

LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING OF STUDENTS OF THE ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ABOUT THE RELIGIOUS MODERATION

Widya Wulandari, and Muhamad Fauzi

Abstract: Actions of radicalism with the rise of extremism have made students vulnerable. The factor that causes radicalism and extremism to enter is due to students' lack of understanding of religious moderation. The important role of higher education is needed to facilitate, introduce, and instill an understanding of moderation. This study aims to determine the level of understanding of Islamic Religious Education study program students regarding the concept of religious moderation. This research uses a descriptive accompanied by a quantitative approach. The data collection technique used the questionnaire method and the data collected by performing percentage analysis. Thus, this study found that the level of understanding of students of the Islamic Religious Education study program regarding religious moderation, there were still students who did not understand the meaning of the concept of various modes of moderation, including; National Commitment (KB), Tolerance (T), Anti-Violence (AK), and Accommodating Local Culture (MKL). So, to increase the understanding of Islamic Religious Education study program students regarding the concept of religious moderation, there is an effort by the study program to provide policies and program activities in Islamic Religious Education study program to introduce and instill an understanding of moderation.

Keywords: level of understanding; student; moderation of religion

Abstrak: Aksi radikalisme dengan maraknya paham ekstremisme menjadi rentan di kalangan mahasiswa. Faktor yang menjadi masuknya radikalisme dan ekstremisme ini, dikarenakan kurangnya pemahaman mahasiswa terhadap moderasi beragama. Peran penting perguruan tinggi sangat dibutuhkan untuk memfasilitasi, mengenalkan, serta menanamkan pemahaman moderasi. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tingkat pemahaman mahasiswa program studi Pendidikan Agama Islam tentang konsep moderasi beragama. Penelitian ini menggunakan deskriptif disertai dengan pendekatan kuantitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan metode angket dan data yang dikumpulkan dengan melakukan analisis persentase. Sehingga, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa tingkat pemahaman mahasiswa program studi Pendidikan Agama Islam tentang moderasi beragama, masih terdapat mahasiswa yang belum memahami makna konsep moderasi beragama, meliputi; Komitmen Kebangsaan (KB), Toleransi (T), Anti Kekerasan (AK), dan Mengakomodasi Kebudayaan Lokal (MKL). Maka, untuk meningkatkan pemahaman mahasiswa khusus prodi Pendidikan Agama Islam tentang konsep moderasi beragama adanya upaya program studi dalam memberikan kebijakan dan program-program kegiatan di prodi Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam mengenalkan, serta menanamkan pemahaman tentang moderasi.

Kata kunci: tingkat pemahaman; siswa; moderasi beragama

Introduction

The rejection of radicalism and deradicalization, targeting the most vulnerable groups, namely youth, is evidenced by the rise of narratives of extremism among students and high schools (Wildan & Mutaqqin, 2022). The results of the 2022 Alvara Research Center (ARC) survey, show that today's young generation has a very large influence on internet use (Mahmudan, 2022). So, the negative impact of its use can increase intolerance, because it relies more on the world of social media as a source of religious learning, both from websites and other virtual media with just one click. The widening complexity of society in religion accompanied by excessive fanaticism and references to extremism, to terrorism, is a challenge globally and universally, both internally and externally to Islam (Maskuri et al., 2021). Thus, religious moderation is very important as a framing in managing religious life in a multicultural and plural Indonesian society. So, implementing the value of religious moderation (moderate) as the main step for social life to be harmonious and safe (Munir et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, moderation began to develop in the early 20th century, its presence in efforts to internalize religious values, as well as efforts to respect religious diversity. This internalization is to make a spiritual, moral, and ethical foundation in the life of society, individuals, nation, and state. Moderation is a process, while tolerance is the result caused by a moderate attitude toward religion (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019). Thus, respect for differences in religious understanding and practice is aimed at encouraging moderate religious life and creating tolerance for these differences (Junaedi, 2019). The actualization of Moderate Islam in Indonesia can be seen in the fact that it is increasingly taking root in nationalist groups such as Muhammadiyah, NU (Nahdlatul Ulama), and soon. Groups that carry religious nationalism are products of peaceful Indonesian religious communities. Through his diverse education, he can mature his respective congregations so that they can get along with each other even though they are different (Inayatillah et al., 2022).

Since 2019, the religious moderation agenda has been through the State Islamic Religious College (hereinafter PTKIN) institutionally through a Circular Letter of the Director General of Islamic Education regarding the

House of Religious Moderation (hereinafter RMB), which requests all PTKIN Rectors to establish and organize RMB to provide education and strengthening in campus environment and the wider community, and assistance and guidance. This is evidenced that the conceptual moderation of religion is more vulnerable among students, especially aspects of tolerance (PPIM, 2022). As the most vulnerable group, students have an important role to play in the growth of religious moderation in education, to introduce and instill an understanding of moderation, as well as what is contained therein (Syafitri et al., 2022). A moderate attitude is basically a dynamic situation and one can see the perspective, religious attitude/behavior of a moderate person (Harm et al., 2022). Therefore, in order to see how far the understanding of religious moderation is, it is necessary to have a theory to determine the level of this understanding. According to Benjamin S. Bloom in the book *Cognitive Taxonomy*, the ability to understand based on its level includes 3 parts (Kuswana, 2012); 1) Translation (Understanding the meaning contained in a concept), 2) Interpretation (Opinions/theoretical views on religious moderation to know and understand by connecting past and subsequent knowledge), and 3) Extrapolation (Higher ability, by broadening perception in terms of time, dimensions, cases, and others).

This study focuses on prospective Islamic religious education teacher students, who have a significant role in the condition of society in shaping students to become superior religious people (Irawan & Handayani, 2022). Considering that acts of radicalism have occurred everywhere among students, strengthening religious moderation is the main foundation, especially for prospective students of Islamic religious education teachers who must have a moderate understanding, because they are the ones who will deliver religious education to their students. To recognize how strong religious moderation is implemented by the people in Indonesia and how vulnerable it is, it is necessary to identify it so that appropriate steps can be taken to strengthen religious moderation. Religious moderation has several indicators, including (Saifuddin, 2019); 1. National commitment; 2. Tolerance; 3. Non-violence; and 4. Accommodating to local culture.

In Selvi's research (2022), he found that the level of understanding of religious moderation of Islamic Religious Education students at Public

Higher Education (hereinafter PTU) was greater than the understanding of Islamic Religious Education students at PTKIN. From the results of Muhammad Fauzi's research, found that there is a potential for seeds of radicalism in new students' class of 2021 who have a very low understanding of religious moderation. Thus, efforts to cultivate religious moderation overcome this by carrying out curriculum development, student organizations that become agents of moderation, conducting seminars or activities with the theme of religious moderation, and establishing RMB (Fauzi & Rohmadi, 2022). As for Purwanto's et al research (2019) the pattern of internalizing the values of moderation at PTU through Islamic Religious Education courses, material adapted to student input, the competence of the lecturers who teach the subject, as well as support from the campus community. Internalization is carried out through lectures, seminars, or the like. As well as conducting evaluations by screening Islamic insights periodically from lecturers or tutors.

Various previous studies discussed the level of understanding of religious moderation of Islamic Religious Education students at PTU and PTKIN. Therefore, to differentiate the previous research. Researchers only focused on the level of understanding of students of the Islamic Religious Education Study Program at UIN Raden Fatah Palembang about religious moderation. This study aims to determine the level of understanding of Tarbiyah Faculty students, especially in the Islamic Religious Education study program batches of 2020, 2021 and 2022 regarding religious moderation. Through this research it is hoped that it can contribute to the level of work programs to increase understanding of religious moderation, especially in Islamic Religious Education study programs as well as have an impact on the academic community of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.

Method

This study uses a descriptive method with a quantitative approach. Descriptive research is not intended to test a particular hypothesis, or it can be said that it only describes what is about a variable. Determination of sampling using purposive sampling, the sample is selected specifically according to research needs (Sugiyono, 2017). The total number of students in the Islamic Religious Education study program at UIN Raden Fatah

Palembang is 1422 people. The sample in this study were students of the Islamic Religious Education Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Raden Fatah Palembang, batches of 2020, 2021, and 2022. There were 75 students who became respondents.

The research data was taken from primary data from students of the 2020, 2021, and 2022 batches of the PAI study program, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. These students are assumed to be still active in the lecture process in the PAI study program. The data collection technique used was a questionnaire distributed to PAI students via an online form (Google Form). The data collection technique used for the variable level of understanding of religious moderation is the questionnaire method. The questionnaire used is a closed questionnaire with answers provided. Each respondent in this study filled out a questionnaire containing information about: 1) respondent demographics (Class of 2020, 2021, and 2022, affiliation of PAI study programs at UIN Raden Fatah Palembang, and religious organizations or majlis); 2) Measuring tool for the level of understanding of respondents about religious moderation.

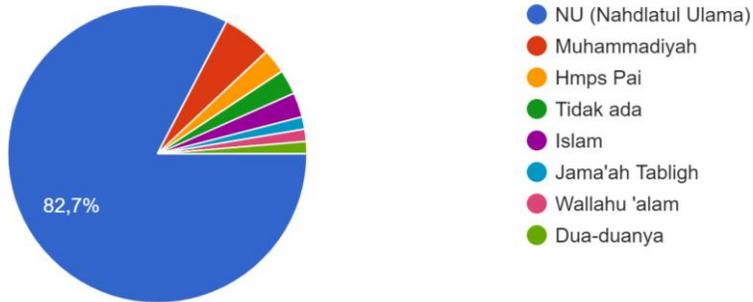
Variable	How to Test	Testing Tool
Religious Moderation	Understanding Level	Questionnaire Method

Skala Likert	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't agree	Strongly Disagree
(+)	4	3	2	1
(-)	1	2	3	4

Results and Discussion

Based on the theoretical aspects of understanding that have been explained, it actually has three indicators and is expanded to 9 item announcements. Where each item will show the amount in percentage. There are religious organizations that students follow.

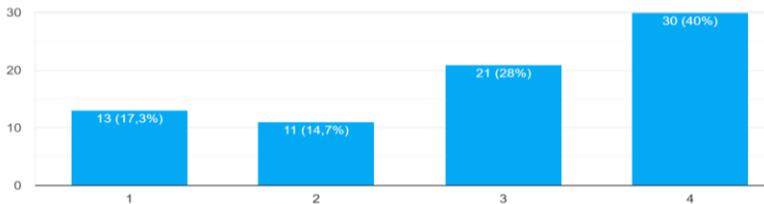
Graphic 1. Religious Organization/Majlis.
75 Answers



Of the 75 students that the researchers obtained, there were several students who did not understand the concept of religious moderation based on the indicators of religious moderation. From the results of the questionnaire analysis of respondents such;

Diagram 1. Indicator Items: The way of religion in a fair and balanced manner is a concept of moderation.

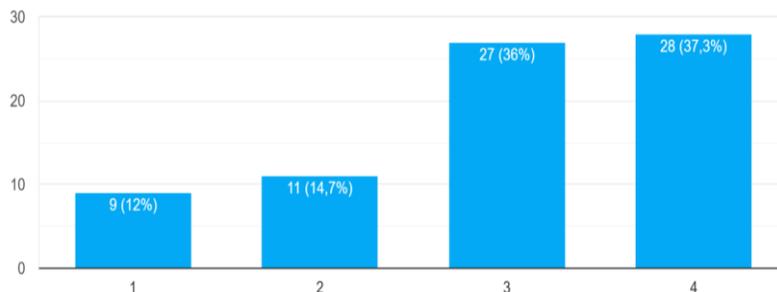
75 Answers



In the diagram above, there are 30 students (40%) out of 75 who strongly agree that a fair and balanced way of practicing religion is a concept of moderation.

Diagram 2. Indicator Items: Religious moderation is not necessary, as it reflects indecisiveness in religion.

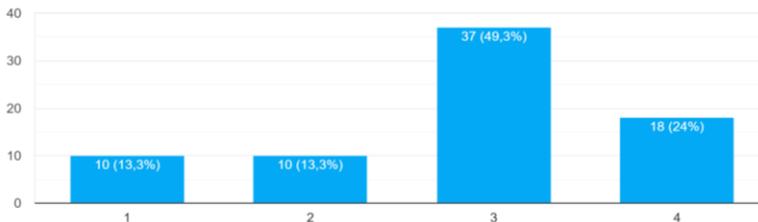
75 Answers



The diagram above shows that there are 28 students (37.3%) out of 75 who strongly disagree that moderation in religion is not needed, because it reflects indecisiveness in religion.

Diagram 3. Indicator Items: Religious moderation is not necessary, because religion already has its own path of truth.

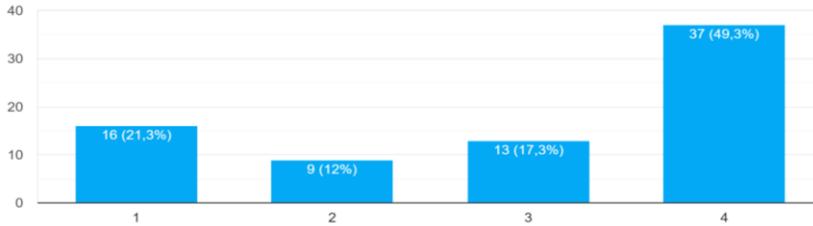
75 Answers



The diagram above shows that there are 18 students (24%) out of 75 who strongly disagree that moderation in religion is not needed, because religions already have their way of truth.

Diagram 4. Indicator Items: Religious moderation is very necessary to maintain harmony in national life.

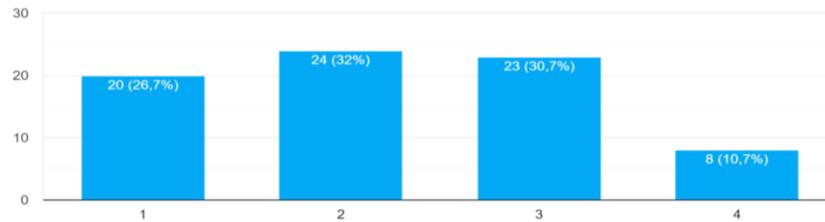
75 Answers



The diagram above shows that there are 37 students (49.3%) out of 75 who strongly agree that religious moderation is necessary to maintain harmony in national life.

Diagram 5. Indicator Items: Moderate is someone who is not extreme and does not exaggerate when undergoing religious teachings.

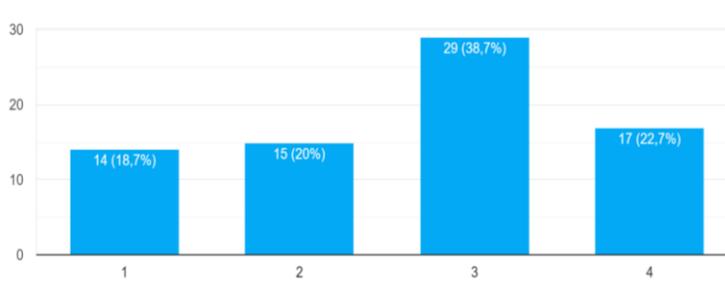
75 Answers



The diagram above, that there are 8 students (10.7%) out of 75 strongly disagree moderate is someone who is not extreme and exaggerated when carrying out religious teachings.

Diagram 6. Indicator Items: Moderation is enough to be respectful and not to interfere with each other.

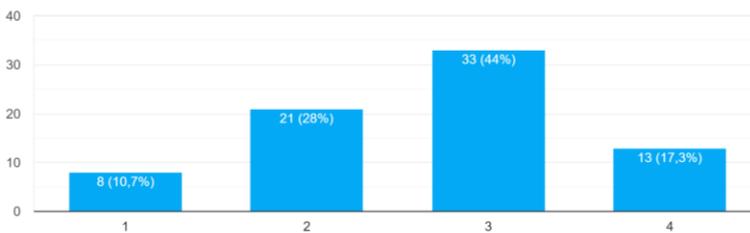
75 Answers



The diagram above shows that there are 17 students (22.7%) out of 75 who strongly agree that being moderate is sufficient by respecting and not disturbing one another.

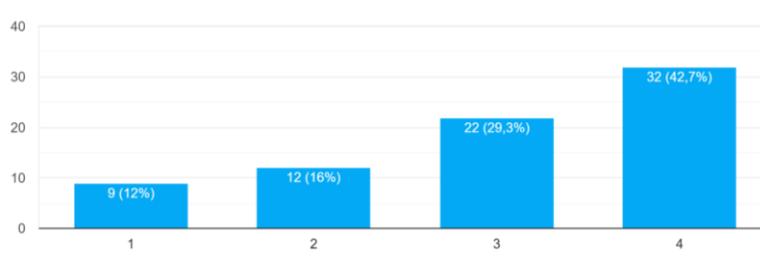
Diagram 7. Indicator Items: The essence of religious teachings is to humanize humans with religious moderation, aiming to mediate and invite the two extremes in religion to move to the middle.

75 Answers



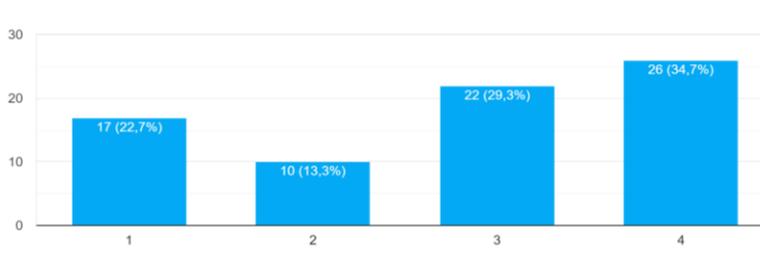
The diagram above shows that there are 13 students (17.3%) out of 75 who strongly agree that the essence of religious teachings is to humanize with religious moderation to mediate and invite the two extreme poles of religion to move towards the middle.

Diagram 8. Indicator Items: Moderates are not firm in religion
75 Answers



The diagram above, that there are 32 students (42.7%) out of 75 strongly disagree that moderate people are not firm in religion.

Diagram 9. Indicator Items: Indonesia is agreed not to be a religious state, but also not to separate religion from the daily lives of its citizens.
75 Answers



In the diagram above, there are 26 students (34.7%) out of 75 who strongly agree that Indonesia is not a religious state, but also does not separate religion from the daily lives of its citizens.

The circle chart of religious organizations followed and believed by PAI study program students at UIN Raden Fatah Palembang and the bar chart above shows the level of understanding of Benyamin S. Bloom's theory, that Islamic education study program students' batch 2020, 2021 and 2022 ability level of understanding is at 'Translation'. It can be seen in the first statement, only 30 out of 75 students strongly agree that a just and balanced way of religion is a moderation concept. Meanwhile, in statement 6, only 17 students strongly agreed that being moderate was sufficient by respecting and not disturbing one another. Although some students did not understand the concept of religious moderation. However, they do not join religious organizations that have radical views. This is in line with previous research,

which found that UIN Raden Fatah students were only active in internal campus organizations and tended not to have radical/extreme thoughts (Fauzi & Rohmadi, 2022).

This is the role, as well as the efforts of the Islamic campus in facilitating and supporting work programs on the theme of religious moderation which are strengthening for being moderate in religion. One of the efforts through the objectives of the UIN Raden Fatah Strategic Plan (Renstra) for 2020-2024 supports the implementation of the goals of the Ministry of Religion (One of them is strengthening the quality of religious moderation at UIN Raden Fatah Palembang) and linear with the aim of the Directorate General of Islamic Education (Strengthening the quality of religious moderation in all level and type of Islamic education). Concerning the program objectives of the Director General of Islamic Education, UIN Raden Fatah Palembang sets 7 annual program targets for 2020-2024, one of which is strengthening the education system with a moderate perspective (Khodijah, 2020).

Previous research found that improving the quality of religious facilitation (religious moderation) at UIN Raden Fatah Palembang focuses on preparing religious education, strengthening religious facilitation content, quality of extracurricular activities, tolerance and educators, and educational energy. The moderation house has become a center for moderate studies and propagates religious perspectives in society. The academic approach is more important and more effective in the prevention (Wulandari, 2023). The religious moderation education policy issued by the Ministry of Religion has given rise to different responses in its implementation within the PTIKIN environment. The difference is reflected in the existence of policy making which is manifested in 2 things, namely the formalization of the steps for implementing religious moderation education in a separate institutional form on campus, and secondly, how universities habituate the idea of religious moderation into the Tri Dharma field of higher education. In connection with the 2 things that have been explained that not all tertiary institutions are quick and responsive in following up on this religious moderation program (Musyafak et al., 2021).

Conclusion

Based on the data obtained through the questionnaire, it was found that the level of understanding of Islamic education study program students regarding religious moderation, there were still students who did not understand the meaning of religious moderation. Although not participating in a religious organization with a radical view. This is based on the data obtained regarding the indicators of religious moderation that were found, so in increasing student understanding, especially the PAI study program at UIN Raden Fatah Palembang about religious moderation, there should be efforts by study programs to provide policies and program activities in education, to introduce and instill an understanding of moderation, as well as the values contained in moderation.

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