

## The Strategic Role of Religious Moderation in Mitigating Conflict and Religious Blasphemy in Indonesia

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### Abstract

Indonesia's diversity is a divine blessing that the nation should embrace. However, not all members of society grasp this concept, often remaining entrenched in extremist ideologies or claims of absolute truth. This extremist understanding can lead to religious blasphemy. This research demonstrates how religious moderation can prevent such blasphemy. The study employed a library research methodology, drawing data from the internet, books, and academic articles. The analysis utilized a descriptive approach. The findings indicate that religious moderation can indeed prevent religious blasphemy in Indonesia. This is because religious moderation signifies a balance between understanding and practicing one's own religious teachings and respecting the doctrines of other faiths.

**Keywords:** Religious Blasphemy; Religious Moderation; Tolerance; Inclusivity

### Abstrak

Keragaman di Indonesia merupakan sebuah anugerah dari tuhan yang wajib kita syukuri sebagai bangsa Indonesia. Namun tidak semua masyarakat paham akan konsep tersebut. Mereka masih terjebak dalam pemahaman ekstremisme atau klaim kebenaran. Pemahaman ekstrem ini dapat mengakibatkan terjadinya penistaan agama. Dalam penelitian ini akan menunjukkan upaya pencegahan penistaan agama dengan moderasi beragama. Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah library research atau kepustakaan. Adapun data penelitiannya bersumber dari internet, buku, dan artikel ilmiah. Teknik analisis yang digunakan adalah analisis deskriptif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan moderasi beragama dapat mencegah terjadinya penistaan agama di Indonesia, karena Moderasi beragama berarti seimbang antara pemahaman dan pengamalan ajaran agama yang dianut dengan juga penghormatan kepada ajaran agama yang lain.

**Kata Kunci:** Penistaan Agama; Moderasi Beragama; Toleransi; Inklusif

## INTRODUCTION

The diversity prevalent in Indonesia frequently precipitates conflict, particularly religious conflicts. Indonesia formally recognizes six distinct religions: Islam, Christianity, Confucianism, Buddhism, Catholicism, and Hinduism.<sup>1</sup> Almost all recognized religions in Indonesia have experienced desecration or blasphemy. Cases of religious blasphemy are a recurring phenomenon in the country, with incidents frequently reported on an annual basis. Judicial records corroborate this trend, with 60 documented Supreme Court decisions related to religious blasphemy cases spanning the period from 2011 to 2021.<sup>2</sup> Religious blasphemy cases in Indonesia demonstrated an increasing trend from 2011 to 2021, peaking in 2020 with 20 documented incidents. Subsequently, a significant decline was observed in 2021, with the number of cases falling to only 5.<sup>3</sup> Following the decline in 2021, four religious blasphemy cases were recorded in 2022. From January to October 2023, at least three additional blasphemy cases occurred in Indonesia, notably involving individuals identified as Lina Mukherjee, Panji Gumilang, and TikToker Deli.<sup>4</sup>

Given the aforementioned data on religious blasphemy cases in Indonesia, it's clear that effective solutions are needed to mitigate this issue. One viable approach is to foster a deeper understanding of religious moderation within society. Religious moderation promotes a balanced set of principles for religious practice. This involves maintaining a harmonious equilibrium between adhering to one's own religious teachings and demonstrating profound respect for the doctrines of other faiths.<sup>5</sup> The diversity prevalent in Indonesia is a divine blessing, a gift that the Indonesian nation is bound to cherish. However, not everyone fully grasps this concept. Many individuals remain ensnared by extremist ideologies or the claim of absolute truth. This extremist mindset often arises from an inability to accept differences. In contrast, those who embrace moderation perceive diversity as a divine endowment, worthy of profound gratitude.<sup>6</sup>

Extensive research has been conducted on religious moderation, exploring various aspects from its general concept to its specific societal roles. Some initial studies primarily focused on the theological and sociological foundations of religious moderation as a middle ground for fostering harmony. However, these early investigations often did not explicitly address its role in preventing religious blasphemy.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, some studies have analyzed the offense of religious blasphemy from a criminal law perspective. These investigations typically highlight the implications of such

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<sup>1</sup> CNN Indonesia, "Mengenall 6 Agama Di Indonesia, Kitab Suci, Hingga Hari Besarnya," *CNN Indonesia*, 2023, <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.cnnindonesia.com/edukasi/2023031163253-569-956372/mengenal-6-agama-di-indonesia-kitab-suci-hingga-hari-besarnya/amp>.

<sup>2</sup> Samala Mahadi, "Sungguh Mengejutkan, 64,7% Kasus Penistaan Agama Islam Ternyata Dilakukan Oleh Umat Muslim Sendiri. Ini Data Konkretnya!," *Berita99*, September 2021, <https://berita.99.co/kasus-penistaan-agama-islam/>.

<sup>3</sup> Mahadi.

<sup>4</sup> Agus Raharjo, "Lina Mukherjee, Selebgram Pembuat Konten Makan Babi Ditahan," *Republika*, 2023, <https://news.republika.co.id/berita/rxl4ak436/lina-mukherjee-selebgram-pembuat-konten-makan-babi-ditahan>; Yusron Fahmi, "6 Kasus Kasus Penistaan Agama Yang Menghebohkan Tanah Air Sebelum Panji Gumilang, Drama Ahok Paling Disorot," *Liputan6*, 2023, <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.liputan6.com/amp/5359786/6-kasus-kasus-penistaan-agama-yang-menghebohkan-tanah-air-sebelum-panji-gumilang-drama-ahok-paling-disorot>; Goklas Wisely, "Titoker Morteza Tersangka Penistaan Agama Kristen Ngaku Keceposan," *Detiknews*, 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, *Moderasi Beragama*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama RI, 2019).

<sup>6</sup> Darmayanti and Maudin, "Pentingnya Pemahaman Dan Implementasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Kehidupan Generasi Milenial," *Syattar* 2, no. 1 (2021): 40–51.

<sup>7</sup> Muria Khusnun Nisa et al., "Moderasi Beragama: Landasan Moderasi Dalam Tradisi Berbagai Agama Dan Implementasi Di Era Disrupsi Digital," *Jurnal Riset Agama* 1, no. 3 (2021): 731–48.

offenses for freedom of religion. However, their primary focus remains on the legal framework itself, rather than exploring the implementation of religious moderation as a preventive measure.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, other research has explored the role of religious education in fostering moderate character traits. There are also studies that examine interfaith communication strategies aimed at promoting social harmony.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, some studies have specifically focused on the contributions of religious figures and organizations in fostering and maintaining tolerance.<sup>10</sup> However, these studies tend to address religious moderation or religious blasphemy either in isolation or within a broader context.

Despite the existing literature, a significant gap remains: there is no specific and comprehensive research that addresses the implementation of religious moderation in preventing religious blasphemy in Indonesia. While religious moderation is acknowledged as crucial for harmony, and religious blasphemy is a serious conflict-triggering issue, this research gap highlights a lack of in-depth study into how the values and practices of religious moderation are concretely translated into effective prevention strategies. There hasn't been adequate exploration of specific mechanisms, programs, or interventions based on religious moderation that have demonstrably succeeded in reducing incidents of religious blasphemy within the Indonesian context.

Religious moderation is frequently misunderstood by the public. Many mistakenly believe that being moderate in faith implies a lack of conviction in practicing one's own religious teachings, indifference towards their own religion, or being overly liberal. These misunderstandings often lead to the emergence of individuals who are anti-moderation and tend to criticize those with moderate stances, perceiving them as neglecting religious norms.<sup>11</sup> The perception that religious moderation implies a lack of conviction in one's own faith, indifference toward it, or an overly liberal stance is inaccurate. Religious moderation doesn't mean sacrificing personal beliefs to accommodate others' convictions. Instead, it signifies a firm belief in the core tenets of one's own religion, while simultaneously being capable of sharing truth through various interpretations of religious doctrines.<sup>12</sup>

For instance, as Muslims, we certainly believe that Islam is the truest religion. However, this doesn't imply we should blaspheme other religions that differ from our own. Religious moderation isn't exclusive to Islam; other religions also advocate for it. This is because no religious teaching instructs its followers to commit injustice or act excessively.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, religious moderation actively promotes the establishment of a harmonious and balanced environment across all spheres of life. This includes personal well-being, family dynamics, community

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<sup>8</sup> Ahmad Yogi Fahrudin and Bintang Wicaksono Ajie, "Hukum Pidana Dan Konflik Agama: Menganalisis Kasus Penistaan Agama Dan Dampak Sosialnya," *HUMANIORUM* 1, no. 4 (2023): 116–23.

<sup>9</sup> Abdul Kadir, "Strategi Pendidikan Agama Islam Untuk Menghadapi Radikalisasi Kalangan Pemuda Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Alasma: Media Informasi Dan Komunikasi Ilmiah* 6, no. 2 (2024): 104–18.

<sup>10</sup> Rika Khusnul Hasanah et al., "Dialektika Tokoh Agama Dalam Menjaga Kerukunan," *Bricolage: Jurnal Magister Ilmu Komunikasi* 9, no. 1 (2023): 117–36; Titin Nuryani and Ahmad Taufiq, "Peran Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama Dalam Memelihara Toleransi Beragama Kota Salatiga Tahun 2018," *Journal of Politic and Government Studies* 8, no. 03 (2019): 381–90; Ondrasi Gea, Hanna Dewi Aritonang, and Senida Harefa, "Peran Pemimpin Agama Berbasis Wawasan Pluralisme Dalam Merawat Toleransi Beragama Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Teologi Cultivation* 6, no. 2 (2022): 47–63.

<sup>11</sup> Saifuddin, *Moderasi Beragama*.

<sup>12</sup> Saifuddin.

<sup>13</sup> Hanafi Pelu and Nurwafia Nur, "Penerapan Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Di Madrasah," *Educandum* 8, no. 2 (2022): 242–54.

interactions, and extends to broader inter-human relationships.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the understanding of religious moderation must be widely disseminated throughout society. This paper, for instance, will discuss the implementation of religious moderation in preventing religious blasphemy in Indonesia.

## Method

The specific research methodology employed in this study is library research, also known as a literature review. This approach was chosen because the research primarily focuses on analyzing and synthesizing existing information, rather than collecting primary data directly from the field.<sup>15</sup> The primary data for this study will be sourced from a variety of relevant literature. This includes information from the internet, a collection of books addressing religious moderation and issues of religious blasphemy, and scholarly articles from prominent journals pertinent to the topic. The use of diverse sources ensures comprehensive and in-depth data coverage, which will allow the researcher to build a thorough understanding based on various existing perspectives and findings.

This research is categorized as qualitative research, which means its primary focus is on depicting and interpreting phenomena rather than on statistical measurement or quantitative hypothesis testing. The objective is to describe in detail and depth how the implementation of religious moderation can function as a preventive effort against religious blasphemy in Indonesia. The analytical technique to be applied is descriptive analysis. This method will enable the researcher to comprehensively, systematically, and meticulously portray the research subject, outlining the patterns, characteristics, and relationships found within the literature data.<sup>16</sup> This approach allows researchers to present a rich and nuanced picture of effective religious moderation practices and the challenges encountered in preventing incidents of religious blasphemy within the Indonesian context.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Religious Blasphemy: Regulation, Reality, and Public Reaction

Religious blasphemy refers to acts that degrade or insult a religion or belief system, religious figures, or involve the destruction of religious symbols and places of worship.<sup>17</sup> According to Nawawi Arief, criminal acts related to religion can be categorized into three types: offenses according to religion, offenses against religion, and offenses related to religious life.<sup>18</sup> Criminal acts according to religion encompass morally reprehensible actions as defined by a particular faith. In

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<sup>14</sup> Badrun Hasani, "Peran Keluarga Dalam Penguatan Moderasi Beragama Untuk Pemantapan Empat Pilar Kebangsaan," *Jurnal Pendidikan Sejarah Dan Riset Sosial Humaniora (KAGANGA)* 6, no. 1 (2023): 262.

<sup>15</sup> J Moleong Lexy, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*, Bandung: Rosda Karya, 2002.

<sup>16</sup> P Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif Dan R&D (D. Sutopo. S. Pd, MT, Ir, Bandung: Alfabeta, 2019.*

<sup>17</sup> Muhammad Hatta, Zulfan, and Husni, "Kejahatan Penistaan Agama Dan Konsekuensi Hukumnya," *Al' Adl: Jurnal Hukum* 13, no. 2 (2021).

<sup>18</sup> Muhammad Syarif, "PENISTAAN AGAMA DALAM HUKUM ISLAM ( Study Analisis Yuridis Di Indonesia )," *Nizam : Jurnal Islampedia* 2, no. 1 (2023): 1–10.

contrast, criminal acts against religion and those related to religious life refer to offenses specifically targeting a religion or its adherents.<sup>19</sup>

Every Indonesian citizen has the right to choose a religion according to their beliefs. This freedom of religion is enshrined in Articles 28E, 29I, and 29 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia.<sup>20</sup> However, freedom of religion is not absolute. It is subject to limitations defined by law to foster a harmonious environment and cultivate high levels of tolerance. This is explicitly stipulated in Article 29, paragraph (2).<sup>21</sup> This article clarifies that an individual's rights and freedom of religion can be restricted if they infringe upon the rights of others. Furthermore, Article 156(a) stipulates that anyone who intentionally commits hostile acts or acts of desecration against a religion, with the intent to deter adherence to any religion in Indonesia, shall be liable to a maximum prison sentence of five years.<sup>22</sup>

One of the most sensational religious blasphemy cases, which triggered widespread public outcry and large-scale demonstrations, involved Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok), who served as the Governor of DKI Jakarta at the time. The offense of religious blasphemy committed by Ahok stemmed from a statement in his speech deemed to contain elements that demeaned Surat Al-Maidah, verse 51. Despite the substantial public turnout for these demonstrations, their execution remained peaceful and orderly.<sup>23</sup>

The consequences of religious blasphemy cases are severe and far-reaching. They can divide religious communities, leading to disorder, animosity, and hate speech.<sup>24</sup> Cases of religious blasphemy can elicit significant public reactions. For instance, the case involving Djawi Hiswara led to a "war of opinion" in print media. Furthermore, such cases can provoke large-scale public gatherings and demonstrations, as seen in the incidents involving Ahok and Arswendo. In Arswendo's case, a crowd besieged the tabloid's editorial office, ransacked editorial files, and even burned an effigy of Arswendo, the alleged perpetrator of the religious blasphemy.<sup>25</sup>

### Religious Moderation: Meanings, Principles, and Universal Values

Linguistically, moderation derives from the Latin *moderatio*, signifying "averageness" or "balance." In English, the equivalent term, *moderation*, also conveys a sense of being "average." From Arabic, the term *wasathiyah* directly translates to "middle ground." Terminologically, religious moderation refers to consistently adopting a neutral, just, and non-extreme stance in one's

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<sup>19</sup> Muhammad Rustamaji and Gendis Nissa Aulia, "Telaah Konsepsi Penistaan Agama Terhadap Penegakan Hukum Kasus Meliana (Studi Putusan Pengadilan Negeri Medan Nomor:1612/Pid.B/2018/PN.Mdn)," *Jurnal Verstek* Vol. 8, no. 2 (2018): 30–38.

<sup>20</sup> Hatta, Zulfan, and Husni, "Kejahatan Penistaan Agama Dan Konsekuensi Hukumnya."

<sup>21</sup> Muwaffiq Jufri, "Pembatasan Terhadap Hak Dan Kebebasan Beragama Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Pancasila Dan Kewarganegaraan* 1, no. 1 (2016).

<sup>22</sup> Marsudi Utoyo, "Tindak Pidana Penistaan Agama Oleh Kelompok Aliran," *PRANATA HUKUM* 7, no. 1 (2012): 15–26.

<sup>23</sup> Hatta, Zulfan, and Husni, "Kejahatan Penistaan Agama Dan Konsekuensi Hukumnya"; Ajie Ramdan, "Aspek-Aspek Konstitusional Penodaan Agama Serta Pertanggungjawaban Pidananya Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Konstitusi* 15, no. 3 (2018).

<sup>24</sup> Alfi Nora, "Kemenag Aceh Akibat Penistaan Agama Timbulkan Kekacauan Permusuhan Perpecahan," *Dialeksis*, 2021, <https://dialeksis.com/aceh/kemenag-aceh-akibat-penistaan-agama-timbulkan-kekacauan-permusuhan-perpecahan/>.

<sup>25</sup> Yaya Mulya Mantri, "Kasus Penistaan Agama Pada Berbagai Era Dan Media Di Indonesia," *Definisi: Jurnal Agama Dan Sosial-Humaniora* 1, no. 3 (2022): 123–38.

attitudes, behaviors, and perspectives.<sup>26</sup> Conversely, terms like *taharruf*, radical, and extreme stand as antonyms to religious moderation. These terms signify acting excessively, holding the most rigid and elevated views, and demonstrating disproportionate reactions when encountering differences.<sup>27</sup>

There are specific criteria or indicators that determine whether an individual's attitude, perspective, and behavior in religious matters align with religious moderation or its opposite.<sup>28</sup> Religious moderation also encompasses principles that society needs to understand and uphold. There are nine principles of religious moderation, including *Tawazun* (balance), which involves harmonizing the understanding and practice of religious teachings across worldly and spiritual aspects, and discerning deviation from legitimate differences—an essential element for justice, according to Quraish Shihab.<sup>29</sup> *I'tidal* (justice/proportionality) emphasizes placing everything in its proper context and fulfilling rights and obligations. *Tawasuth* (moderation) calls for practicing religion without extremism or negligence. *Tasamuh* (tolerance) promotes respect for differing beliefs, both religious and otherwise.<sup>30</sup> *Syura* (consultation) encourages resolving matters through deliberative consensus. *Musawah* (equality) urges rejection of discriminatory attitudes based on belief, tradition, or race. *Tathawwur wa Ibtikar* (dynamism and innovation) reflects openness to positive, beneficial change. *Islah* (reform and preservation) supports improving society while retaining valuable traditions and embracing beneficial innovations. Lastly, *Aulawiyah* (prioritization) involves the discernment to apply and act upon more pressing and important matters.<sup>31</sup>

Religious moderation is not exclusively taught by Islam; other religions also advocate for it. This is because no religious teaching instructs its followers to commit injustice or behave excessively.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, religious moderation promotes the establishment of a harmonious and balanced environment across all spheres of life. This includes personal well-being, family dynamics, community interactions, and extends to broader inter-human relationships.<sup>33</sup>

### Implementing Religious Moderation to Prevent Religious Blasphemy

Religious moderation emerges as a solution to bridge the divide between extremist and liberal factions. A crucial understanding within religious moderation is the balanced approach between practicing one's own religious teachings and respecting the beliefs of others. This enables religious communities to treat others with dignity, accept differences, and coexist peacefully. Religious moderation isn't taught by just one religion; it's a principle advocated by all faiths. This is because no religion genuinely promotes excess, malevolence, injustice, or other destructive

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<sup>26</sup> Saifuddin, *Moderasi Beragama*.

<sup>27</sup> Jamaluddin, "Implementasi Moderasi Beragama Di Tengah Multikulturalitas Indonesia (Analisis Kebijakan Implementatif Pada Kementerian Agama)," *AS-SALAM Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 7, no. 1 (2022): 1–13.

<sup>28</sup> Zahdi and Iqrima, "Implementasi Moderasi Beragama Pada Pembelajaran Al-Qur'an Di Mushola Nur Ahmad," *Moderatio : Jurnal Moderasi Beragama* 01, no. 1 (2021): 142–59.

<sup>29</sup> Mohamad Fahri and Ahmad Zainuri, "Moderasi Beragama Di Indonesia," *Intizar* 25, no. 2 (2019): 95–100.

<sup>30</sup> Azmi Uwafiq Muhammad et al., "Moderasi Beragama Sebagai Gerakan Islam Wasathiyah Dalam Menangkal Radikalisme," *Risalah: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Islam* 9, no. 2 (2023): 916–27.

<sup>31</sup> Fahri and Zainuri, "Moderasi Beragama Di Indonesia."

<sup>32</sup> Pelu and Nur, "Penerapan Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Di Madrasah."

<sup>33</sup> Hasani, "Peran Keluarga Dalam Penguatan Moderasi Beragama Untuk Pemantapan Empat Pilar Kebangsaan."

behaviors.<sup>34</sup> In Indonesia, religious moderation is commonly articulated through three key pillars: moderation in thought, movement, and action.

Moderation of thought serves as the first pillar articulating religious moderation in Indonesia. This refers to the ability to integrate religious texts with their contexts. Thus, it doesn't solely rely on the text while neglecting the context, but rather facilitates a dialogue between the two. This enables an individual to think moderately, meaning they occupy a middle ground, neither disregarding the text nor being overly liberal.<sup>35</sup> The second pillar is moderation in movement. This refers to shaping actions as a form of moderation, such as movements aimed at disseminating religious teachings that seek to invite people toward goodness and away from wrongdoing, all executed through proper means. Therefore, the movement itself, its objective, and its methodology are all carried out appropriately.

The final pillar is moderation in action. This can be understood as moderation in religious traditions and practices, such as strengthening the relationship between religion and local culture. Religion and culture are inseparable; they are mutually open and strive to foster new cultures by facilitating a dialogue between religious teachings and local customs.<sup>36</sup> Religious moderation is key to fostering a harmonious, peaceful, and highly tolerant environment at local, national, and global levels. In the Indonesian context, known for its diverse cultures, races, and religions, religious moderation is no longer an option but a necessity. When society adopts a moderate stance, religious blasphemy in Indonesia can be prevented.

Religious blasphemy is defined as actions that demean or insult a religion or belief, religious figures, or involve the destruction of religious symbols and places of worship. Such acts often stem from a sense of self-righteousness and an unwillingness to accept differences. Before implementing efforts to prevent religious blasphemy, it is crucial to first identify its causes. Based on several cases of religious blasphemy in Indonesia, the author concludes that the underlying causes are self-righteousness, an unwillingness to respect differences, and a refusal to accept truths originating outside one's own group.

A core principle within religious moderation is balance. This balance specifically refers to an equilibrium between one's understanding and practice of their own religious teachings and the respect shown towards the doctrines of other faiths. This means that while we may firmly believe our own religion is the truest among all, we must not condemn or invalidate others who, based on their own faith, assert the same about their religion. The moderate stance in this context is simply to respect their statement without assigning blame or engaging in debate.

In Islamic teachings, religious moderation has existed since the time of Prophet Muhammad SAW, directly practiced by him as stipulated in the Medina Charter. The Medina Charter contains an agreement made by the Prophet with both Muslims and Jews. This agreement comprises 47 articles that regulate the unity of the Medina community, encompassing mutual advice, assistance, defense, and respect for religious freedom.<sup>37</sup> Several studies also indicate

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<sup>34</sup> Pelu and Nur, "Penerapan Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Di Madrasah."

<sup>35</sup> Saifuddin, *Moderasi Beragama*.

<sup>36</sup> Isna Shofiyani Fathoni, "Analisis Upaya Uin Raden Mas Said Dalam Implementasi Nilai-Nilai Moderasi Beragama Di Era Modern," *International Conference on Cultures & Languages (ICCL)* 1, no. 1 (2019): 320–37.

<sup>37</sup> Abu Bakar and Hurmain, "Telaah Atas Piagam Madinah Dan Relevansinya Bagi Indonesia," *TOLERANSI: Media Komunikasi Umat Beragama* 8, no. 2 (2016).

positive impacts from the implementation of religious moderation. First, its implementation demonstrates a positive correlation leading to humanistic attitudes and the ability to minimize conflicts among students of different religious beliefs and ethnicities at Merdeka University Malang.<sup>38</sup>

Second, the application of religious moderation to prevent radicalism and intolerance in Kampung Kristen Bojonegoro has been successful, with the pillars of religious moderation fully integrated into community activities.<sup>39</sup> Third, the implementation of religious moderation is also effective in realizing democratic local elections (Pilkada). Identity politics can also be eradicated by religious moderation through emphasizing the balance between inclusivity and exclusivity. Furthermore, political parties also serve as a driving force for religious moderation.<sup>40</sup> Fourth, instilling the values of moderation in society can effectively address the emergence of extremist or radical ideologies.<sup>41</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Religious moderation is crucial for fostering a harmonious, peaceful, and highly tolerant environment at local, national, and global levels. In Indonesia's diverse cultural, racial, and religious landscape, religious moderation is no longer optional; it's a necessity. The nine principles of religious moderation, when practiced by society, can significantly minimize and prevent religious blasphemy. This is because blasphemy often stems from an exclusive mindset or an inability to accept differences. Religious moderation, conversely, emphasizes a balance between understanding and practicing one's own faith while also respecting the teachings of other religions. By implementing these values, religious blasphemy in Indonesia can be effectively prevented.

This research significantly contributes to our understanding of religious moderation, particularly in the context of preventing religious blasphemy in Indonesia. By highlighting the nine principles of religious moderation and their connection to the exclusive attitudes that often trigger blasphemy, this study asserts that religious moderation is not merely an option but an absolute necessity for a multicultural nation like Indonesia. Its primary contribution lies in affirming that the balance between understanding one's own religious teachings and respecting other religions is the fundamental foundation for building a harmonious, peaceful, and tolerant environment. This provides a more robust theoretical and practical basis for various preventive efforts against religious blasphemy.

While this study has identified the crucial role of religious moderation in preventing religious blasphemy, there's still ample room for further exploration. It's recommended that future researchers conduct more in-depth empirical studies on the concrete implementation of the nine principles of religious moderation across various societal strata, including educational institutions,

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<sup>38</sup> Novia Elok Rahma Hayati, "Konsep Dan Implementasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Meningkatkan Sikap Sosioreligius Dan Toleransi Beragama Di Universitas Malang" (Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2022).

<sup>39</sup> Ibnu Habibi, "IMPLEMENTASI MODERASI BERAGAMA DALAM MENCEGAH FAHAM RADIKALISME DAN INTOLERAN DI KAMPUNG KRISTEN BOJONEGORO," *Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars (AnCoMS)* 6, no. 1 (2022): 1139–51, <https://doi.org/10.36835/ancoms.v6i1.342>.

<sup>40</sup> Muhammad Ardhi Razaq Abqa, "Partai Politik Dan Moderasi Beragama Sebagai Pilar Demokrasi Di Indonesia," *RESIPROKAL* 2, no. 1 (2020): 1–12.

<sup>41</sup> Edelweisia Cristiana, "Implementasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Mencegah Radikalisme," *Prosiding Webinar Nasional LAHN-TP Palangka Araya* 3, no. 7 (2021): 19–28; Puji Rahayu, "Urgensi Moderasi Beragama Solusi Mengatasi Masalah Radikalisme Di Era Milineal" (IAIN Pontianak, 2023).



indigenous communities, or through government programs. Future studies could also utilize participatory qualitative approaches to directly understand community perceptions and experiences regarding religious moderation and its impact on preventing religious blasphemy. Furthermore, comparative research between regions with differing levels of harmony could provide valuable insights into the factors that either promote or hinder the successful implementation of religious moderation.

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