



Contextual Learning Model to Realize Islamic Moderation in Islamic Religious Education

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Abstract : The application of contextual learning models can be an effective means of moderating religious understanding among students. This model provides learning experiences that are more relevant to everyday life, allowing students to develop a moderate attitude towards their religious values. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of contextual learning models in fostering religious moderation, emphasizing the role of curriculum design, teacher facilitation, and student engagement. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with educators, and student surveys. The findings indicate that a well-structured contextual learning model significantly enhances students' ability to interpret religious teachings with a balanced perspective, reducing tendencies toward extreme views. Furthermore, the study highlights the need for continuous teacher training and curriculum adjustments to optimize the implementation of this approach. The implications of this research contribute to curriculum development, teacher education, and educational policy, supporting pedagogical strategies that promote religious moderation in academic settings.

Keywords: Contextual learning model; Islamic moderation; Islamic religious education

Introduction

Islamic moderation known as *al-Wasathiyah al-Islamiyyah* in Arabic refers to the concept that advocates for the principle of moderation in life. This concept places Islam as a religion that teaches having polite, peaceful, and harmonious attitudes in interacting with its environment. Moderate Islam, or Islamic moderation, focuses on principles of politeness, justice, social harmony, and prioritizes dialogue, peace, and anti-extremism in preaching. This attitude aligns with Islam's mission, which is *Rahmatan Lil Alamin*, meaning bringing mercy to the entire universe (Khosiin et al., 2023; Nurdin et al., 2023).

Essentially, Islamic Moderation creates a foundation for Muslim individuals to act moderately and respect differences with others. In Islamic teachings, each individual has different customs and traditions, and the effort to make all of humanity identical is something that can never be achieved. Therefore, peace can be built by respecting differences.

The concept of Islamic Moderation, which includes ways of thinking and acting, seeks to find a middle ground between following revelation (guidance from God) and using our reason. This concept helps us adapt to changes in time without violating the fundamental teachings of Islam.

In *Wasathiyah Islam* (moderate Islam), we are expected to understand that society is diverse and there are many differences among us. Therefore, when interpreting and understanding the verses of the Qur'an, we need to consider the context and not just focus on the text itself.

The principles of Islamic moderation, such as justice, tolerance, balance, cooperation (*ta'awwun*), and exemplary behavior, form the foundation of Islamic teachings that must be thoroughly understood and comprehended by students through the process of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) (Daffa & Anggara, 2023). The PAI teacher plays a very strategic role in shaping students' understanding of Islamic moderation,

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which is not only about belief and worship but also encompasses broader aspects of life.

The PAI learning process is expected to shape students' personalities to have a comprehensive understanding of Islam and be able to apply it in their daily lives. This learning process plays a key role in forming moderate attitudes, respecting differences, and creating harmony in society.

Therefore, as a PAI teacher, one must be able to foster moderate attitudes in students. One of the ways to develop a moderate attitude is by implementing a Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model, which is an effective method in delivering Islamic moderation education (Parhan et al., 2024; Sabarudin et al., 2023). This learning model links the material being taught to the students' real-world situations, enabling them to experience and internalize the concepts of Islamic moderation in a contextual way (Handini et al., 2016).

Several learning methods can be applied, such as discussions, case studies, and screening short films about Islamic moderation, which will help students understand and absorb these values. Discussions provide opportunities for students to develop their understanding objectively and actively participate in applying the principles of Islamic moderation in daily life. The screening of short films, as an audio-visual medium, can provide real-life experiences and motivate students to practice the values of Islamic moderation.

The purpose of this writing is to provide insights to every Islamic Religious Education teacher in order to create students who behave moderately, not only in school but also in the real world, by using the contextual learning model.

Method

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to describe moderate Islam. The method used in this research is literature review by examining various sources of literature that are relevant to understanding the concept of moderate Islam with data collection techniques according to the following steps: search for literature or articles related to moderate Islam; analyzing the literature on moderate Islam that has been found; present the data that has been analyzed; and description of conclusions.

Result and Discussion

Understanding Islamic Moderation

Linguistically, Islamic moderation is known as al-Wasathiyah al-Islamiyyah. Al-Qardawi notes several other terms with similar meanings, such as I'tidal, Ta'adul, and Istiqamah. Meanwhile, in English, this term is translated as Islamic Moderation. According to Khaled

Abou El Fadl, moderation is a view that seeks a middle path, avoiding extremism from both the right and the left. Islamic Moderation prioritizes politeness, justice in decision-making, good interaction within society, as well as dialogue and peace, while rejecting violence and radical views in preaching.

The principles of Islamic moderation align with the core essence of Islam, which is the mission of Rahmatan Lil Alamin, meaning to bring mercy to the entire universe. A Muslim is considered moderate when they respect the opinions of others and honor differences as an important part of the principles of Islamic moderation. Islamic teachings instruct us that humans have various customs and traditions, and each individual is part of this wonderful world. While it may be impossible to make everyone the same, peace must still be achieved through mutual respect for differences. On the other hand, if we do not apply this attitude, conflict and confrontation will be hard to avoid (Purnomo & Umiarso, 2018).

In Islamic moderation, differences in society are seen as a natural thing that must be accepted. Islamic moderation teaches the importance of interpreting the verses of the Qur'an regarding divinity with a contextual approach, not just a textual or literal one. In establishing laws, Islamic moderation uses the *istinbath* method to ensure that the laws applied remain relevant to the times, without deviating from the principles of sharia contained in the Qur'an and Hadith. This principle of moderate Islam is the main perspective in Islamic moderation to face various life issues.

Principles of Islamic Moderation

Islam is a good and true religion that teaches moderate, polite, peaceful, and harmonious attitudes in interacting with the surrounding environment. The characteristics of Islamic moderation can be seen through teachings that emphasize the principle of *wasathiyah* in various aspects of life. Islamic teachings actually contain principles of moderation that are very relevant and important to be understood by students through the process of Islamic Religious Education (Faridah, 2013). Below are the principles of Islamic moderation that underpin these teachings:

Justice ('Adalah)

Justice in Islam means siding with the truth by giving rights to those who deserve it, whether they are right or wrong. This principle of justice emphasizes that every decision should be made reasonably and not arbitrarily. In Islam, justice applies in all aspects of life, regardless of religious or faith differences. Islamic moderation emphasizes the concept of being fair to everyone and safeguarding their rights. The attitude of justice in Islam includes several aspects, as follows:

Balance, meaning neither too little nor too much. Justice means giving each person their rights according to their proportions, without adding or subtracting from what is due. Objectivity and not making biased decisions. Justice requires that decisions be made impartially, ensuring that all parties are treated equally.

Siding with the truth and not doing as one pleases. Justice means always siding with the truth and making decisions without arbitrary actions. With these principles, Islamic moderation presents a balanced and fair perspective in facing various life issues (Nurdin, 2017).

Tolerance (Tasamuh)

In Arabic, the term for tolerance is *سماحة* (Samahah) or *تسامح* (Tasamuh). Literally, Samahah means nobility, an open heart, and a kind attitude of forgiveness. Meanwhile, Tasamuh refers to an open-hearted attitude or accepting reality when facing a difference. This reflects a noble personality and an attitude that respects differences between individuals or groups.

Tolerance, in terms of its definition, is one of the main principles taught to build a life together that creates a sense of safety and mutual respect. Tolerance teaches that differences are a very natural thing and should be addressed openly with a sense of mutual respect (Ghazali, 2016). Islamic moderation gives us an understanding of the meaning of tolerance or tasamuh in facing various life problems. Being tolerant is one of the main prerequisites for each individual to live together safely and respectfully.

Balance

Balance in Arabic is known as (At-Tawazun), which is one of the important principles in Islamic teachings. At-Tawazun means establishing harmony in various aspects of human life, including honor, which encompasses the body (physical), mind, and soul. The principle of Islamic moderation teaches the importance of balance in all aspects of life, both in terms of belief and practice, as well as in both spiritual and material aspects (Setiyadi, 2012).

By applying the Tawazun principle, Islamic moderation provides guidelines for achieving a harmonious and just life, both individually and socially. This balance is key to understanding and practicing Islamic teachings comprehensively and effectively.

Diversity

The diversity in Arabic is known as diversity (Tanawwu') is an unavoidable aspect of human life because it is part of God's law (sunnatullah). In every society, we will find diversity in various aspects, such as ethnicity, religion, language, and beliefs. These differences are part of God's creation that cannot be

avoided, and denying these differences is the same as denying God's nature (Agung, 2017). By understanding and applying the principle of Tanawwu', Islamic moderation encourages the community to view diversity as an opportunity for mutual learning and collaboration, rather than as a source of conflict. This is an important step to create a peaceful and harmonious society amidst the existing diversity.

The principles of Islamic moderation, including justice, tolerance, balance, and diversity, must be instilled in students through various effective and relevant approaches. One of the recommended methods for teaching these principles is through the contextual learning model. It is the duty of Islamic education teachers to convey and strive to instill the principles of Islamic moderation in students so that they can internalize the values of wasathiyah (moderation) in their daily lives. The effective teaching of Islamic moderation principles through the contextual learning model is also useful in combating radicalization and extreme liberalization.

PAI Learning

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is one of the strategic subjects in schools that plays an important role in shaping the character of students, especially in understanding and applying Islamic moderation. As an integral part of the education system, Islamic Religious Education must be carefully designed and implemented effectively. The quality of good PAI learning not only affects the individual development of students but also impacts the overall quality of education and, ultimately, influences the civilization of a nation (Hidayat & Syahidin, 2019).

The purpose of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is not limited to teaching *aqidah* (faith) and *ibadah* (worship) but also encompasses broader aspects of life. PAI learning aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings, ensuring that students not only have narrow, rigid, or incorrect knowledge but are also able to apply Islamic principles in their daily lives.

The rise of extremism and radicalism in society, often involving youth, indicates an urgent need to thoroughly evaluate the teaching methods and approaches used in PAI. It is the responsibility of educators and education observers to ensure that PAI learning provides correct knowledge, understanding, and internalization of Islamic values. Therefore, students must be guided to become complete individuals (*insan kamil*) and righteous individuals through development, guidance, and practice. This is done to ensure that students have a true understanding of Islam, which will ultimately lead them to submit and

obey Islamic teachings. The application of Islamic teachings is expected to manifest in the lives of individuals, families, and society.

A correct understanding of Islam brings positive impacts on students in three areas: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. This supports the formation of the next generation of the nation who are knowledgeable, virtuous, and committed to spreading a peaceful and compassionate Islam (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*). The effectiveness of PAI learning in instilling Islamic moderation values greatly depends on the competence and strategies of PAI teachers.

PAI teachers must have a deep understanding of Islamic moderation and be able to explain it in practical learning that contains useful and inspirational knowledge. In the teaching and learning process, PAI teachers are required to provide both implicit and explicit understanding of Islamic moderation, including the principles of justice, tolerance, balance, diversity, and exemplary behavior, with the hope that these values can be practiced in real life.

Awareness of respecting other religions, for example, is one attitude of students regarding interfaith harmony to create a peaceful society. Tolerance can be observed in daily activities in residential areas through mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*). *Gotong royong* reflects cooperation among individuals with various backgrounds, including religion, to achieve a common goal (Faridah, 2013).

By applying the right strategies and learning models, PAI teachers can help students understand the values of Islamic moderation more easily, motivate them to practice these values, and cultivate a sense of responsibility in them to spread Islamic moderation values in society.

Application of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) Model in Islamic Moderation

The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL)

The contextual learning model is an effective approach that Islamic Religious Education teachers can use during the teaching and learning process to instill moderate attitudes through the application of the Contextual Learning Model. The contextual model focuses on linking or connecting the teaching material with students' real-life experiences and their social environment, making the learning more relevant and impactful. In this model, the role of the PAI teacher is not just to transfer knowledge, but also to encourage students to analyze and connect the material being taught with what exists in their real life. This approach ensures that learning is not just theoretical, but also practical and applicable.

The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model is an educational approach that enables students to gain an understanding of Islamic moderation by

experiencing and internalizing the material being studied. CTL can help teachers connect the teaching material with the reality of students' lives and encourage students to make connections between their knowledge and its application in daily life. This model uses seven key components that support effective learning in Islamic moderation.

Constructivism

Application: The teacher invites students to analyze how the values of Islamic moderation are applied in real-life situations, such as discussing ways to maintain tolerance in differences within their environment.

Questioning

Application Example: The teacher asks open-ended questions like, "How can we apply justice in social conflicts?" which encourages students to actively discuss and seek answers.

Inquiry

Application: Students search for information about the application of Islamic moderation in society through case studies and observations.

Learning Community

Application: Students work in groups to identify social issues in their surroundings and formulate solutions based on the values of Islamic moderation.

Modeling

Application: The teacher practices attitudes of tolerance and justice in their interactions with students so that students can emulate these behaviors.

Reflection

Application: Students write journals or discuss their experiences in applying the values of Islamic moderation in their daily lives.

Authentic Assessment

Application Example: The teacher conducts project-based assessments where students demonstrate the application of Islamic moderation values in social activities.

The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model is considered successfully implemented in the teaching and learning process when the material is not only presented in the form of text or theory but also connected to its application in students' daily lives in their environment and the broader society.

Contextual learning is believed to be a more meaningful and effective approach in efforts to internalize the principles of Islamic moderation in students. Through this approach, students not only gain knowledge or cognitive skills but also develop attitudes (affective aspects) and skills or psychomotor abilities that can be applied in their real lives.

Conclusion

Islamic moderation is an important concept in Islam that carries principles of balance, justice, and tolerance. Effective PAI (Islamic Religious Education) learning requires teachers to instill the values of Islamic moderation in students so they can become individuals with noble character, tolerance, and contribute positively to a diverse society. The application of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model in education is one proven way to help students understand and practice the values of Islamic moderation in their daily lives. With contextual learning, students are able to connect the lesson material to their real-life contexts, making the learning more meaningful and relevant.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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