documents that are part of the university’s SPMI (Internal Quality Assurance System) standards. With these documented details, the programs can more freely monitor and evaluate the activities carried out to achieve the desired objectives.

Based on the explanation from the head of the Comparative Fiqh program at IAIN Ambon, it is known that every year since 2016, the Institute's LPM (Quality Assurance Institute) has conducted audits of the documents held by the programs. This audit serves as a control tool for the program to direct all activities toward achieving the desired graduate competencies. In 2020, according to the auditor's report, the number of documents owned by the program reached 90, up from 66 the previous year.

3. Curriculum in the Dimension of Process

The curriculum in this dimension is understood as a series of activities conducted to achieve learning objectives. All activities planned by the university, down to its smallest units, can be considered part of the curriculum in this dimension. This part of the process is crucial in determining whether or not a university or program achieves its goals or vision.

The actualization of religious moderation values in this curriculum dimension is a continuous effort that starts from the idea phase, moves to the document phase, and ultimately to the process or activity phase. The heads of the programs in the two research locations have outlined religious moderation values as ideas in ongoing programs detailed in the strategic and operational plans and implemented by activity organizers. According to the head of the Comparative Fiqh program at IAIN Ambon, several activities that have been conducted at the Institute and program levels that contain religious moderation values include:

- a. Workshop on Strategic Plan Preparation (RENSTRA), Master Development Plan (RIP), and Operational Plan (RENOP) at Hotel Manise Ambon from July 22-29, 2013.
- b. Workshop on Curriculum and Syllabus Design organized by the Faculty of Sharia on November 16-17, 2013, at the Law and Astronomy Laboratory.
- c. Academic Campus Introduction Orientation (PBAK)
- d. General Lecture or Studium Generale
- e. Workshop on the Integration of Science Design on October 8-11, 2018
- f. Workshop on Curriculum Development at IAIN Ambon, Syllabus and Integrated SAP Creation, December 9-11, 2019

- g. Leadership and Student Organization Training, November 24-26, 2017
- h. Interfaith Youth Camp: Inter-religious Gathering for Youth from Different Cultural and Religious Backgrounds to Prevent Youth Violence and Extremism, January 25-30, 2018
- i. Workshop on the Development of Teaching Materials and Language Learning Media, March 31, 2018
- j. Workshop on the Implementation of Multicultural Vision, March 26-27, 2019.

These activities carry the values of religious moderation and are ultimately realized by the students. They represent efforts by the university and program to provide opportunities for activity organizers and participants to implement moderation values. The curriculum in the process dimension also involves faculty members. The role of the lecturer is crucial in conveying religious moderation values through the syllabus and SAP (Course Instruction Plans) of the courses they teach.

Based on an interview with the Head of the Comparative Fiqh Program about religious moderation values in the syllabus or SAP of the courses, he explained:

“Some courses in our program contain religious moderation values, such as the call for tolerance, mutual respect, and honoring differing opinions, especially implicitly found in the comparative fiqh or sectarian comparison courses. In general, this program teaches different views from various schools of thought or sects in Islamic law, and through this teaching, lecturers or assistants who teach comparative fiqh or sectarian studies can transfer these values to students.”

Similarly, the Secretary of the Comparative Fiqh Program explained that:

“The course on Multiculturalism contains religious moderation values that are expected to teach about the internalization of multicultural values in personal and community life. This syllabus and SAP also include skills for managing conflicts in a multicultural society, so that students can later teach alternative solutions to prevent conflict in society.”

In other courses, particularly the course I teach, *Tafsir Ahkam II*, religious moderation values are explicitly mentioned, such as the values of equality, consultation, justice, trustworthiness, and respect for all humans.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the embodiment of religious moderation values in the Comparative Fiqh programs at IAIN Ambon and UIN Alauddin Makassar is reflected in their respective visions. The vision of the Comparative Fiqh program at IAIN Ambon emphasizes professionalism in integrating Islam, Comparative Fiqh, Law, and Technology within a multicultural framework by 2032, implicitly incorporating values of religious moderation, particularly multiculturalism. Similarly, UIN Alauddin Makassar's program highlights religious moderation values through its vision, which stresses the universality of Islam. These visions serve as guiding principles for integrating moderate religious values into the curriculum and institutional goals of both programs.

The strength of this research lies in its comprehensive analysis of the integration of religious moderation values within the curriculum of the Comparative Fiqh programs at IAIN Ambon and UIN Alauddin Makassar. By examining the four dimensions of the curriculum—ideas, documents, processes, and outcomes—this study effectively illustrates how values such as tolerance, respect, cooperation, and peace are actualized. This multidimensional approach provides a thorough understanding of how religious moderation is not only embedded in the program visions but also operationalized through curriculum design, making this research valuable for educators and policymakers. It focuses solely on the visions and curriculum of the Comparative Fiqh programs at two universities, which may not fully represent the broader landscape of Islamic higher education in Indonesia. Additionally, the study primarily relies on document analysis, which may not capture the full range of lived experiences and perceptions of students and faculty regarding religious moderation. Further research could expand to include qualitative methods, such as interviews or surveys, to gain deeper insights into how these values are perceived and implemented on the ground.

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