

From interfaith harmony to religious moderation education: A conceptual model from the Jetayu area, Pekalongan, Indonesia

Lidya Arafah^{1*}, Dini Valencia Kholifatun Khasanah², Navilatul Maimunah³, Abidatul Dhulkamala⁴, Mutiara Aqila⁵, Zalfa Zaherotul Jannah⁶, Elok Nailuna⁷, Farah Amelia Efendi⁸, Ika Ismatul Hawa⁹, Arditya Prayogi¹⁰

^{1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10} Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid, Pekalongan, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: arditya.prayogi@uingusdur.ac.id

Submission: 11 June 2026

Revision: 28 June 2026

Accepted: 10 July 2026

Abstract

Interfaith harmony has been widely examined as a form of social cohesion; however, its role as a foundation for religious moderation education within multicultural public spaces remains underexplored. This study aims to analyze interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu Area, Pekalongan City, as a basis for religious moderation education through the perspective of the four pillars of religious moderation. A qualitative case study approach was employed using observation, in-depth interviews with seven informants, document analysis, and the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings reveal that interfaith communication, shared public space management, community participation, and local cultural values foster interfaith harmony that internalizes national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation toward local culture. This study contributes by proposing the conceptual model *Religious Moderation Education through Interfaith Harmony in Public Multicultural Space* as a new perspective for developing community-based religious moderation education.

Keywords: Interfaith harmony; Religious moderation education; Religious moderation; Multicultural public space; Four pillars of religious moderation

Abstrak

Harmoni lintas iman telah banyak dikaji sebagai bentuk kerukunan sosial, namun perannya sebagai basis pendidikan moderasi beragama di ruang publik multikultural masih belum banyak dijelaskan. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis praktik harmoni lintas iman di Kawasan Jetayu, Kota Pekalongan, sebagai basis pendidikan moderasi beragama melalui perspektif empat pilar moderasi beragama. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam terhadap tujuh informan, studi dokumentasi, serta dianalisis menggunakan model analisis interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi lintas iman, pengelolaan ruang publik bersama, partisipasi masyarakat, dan nilai budaya lokal membentuk harmoni lintas iman yang menginternalisasi komitmen kebangsaan, toleransi, anti-kekerasan, serta sikap akomodatif terhadap budaya lokal. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dengan menawarkan model konseptual *Religious Moderation Education through Interfaith Harmony in Public Multicultural Space* sebagai perspektif baru dalam pengembangan pendidikan moderasi beragama berbasis masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: Harmoni lintas iman; Pendidikan moderasi beragama; Moderasi beragama; Ruang publik multikultural; Empat pilar moderasi beragama

Introduction

Religious diversity is one of the defining characteristics of Indonesian society, shaping various patterns of social interaction in everyday life (Laksana & Wood, 2019). Within this pluralistic context, interfaith harmony serves as a fundamental pillar for maintaining social cohesion while ensuring that every religious community can practice its beliefs peacefully (Kruja, 2022). Interfaith harmony is reflected not only in mutual respect but also in communication, collaboration, and the shared use of public spaces without diminishing each community's religious identity. One area that exemplifies these practices is the Jetayu Area in Pekalongan City, where a mosque, a church, and a Chinese temple coexist within a single multicultural public space (Astuti & Ulya, 2020). This setting demonstrates that interfaith harmony is not merely a normative concept but a social practice that evolves through everyday interactions and therefore merits examination as a social phenomenon with significant educational value.

Although interfaith harmony has long been part of Indonesian society, persistent challenges such as intolerance, social polarization, and increasing sensitivity toward religious differences indicate that social harmony cannot be regarded as a condition that develops automatically (Takdir, 2025). Rather, it requires continuous cultivation through communication, community participation, and the reinforcement of values that foster respect for diversity (Jailani et al., 2023). In this context, religious moderation has emerged as a strategic approach by emphasizing national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation toward local culture as the foundations for building an inclusive society (Saifuddin, 2019). Nevertheless, these values have predominantly been understood within the framework of public policy and formal education. Consequently, naturally emerging social practices within communities have received limited attention as potential sources of religious moderation education.

The Jetayu Area offers a distinctive context because interfaith harmony has evolved through the lived experiences of local communities within a multicultural public space (Suprpto & Arthasari, 2020). Interactions among religious leaders, local residents, business actors, and visitors have created patterns of social relationships that illustrate how diversity can be managed constructively without compromising the identity of each religious group. This context makes Jetayu a particularly relevant setting for understanding how interfaith harmony contributes to the internalization of religious moderation values. Nevertheless, previous studies have largely examined interfaith harmony as a social phenomenon or positioned religious moderation as an educational policy implemented through formal institutions. As a result, the relationship between interfaith harmony practices, the internalization of the four pillars of religious moderation, and religious moderation education within multicultural public spaces

remains insufficiently explored. This gap constitutes the primary rationale for the present study.

Research on interfaith harmony and religious moderation has been conducted across various multicultural contexts. Research by Alhamuddin and Alifuddin (2024) demonstrates that interfaith communication plays a crucial role in building trust and strengthening social relationships among different religious groups. Research by Hermawan and Handoyo (2025) finds that local culture functions as a form of social capital that sustains harmony through the values of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), deliberation, and environmental responsibility. Furthermore, research by K. et al. (2023) indicates that religious moderation education has primarily been developed through curricula, classroom instruction, and character-building programs in educational institutions. However, most of these studies continue to position interfaith harmony as an outcome of religious moderation rather than as a mechanism through which religious moderation education itself takes place. Consequently, the interrelationship between interfaith harmony practices, the internalization of the four pillars of religious moderation, and religious moderation education in multicultural public spaces has yet to be comprehensively examined.

Against this background, this study aims to analyze interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu Area as a foundation for religious moderation education through the perspective of the four pillars of religious moderation. This study is significant because it offers a different perspective by positioning multicultural public space not merely as a site of social interaction but also as a learning environment in which communities internalize the values of national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation toward local culture through everyday social experiences. Accordingly, this study seeks to make a conceptual contribution by proposing the *Religious Moderation Education through Interfaith Harmony in a Public Multicultural Space* model while also providing practical insights for governments, educational institutions, and community organizations in developing more contextual, participatory, and sustainable approaches to religious moderation education.

Method

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of interfaith harmony practices as a foundation for religious moderation education in the Jetayu Area, Pekalongan City (Hamel et al., 1993). This approach was selected because it enabled the researchers to explore the dynamics of social interaction and the lived experiences of a multicultural community holistically within its natural context. The study utilized both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with seven informants selected using purposive sampling. These informants consisted of three administrators representing a mosque, a church, and a Chinese temple, two local

residents, and two vendors who had long been engaged in economic activities in the Jetayu Area. Informants were selected based on their involvement in interfaith interactions and their knowledge of the area's social life (Lexy, 2002). The inclusion of seven informants was considered sufficient because data saturation had been achieved, as evidenced by the absence of substantively new information during the final interviews. Secondary data were obtained from official documents, institutional reports, scholarly articles, books, and other relevant literature on religious moderation, interfaith harmony, and community-based education.

Data were collected through non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis to obtain comprehensive information on interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu Area. The trustworthiness of the data was ensured through both source triangulation and methodological triangulation by comparing findings derived from interviews, field observations, and documentary evidence. Subsequently, the data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2019), which consists of *data condensation*, *data display*, and *conclusion drawing and verification*. The analysis was conducted concurrently throughout the data collection and interpretation processes to identify patterns of relationships between interfaith harmony practices, the internalization of the four pillars of religious moderation, and their implications for the development of religious moderation education grounded in multicultural public spaces.

Results and Discussion

Interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu area

The Jetayu Area in Pekalongan City is a multicultural public space that exemplifies the peaceful coexistence of diverse religious communities in everyday life. The presence of Al-Ikhlâs Mosque, St. Peter's Church, and Po An Thian Chinese Temple within the same area creates a shared space where people from different religious backgrounds interact regularly. Field observations revealed that community members make collective use of public facilities without restrictions based on religious identity. This finding is reinforced by the statement of an administrator of Al-Ikhlâs Mosque, who explained, "For a long time, people in the Jetayu area have been accustomed to living side by side, so religious differences have never become a barrier to everyday interaction" (IF1). Similarly, an administrator of St. Peter's Church noted that "relationships among religious communities in this area are built upon mutual respect, allowing every religious activity to take place without disrupting others" (IF2). These findings indicate that religious diversity in Jetayu has evolved into a socially accepted reality that constitutes an integral part of community life.

Interfaith harmony is also reflected in the regular communication maintained among the administrators of different houses of worship. According to the interview findings, every major religious event expected to attract large congregations is preceded by the

dissemination of information to the administrators of other houses of worship. An administrator of Al-Ikhlās Mosque explained, “Whenever we organize major events such as the *Īd al-Fiṭr* prayer or a large religious gathering, we always inform the church and the Chinese temple so that they are aware of the situation and can adjust their activities if necessary” (IF1). This statement was corroborated by an administrator of St. Peter’s Church, who emphasized that “this communication is not motivated by previous conflicts but rather reflects mutual respect and a shared commitment to maintaining public comfort” (IF2). Likewise, an administrator of Po An Thian Chinese Temple added that “coordination has become a longstanding practice that continues to be maintained, ensuring that relationships among religious leaders remain harmonious” (IF3). These findings suggest that communication functions as a preventive mechanism for preserving social harmony while strengthening trust among religious communities.

Beyond communication, the collective management of public space represents another important practice that reinforces interfaith harmony in the Jetayu Area. Field observations showed that parking areas, road access, and open spaces surrounding the houses of worship are shared alternately according to the needs of each religious event. A vendor who has conducted business in the area for many years explained, “When the church holds a major Mass or the mosque organizes the *Īd* prayer, we already understand the situation and adjust our vending locations to ensure that worshippers can move freely” (IF6). Another vendor similarly stated, “Throughout my years of trading here, I have never witnessed disputes over parking areas because people prefer to accommodate one another rather than escalate minor issues” (IF7). Meanwhile, local residents reported that community members voluntarily assist in managing traffic and vehicles whenever one of the houses of worship hosts a major event. These findings indicate that public space management in Jetayu is shaped primarily by social awareness and mutual understanding rather than by formal regulations.

Social interactions within the community further demonstrate that religious identity does not constitute a barrier to either social or economic relationships. One local resident remarked, “Whenever there is a community service activity or a neighborhood event, everyone participates regardless of their religion” (IF4). This observation was reinforced by another resident, who explained, “We know one another first as neighbors rather than by religious background, so whenever someone needs help, everyone is willing to lend a hand” (IF5). Similar patterns are evident in everyday economic activities, where vendors serve all customers without religious discrimination, while residents interact naturally through various social activities. These findings indicate that interfaith relations in Jetayu have evolved beyond mere tolerance into inclusive and sustainable forms of social cooperation.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that interfaith harmony in the Jetayu Area is not established through a single activity but through a series of mutually reinforcing social practices. Communication among religious leaders serves as the foundation for anticipating potential misunderstandings, while the collective management of public space, social cooperation, and everyday economic interactions strengthen relationships among community members. Accordingly, the interfaith harmony practices identified in this study can be classified into several major forms, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Forms of interfaith harmony practices in the jetayu areJ

No.	Practice	Empirical Description
1	Interfaith communication	Religious leaders routinely coordinate before major religious events to anticipate technical issues and maintain mutual convenience.
2	Shared management of public space	Parking areas, road access, and public facilities are managed collectively through mutual understanding and mutual respect.
3	Social cooperation	Residents jointly participate in neighborhood activities, environmental maintenance, and community events regardless of religious affiliation.
4	Deliberative conflict prevention	Potential misunderstandings are addressed through dialogue and consensus before escalating into disputes.
5	Inclusive daily interaction	Social and economic activities take place naturally without discrimination based on religious identity.

Source: Primary data from field observations and interviews conducted by the researchers (2026).

Table 1 illustrates that the interfaith harmony practices observed in the Jetayu Area are highly integrated and mutually reinforcing rather than isolated from one another. Communication among religious leaders provides the foundation for the collective management of public space, while social cooperation and everyday interactions strengthen long-term trust among different religious communities. In other words, harmony in Jetayu is sustained not only through cordial relationships among religious leaders but also through recurring social practices embedded in the daily lives of local residents. These findings are consistent with Contact Theory proposed by Pettigrew and Tropp (2006), which argues that intensive, equal-status, and sustained interaction reduces prejudice and strengthens intergroup relations. Therefore, interfaith harmony in the Jetayu Area can be understood as a social process shaped through communication, collaboration, and shared lived experiences, ultimately serving as a fundamental foundation for fostering an inclusive society amid religious diversity.

The four pillars of religious moderation in interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu area

Religious moderation in the context of multicultural societies is no longer understood merely as a normative concept emphasizing the importance of peaceful coexistence.

Instead, it has evolved into an analytical framework for understanding how religious diversity is managed in everyday social life. The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia identifies national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation toward local culture as the four interrelated pillars of religious moderation that underpin the development of an inclusive society. Nevertheless, the implementation of these four pillars remains a subject of scholarly debate. While some studies argue that religious moderation is most effectively fostered through formal educational institutions, others emphasize the importance of lived social experiences as a medium for internalizing the values of religious moderation. These differing perspectives suggest that the implementation of the four pillars is strongly influenced by the social context in which these values develop. Accordingly, interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu Area provide a valuable context for examining how the four pillars of religious moderation are realized through the lived experiences of communities in a multicultural public space.

The most prominent pillar reflected in interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu Area is tolerance. From the perspective of religious moderation, tolerance is understood not merely as accepting the existence of other religions but also as the willingness to provide equal opportunities for every religious community to practice its beliefs free from discrimination. Tolerance is particularly significant in multicultural societies, where tensions may arise if individual groups prioritize exclusive identities over shared interests. Consistent with the findings of Eko and Putranto (2019), tolerance develops when interfaith relationships are built upon open communication, respect for the right to worship, and recognition of diversity as an integral part of social life. Likewise, research by Simon (2023) demonstrates that tolerance fostered through sustained social interaction is more effective in building trust than tolerance that remains confined to normative discourse. However, unlike the study by Janmaat (2022), which positions tolerance as an outcome of educational curricula, the practices observed in the Jetayu Area indicate that tolerance develops organically through the community's habitual respect for religious activities, communication prior to religious events, and the shared use of public spaces. These findings suggest that tolerance is not acquired solely through formal education but is also cultivated through social experiences that are continuously reproduced in everyday life.

Beyond tolerance, interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu Area also embody national commitment as another essential pillar of religious moderation. National commitment extends beyond loyalty to the state; it is reflected in the willingness of community members to prioritize the common good over the interests of particular religious groups. Within a pluralistic society, national commitment functions as a social adhesive by encouraging individuals to regard public space as a shared resource that must be collectively maintained. Consistent with the findings of Arifin et al. (2025), national commitment constitutes a fundamental basis for strengthening social

cohesion by reducing tendencies toward identity-based exclusivism. Similarly, research by Sulistyaningsih (2022) explains that maintaining public order, complying with shared regulations, and participating in community activities represent local manifestations of national commitment. However, unlike the study by Sen (2022), which primarily associates national commitment with citizenship education and symbols of nationalism, the practices observed in the Jetayu Area demonstrate that national commitment is expressed through simple yet recurring civic actions, such as maintaining order during religious events, collectively managing public facilities, and sharing responsibility for public comfort. These findings broaden the understanding of national commitment by demonstrating that it is not solely expressed through state symbols but also through everyday social practices that reflect citizens' responsibility for managing diversity constructively.

The next pillar that shapes interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu Area is anti-violence. Within the framework of religious moderation, anti-violence is understood not merely as the absence of physical conflict but also as the community's capacity to resolve differences through dialogue, deliberation, and constructive communication. This pillar is particularly important because multicultural societies are inherently susceptible to tensions arising from differences in identity, interests, and religious practices. Consistent with the findings of Doerr and Porsild Hansen (2024), dialogical approaches constitute the primary instrument for preventing horizontal conflict by fostering mutual trust among community groups. However, unlike the study by Grossman et al. (2022), which primarily situates anti-violence within the context of preventing radicalism and violent extremism, the practices observed in the Jetayu Area reveal that anti-violence is realized through more everyday social mechanisms, including coordination among administrators of different houses of worship, deliberative problem-solving, and the willingness of community members to prioritize collective interests over sectarian concerns. These findings indicate that a culture of dialogue functions as a more effective preventive mechanism than conflict resolution after disputes have already emerged.

The final pillar is accommodation toward local culture, defined as the community's ability to integrate local cultural values into religious life without compromising the identity of each religious group. In the Indonesian context, local culture frequently serves as a form of social capital that brings together communities of different religious backgrounds through shared traditions, customs, and civic activities. Consistent with the findings of Gede Agung et al. (2024), local culture plays a strategic role in strengthening social cohesion by creating spaces for interaction that transcend religious boundaries. However, unlike the study by Banda et al. (2024), which regards local culture primarily as an instrument for preserving tradition, the practices observed in the Jetayu Area demonstrate that local culture also functions as a medium for actualizing religious moderation through mutual assistance, collective

responsibility for maintaining neighborhood order, respect for religious activities, and the cultivation of enduring social relationships. These findings illustrate that local culture not only sustains social harmony but also reinforces the internalization of religious moderation values within community life.

These four pillars of religious moderation do not operate independently but instead reinforce one another within the interfaith harmony practices observed in the Jetayu Area. Tolerance enables communities to establish open communication, national commitment fosters collective responsibility for public space, while anti-violence and accommodation toward local culture strengthen the community's capacity to sustain harmonious social relationships over time. Accordingly, the interfaith harmony practices identified in this study can be mapped according to their relationship with the four pillars of religious moderation, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Synthesis of the four pillars of religious moderation in the interfaith harmony practices of Jetayu

Four Pillars of Religious Moderation	Empirical Manifestation	Position toward Previous Studies	Contribution of This Study
National Commitment	Collective responsibility in maintaining public order, public facilities, and shared spaces	Reinforces studies emphasizing civic responsibility in multicultural communities	Demonstrates that national commitment is expressed through everyday civic practices rather than symbolic nationalism.
Tolerance	Respect for religious activities, interfaith communication, and shared use of public facilities	Supports previous findings on interfaith tolerance while extending its application beyond educational settings	Shows that tolerance develops organically through repeated social interaction in public spaces.
Anti-Violence	Dialogue, coordination, and deliberation in preventing potential conflict	Confirms studies highlighting peaceful conflict resolution	Explains anti-violence as a preventive social mechanism embedded in community interaction.
Accommodation toward Local Culture	Mutual cooperation, neighborhood solidarity, and preservation of local traditions	Supports studies emphasizing the role of local wisdom in social harmony	Demonstrates that local culture functions as a medium for internalizing religious moderation within everyday community life.

Source: Synthesized by the authors based on field findings and previous studies (2026).

Table 2 demonstrates that each pillar of religious moderation is manifested in distinct yet interconnected ways in fostering interfaith harmony within the Jetayu Area. Importantly, the primary contribution of this study does not lie in identifying these

four pillars themselves but rather in explaining how they operate simultaneously through everyday social practices. Previous studies have generally examined religious moderation within the contexts of government policy, educational curricula, or the strengthening of religious institutions. In contrast, the findings of this study demonstrate that multicultural public spaces can serve as arenas in which the four pillars of religious moderation are actualized through continuous communication, social interaction, and the collective management of shared spaces. Consequently, interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu Area not only confirm the relevance of the four pillars of religious moderation as an analytical framework but also extend the scholarly discourse by demonstrating that religious moderation can develop organically through communities' lived social experiences without necessarily being mediated by formal educational institutions.

Interfaith harmony as a basis for religious moderation education

Religious moderation education has traditionally been developed through formal educational approaches, including curricula, classroom instruction, and various character-building programs implemented by educational institutions. These approaches have contributed significantly to strengthening students' understanding of the importance of peaceful coexistence in pluralistic societies. Nevertheless, the growing complexity of multicultural societies indicates that the internalization of religious moderation values does not occur exclusively within formal educational settings but also emerges through the social experiences individuals encounter in everyday life. Consistent with the findings of Morris (2020), educational processes grounded in *experiential learning* generate more contextualized understanding than approaches that emphasize cognitive learning alone. Meanwhile, Huda (2024b) continues to position educational institutions as the primary agents responsible for internalizing religious moderation values. In contrast, the present study argues that interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu Area demonstrate how multicultural public spaces can be transformed into effective media for religious moderation education through the lived social experiences of local communities. The relationships among these components are conceptualized in the framework presented in Figure 1.

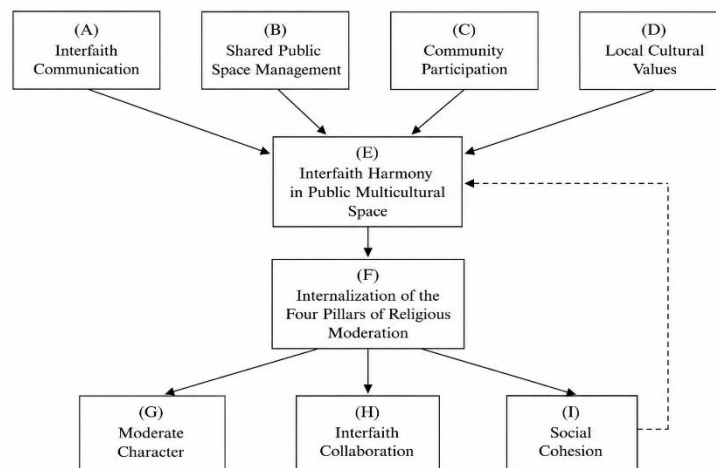


Figure 1. Proposed conceptual framework of religious moderation education through interfaith harmony in a public multicultural space

Source: Developed by the authors based on field findings and the synthesis of previous studies (2026).

Figure 1 illustrates that the process of religious moderation education does not originate from formal instructional activities but rather from the lived social experiences of communities, which are shaped by four empirical components: (A) *Interfaith Communication*, (B) *Shared Public Space Management*, (C) *Community Participation*, and (D) *Local Cultural Values*. These four components do not function independently; instead, they interact dynamically to generate (E) *Interfaith Harmony in Public Multicultural Space*, which constitutes the core of community social life. Interfaith communication creates opportunities for dialogue and fosters trust among religious groups, while the collective management of public spaces cultivates a shared sense of ownership over public facilities irrespective of religious identity. Simultaneously, community participation in various social activities intensifies interpersonal interaction, whereas local cultural values function as collective norms that sustain these social relationships over time.

In other words, (E) *Interfaith Harmony in Public Multicultural Space* is not the product of any single component but rather the outcome of continuous interactions among communication, public space, social participation, and local culture. Consistent with the findings of Banban (2018), social harmony in plural societies is not established through a single determinant but through the simultaneous interaction of multiple social dimensions. Likewise, research by Orazani et al. (2023) demonstrates that communication, community participation, and local culture constitute forms of social capital capable of strengthening intergroup cohesion. Accordingly, the conceptual model presented in Figure 1 highlights the integrative nature of these relationships, indicating that interfaith harmony can only be understood through the interconnectedness of all four empirical components rather than through any single factor in isolation.

The successful establishment of (E) *Interfaith Harmony in Public Multicultural Space* subsequently becomes the prerequisite for (F) *Internalization of the Four Pillars of Religious Moderation*, as illustrated in Figure 1. This relationship indicates that interfaith harmony is not positioned as the ultimate objective but rather as a mechanism through which social experiences are transformed into religious moderation education. Through repeated social interactions, community members gradually internalize the values of national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation toward local culture without relying on formal instructional processes. This process demonstrates that shared lived experiences cultivate understandings, attitudes, and behaviors aligned with the principles of religious moderation because individuals learn through direct engagement in social life rather than solely through theoretical instruction.

These findings confirm the argument advanced by Engler et al. (2020), who explain that *experiential learning* produces more profound attitudinal change because individuals directly experience the situations from which they learn. This argument is further reinforced by the findings of Martela et al. (2021), who demonstrate that value internalization is more effective when individuals actively participate in social practices rather than merely receiving theoretical instruction. However, unlike Rohmadi et al. (2024), who position educational institutions as the principal agents of religious moderation internalization, the present study demonstrates that multicultural public spaces can also perform a pedagogical function through shared lived experiences. Consequently, Figure 1 not only illustrates the relationship between (E) and (F) but also proposes the perspective that interfaith harmony functions as a pedagogical mechanism connecting community social practices with the internalization of the four pillars of religious moderation. Through this perspective, the present study extends the discourse on religious moderation education from an institution-centered approach toward one grounded in social experiences that emerge organically within multicultural communities.

The process of (F) *Internalization of the Four Pillars of Religious Moderation* subsequently produces three principal educational outcomes: (G) *Moderate Character*, (H) *Interfaith Collaboration*, and (I) *Social Cohesion*. These outcomes indicate that religious moderation education extends beyond increasing knowledge about diversity to generating observable changes in attitudes and behaviors within community life. The development of moderate character reflects an individual's ability to perceive diversity as a social reality deserving respect, whereas interfaith collaboration represents the willingness of community members to cooperate in various social activities regardless of religious differences. At the same time, social cohesion reflects the emergence of strong social bonds founded upon trust, shared responsibility, and concern for the broader community. Consistent with the findings of Kuswanto et al. (2023), the success of religious moderation education should be evaluated through changes in social

behavior rather than merely improvements in conceptual understanding. Similarly, Huda (2024a) argues that learning grounded in social experience is more effective in cultivating moderate character than approaches emphasizing cognitive development alone. Figure 1 illustrates that the development of moderate character, interfaith collaboration, and social cohesion occurs simultaneously as the natural consequence of the internalization process within multicultural public spaces.

The relationships among (G) *Moderate Character*, (H) *Interfaith Collaboration*, and (I) *Social Cohesion* further demonstrate that these three outcomes are mutually reinforcing rather than independent. Individuals possessing moderate character are generally more open to interfaith cooperation, while sustained collaboration strengthens social cohesion within the community. In turn, established social cohesion creates an increasingly supportive environment for the continued development of communication, community participation, and appreciation of local cultural values. Thus, the relationships among the variables in Figure 1 are not linear but instead form a *reinforcing cycle* through which interfaith harmony is continuously reproduced within community life. Consistent with the findings of Huda et al. (2021), the sustainability of social relationships in plural societies depends largely on the community's ability to maintain communication and cooperation over time. However, this study extends the work of Liu et al. (2025) by demonstrating that social cohesion is not merely an outcome of religious moderation but also serves as a factor that further reinforces interfaith harmony, as reflected in the reciprocal relationships illustrated in Figure 1. To clarify the educational implications of the proposed conceptual model, the relationship between the internalization process and the educational outcomes of religious moderation is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Educational implications of the proposed religious moderation education model

Figure Component	Educational Function	Expected Educational Outcome
(E) <i>Interfaith Harmony in Public Multicultural Space</i>	Provides an authentic social learning environment where individuals experience religious diversity through everyday interaction.	Development of mutual understanding, respect for diversity, and inclusive social attitudes.
(F) <i>Internalization of the Four Pillars of Religious Moderation</i>	Transforms social experiences into religious moderation values through continuous interaction, reflection, and participation.	Internalization of national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation toward local culture.
(G) <i>Moderate Character</i>	Encourages individuals to demonstrate balanced religious attitudes and responsible social behavior in everyday life.	Strengthened religious moderation attitudes and ethical citizenship.

(H) <i>Collaboration</i>	<i>Interfaith</i>	Promotes collaborative engagement among religious communities through shared social activities and collective problem-solving.	Sustainable interfaith cooperation, mutual trust, and community engagement.
(I) <i>Social Cohesion</i>		Reinforces solidarity, resilience, and harmonious coexistence within multicultural communities.	Inclusive community development and long-term peaceful coexistence.

Source: Developed by the authors based on field findings and the synthesis of previous studies (2026).

Table 3 demonstrates that each component of the proposed conceptual model performs a distinct yet complementary pedagogical function in shaping religious moderation education. Component (E) provides an authentic learning context through social experience, enabling individuals to engage directly with religious diversity, whereas component (F) functions as the mechanism through which these experiences are transformed into the values of religious moderation. This process subsequently produces (G) *Moderate Character*, (H) *Interfaith Collaboration*, and (I) *Social Cohesion* as interconnected educational outcomes. Accordingly, the proposed model not only explains the conceptual relationships among these components but also illustrates the transformative process through which everyday social practices evolve into meaningful outcomes of religious moderation education applicable within multicultural societies.

The principal contribution of this study lies in the development of a conceptual model that systematically explains the relationship between interfaith harmony practices and religious moderation education. Previous studies have predominantly positioned religious moderation as an outcome of curriculum implementation, government policy, or character education programs within formal educational institutions. In contrast, the present study demonstrates that community social practices also possess significant pedagogical capacity to internalize the four pillars of religious moderation through interfaith communication, the collective management of public spaces, community participation, and the reinforcement of local cultural values. Therefore, the model presented in Figure 1 and the synthesis provided in Table 3 not only broaden the understanding of how religious moderation is implemented but also introduce a new perspective by demonstrating that interfaith harmony within multicultural public spaces can serve as a foundation for religious moderation education. This perspective enriches the discourse on religious moderation education by positioning communities not merely as recipients of public policy but as active agents and *learning ecosystems* that continuously reproduce the values of religious moderation through everyday social life.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu Area not only represent the peaceful coexistence of diverse religious communities but also constitute

a social mechanism through which the four pillars of religious moderation – national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation toward local culture – are internalized. Such harmony is cultivated through interfaith communication, the collective management of public spaces, active community participation, and the continuous reinforcement of local cultural values in everyday life. In contrast to perspectives that position religious moderation education solely within formal educational institutions, the findings of this study indicate that multicultural public spaces can function as authentic learning environments where communities acquire direct social experiences that facilitate the internalization of religious moderation values. Accordingly, interfaith harmony practices in the Jetayu Area should be understood not only as manifestations of social cohesion but also as pedagogical mechanisms that transform lived social experiences into community-based religious moderation education.

This study makes a conceptual contribution by proposing the *Religious Moderation Education through Interfaith Harmony in Public Multicultural Space* model, which positions interfaith harmony as a foundation for religious moderation education grounded in community social experiences. The proposed model extends existing scholarship on religious moderation, which has largely focused on government policy and formal educational institutions, by advancing a multicultural public space-based perspective. From a practical standpoint, these findings provide valuable insights for local governments, educational institutions, and religious organizations in designing more contextualized and community-based religious moderation education programs. Nevertheless, this study is limited to a single multicultural setting and employs a qualitative approach; therefore, its findings cannot yet be generalized to different social contexts. Future research is therefore encouraged to validate the proposed conceptual model across diverse multicultural settings using comparative or *mixed methods* approaches, thereby enabling a more comprehensive assessment of the model's validity and applicability across broader sociocultural contexts.

References

- Alhamuddin, & Alifuddin, M. (2024). Dynamics of interfaith communication in segregated communities. *Harmoni*, 23(1), 18–34. <https://doi.org/10.32488/harmoni.v23i1.532>
- Arifin, F., Tedjabuwana, R., Wiyono, S., & Abdullah, M. K. (2025). Indonesia's identity politics and populism: Disruption to national cohesion. *Jurnal Civics: Media Kajian Kewarganegaraan*, 22(1). <https://doi.org/10.21831/jc.v22i1.1291>
- Astuti, S. P., & Ulya, I. (2020). The position and function of Masjid Jami' and city square in the dynamics of Pekalongan development. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 409(1), 012039. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/409/1/012039>

- Banban, D. (2018). Harmony in diversity: An empirical study of harmonious co-existence in the multi-ethnic culture of Qinghai. *International Journal of Anthropology and Ethnology*, 2(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41257-018-0010-6>
- Banda, L. O. L., Banda, C. V., Banda, J. T., & Singini, T. (2024). Preserving cultural heritage: A community-centric approach to safeguarding the Khulubvi Traditional Temple Malawi. *Heliyon*, 10(18), e37610. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e37610>
- Doerr, N., & Porsild Hansen, J. (2024). "Climate translators" building trust and local democratic cooperation on green transition: Denmark and Germany. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 65(4), 479–498. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00207152231219489>
- Eko, B. S., & Putranto, H. (2019). The role of intercultural competence and local wisdom in building intercultural and inter-religious tolerance. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 48(4), 341–369. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17475759.2019.1639535>
- Engler, J. N., Druen, P. B., Steck, L. W., Ligon, M., Jacob, S., & Arseneau, L. J. (2020). Enhancing advocacy for individuals in poverty: The role of a poverty simulation training. *Psychological Services*, 17(S1), 110–119. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ser0000348>
- Gede Agung, D. A., Nasih, A. M., Sumarmi, Idris, & Kurniawan, B. (2024). Local wisdom as a model of interfaith communication in creating religious harmony in Indonesia. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 9, 100827. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2024.100827>
- Grossman, M., Hadfield, K., Jefferies, P., Gerrand, V., & Ungar, M. (2022). Youth resilience to violent extremism: Development and validation of the BRAVE measure. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 34(3), 468–488. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2019.1705283>
- Hamel, J., Dufour, S., & Fortin, D. (1993). *Case study methods* (Vol. 32). SAGE Publications.
- Hermawan, M. S., & Handoyo, A. D. S. (2025). Harmonizing ESG in a local context; integrating social dimension and kekeluargaan values in the context of Indonesia culture. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 32(2), 2225–2236. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.3057>
- Huda, M. (2024a). Incorporating the value of religious moderation in Islamic education learning. *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, 8(1), 221. <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v8i1.476>

- Huda, M. (2024b). Strengthening religious moderation through the core values of Islamic boarding school education. *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, 8(1), 59. <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v8i1.458>
- Huda, M., Mustafa, M. C., & Mohamed, A. K. (2021). Understanding of multicultural sustainability through mutual acceptance: Voices from intercultural teachers' previous early education. *Sustainability*, 13(10), 5377. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13105377>
- Jailani, M., Dewantara, J. A., & Rahmani, E. F. (2023). The awareness of mutual respect post-conflicts: Ethnic Chinese strategy through social interaction and engagement in West Kalimantan. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 33(1), 17–34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2021.1990170>
- Janmaat, J. G. (2022). *Education and tolerance: A review of recent research*. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800376953.00021>
- K., M., Makmur, M., Rasyid, M. N. A., Naro, W., Usman, S., & Pajariato, H. (2023). Character building training model for young people to strengthen religious moderation. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 79(1). <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i1.8552>
- Kruja, G. (2022). Interfaith harmony through education system of religious communities. *Religion & Education*, 49(1), 104–117. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15507394.2021.2009305>
- Kuswanto, E., Mubin, M. N., Suharsono, & Kurniawan, D. S. (2023). Internalizing Islamic moderation: A model approach for educational institutions. *IJoReSH: Indonesian Journal of Religion, Spirituality, and Humanity*, 2(1), 93–113. <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijores.v2i1.93-113>
- Laksana, B. K. C., & Wood, B. E. (2019). Navigating religious diversity: Exploring young people's lived religious citizenship in Indonesia. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 22(6), 807–823. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2018.1545998>
- Lexy, J. M. (2002). *Metode penelitian kualitatif*. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Liu, Y., Rakthin, C., & Budianto, L. (2025). Religious moderation and community cohesion: Exploring social memory, identity, and solidarity in the Phu Khao Thong Muslim community, Ayutthaya. *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, 379–392. <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol24.iss1.art10>
- Martela, F., Hankonen, N., Ryan, R. M., & Vansteenkiste, M. (2021). Motivating voluntary compliance to behavioural restrictions: Self-determination theory-based checklist of principles for COVID-19 and other emergency communications. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 32(2), 305–347. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2020.1857082>

- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2019). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Morris, T. H. (2020). Experiential learning – a systematic review and revision of Kolb’s model. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 28(8), 1064–1077. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2019.1570279>
- Orazani, S. N., Reynolds, K. J., & Osborne, H. (2023). What works and why in interventions to strengthen social cohesion: A systematic review. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 53(10), 938–995. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12990>
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(5), 751–783. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.5.751>
- Rohmadi, Ibrahim, D., & Munir. (2024). Model of internalization of religious moderation values in Salafiyah boarding schools. *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, 8(3), 950–965. <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v8i3.574>
- Saifuddin, L. H. (2019). *Moderasi beragama* (1st ed.). Kementerian Agama RI.
- Sen, A. (2022). Three evils of citizenship education in Turkey: Ethno-religious nationalism, statism and neoliberalism. *Critical Studies in Education*, 63(3), 307–322. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2020.1761849>
- Simon, B. (2023). Taking tolerance seriously: A proposal from a self-categorization perspective on disapproval and respect. *American Psychologist*, 78(6), 729–742. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0001166>
- Sulistyaningsih, E. (2022). Community participation in improving environmental protection and effort management. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 1030(1), 012021. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/1030/1/012021>
- Suprpto, R. A., & Arthasari, A. H. (2020). The environmental thermal comfort analysis of public space in Jetayu Park, Pekalongan City. *Geographia Technica*, 15, 151–158. https://doi.org/10.21163/GT_2020.151.32
- Takdir, M. (2025). Moderation reasoning based on religious literacy to prevent radicalisation among interfaith Generation Z in Indonesia. *International Studies in Catholic Education*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19422539.2025.2568712>