

## Integration of Character Values and Religious Moderation in School Activities at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta

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### *Abstract*

This study aims to describe how character values and religious moderation are integrated into school activities at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta. The research method used is a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation, then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results indicate that the integration of character values and religious moderation is carried out through habituation, teacher role models, cross-student religious activities, and a school culture that emphasizes tolerance and discipline. In conclusion, the integration of these values is effective because it is supported by a religious and inclusive school culture and the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers as role models and prime movers. These findings confirm that strengthening character and religious moderation can be achieved sustainably if all school members actively participate in building a tolerant, disciplined, and socially empathetic environment.

**Keywords:** Character Education; Religious Moderation; School Activities; SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta.

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### *Abstrak*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana nilai-nilai karakter dan moderasi beragama diintegrasikan dalam kegiatan sekolah di SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi nilai karakter dan moderasi beragama dilakukan melalui pembiasaan, keteladanan guru, kegiatan keagamaan lintas siswa, serta budaya sekolah yang menekankan toleransi dan kedisiplinan. Kesimpulannya,

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integrasi nilai-nilai tersebut berjalan efektif karena didukung oleh budaya sekolah yang religius dan inklusif, serta peran guru PAI sebagai teladan dan penggerak utama. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa penguatan karakter dan moderasi beragama dapat diwujudkan secara berkelanjutan apabila seluruh warga sekolah berpartisipasi aktif dalam membangun lingkungan yang toleran, disiplin, dan berempati sosial.

**Kata Kunci:** Pendidikan Karakter; Moderasi Beragama; Kegiatan Sekolah; SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta.

### A. Introduction

Amid the increasing challenges of globalization and the diversity of Indonesian society, schools have a significant responsibility to instill character values and religious moderation in students. The rise of intolerance and declining social empathy among students demonstrates that education has not fully succeeded in developing individuals who respect differences. A 2023 survey by the SETARA Institute indicates that some secondary school students still have fluctuating levels of tolerance, particularly regarding acceptance of differences in religion and social perspectives. This situation underscores the crucial role of schools in fostering inclusive attitudes through habituation, teacher role models, and moderate religious activities (Institute, 2023).

Research by Handayani et al. (2024) shows that character education plays a strategic role in shaping the religious moderation of the millennial generation amidst the strong currents of globalization so that students are able to display inclusive and empathetic attitudes in social life (Handayani et al., 2024). Therefore, character education and religious moderation are the keys to forming a generation that is faithful, civilized, and able to live harmoniously in diversity (Institute, 2023). Efforts to integrate these two values in the school environment are relevant to study, especially in educational units that have implemented a religious and tolerant culture, such as SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta.

Indonesian national education is essentially oriented not only toward mastery of science and technology but also toward the development of students'

character and personality based on moral and national values. This aligns with the goals of national education as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, 2003). In a diverse social context like Indonesia, character education and religious moderation are key pillars for developing a generation with morals, tolerance, and love for their homeland. Religious moderation is understood as a perspective, attitude, and religious practice that avoids extremism and maintains a balance between commitment to religious teachings and respect for differences (Indonesia, 2019).

A similar concept was also found in Arifin and Aziz's (2019) research, which emphasized the importance of internalizing Islamic moderation values in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at Al-Azhar Islamic Middle School in Kediri. Through an exemplary approach, habituation, and a balance between spiritual and social aspects, the values of moderation can be effectively instilled in students from adolescence (Arifin & Aziz, 2019). Hidayat and Rahman (2022) identified four main

values in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning that reflect religious moderation: *i'tidal*, *tasamuh*, *syura*, and *qudwah*. These values serve as an important foundation for developing students' character, oriented toward balance and tolerance (Hidayat & Rahman, 2022).

The values of religious moderation must be integrated into learning and school activities in practical ways, enabling students to grasp the essence of Islamic teachings, which emphasize *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, and to develop an inclusive and adaptive personality that respects societal diversity (Saefudin et al., 2023). Psychological research on student self-acceptance at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta also found that some students face challenges in building self-confidence during puberty (Payangan & Arswimba, 2024). These results reinforce the importance of character education and religious moderation in fostering positive self-concept and empathy among students.

At SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta, many local traditions are still preserved, such as gamelan lessons facilitated by a gamelan room. Meanwhile, SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta also teaches hadroh arts in

preparation for competitions. Research by Susianti and Nasucha (2025) also confirms that internalizing the value of religious moderation can be achieved not only through formal learning but also through school sociocultural activities such as local traditions, arts, and culture, which serve as a vehicle for interfaith harmony (Susianti & Nasucha, 2025). This is consistent with Sari's (2023) findings which show that cultivating tolerance and respect for local culture at the elementary level has a positive influence on students' inclusive attitudes at the next level (Sari, 2023). Culture-based learning like this instills the values of discipline, perseverance, and respect for cultural heritage as part of faith and nationality (Anwar & Ramadhani, 2025).



**Figure 1. Karawitan/Gamelan Room at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta (source: <https://smpn1yogyakarta.sch.id/layanan.php>)**

Furthermore, the local culture-based learning approach (ethnomathematics) at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta has proven effective in strengthening student identity and increasing empathy for the cultural diversity of the surrounding area. This effort is relevant to the goal of character education, which is contextualized with the values of Yogyakarta's civilized and tolerant society. (Anwar & Ramadhani, 2025).

Previous research at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta shows that the integration of character education has become a strategic focus in supporting the school's vision of a moderate culture. For example, the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) fosters the values of mutual cooperation, nationalism, and social responsibility in students through cross-disciplinary collaborative activities. (Khotrunada & Widiyanah, 2024). These findings are in line with the spirit of religious moderation, which also emphasizes the balance between individual freedom and social harmony.



**Figure 2. Implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) on the Local Wisdom Theme at Smp Negeri 1 Yogyakarta (source: [https://smpn1yogyakarta.sch.id/berita\\_detail.php?id=127](https://smpn1yogyakarta.sch.id/berita_detail.php?id=127))**

Ramadhani's (2025) research confirms that the success of instilling religious moderation values in schools is also greatly influenced by collaboration between teachers. Collaboration across subjects makes religious moderation values more alive in the context of everyday learning. (Ramadhani, 2025)

Based on this review, it is clear that previous studies such as those by Arifin and Aziz (2019), Hidayat and Rahman (2022), and Saefudin et al. (2023) have focused more on the learning aspects of Islamic Religious Education and the internalization of religious moderation values in the classroom context. Meanwhile, studies by Susianti and Nasucha (2025) and Rokib et al. (2025) highlight the sociocultural dimension but have not

systematically outlined strategies for integrating character values and religious moderation into the overall school culture. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by in-depth describing how these two values are integrated into various school activities (both intracurricular and extracurricular) at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta through a qualitative approach based on field observations and interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers. The findings of this study are expected to provide a practical integration model that can be replicated in other schools with similar characteristics.

Therefore, this study aims to describe the integration of character values and religious moderation in school activities at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta.

## **B. Methods**

This research method uses a descriptive qualitative approach because it seeks to understand the phenomenon of the integration of character values and religious moderation in depth in the natural context of schools. The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta, with the research subjects

being Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers who play a role in planning, implementing, and evaluating the character value instillation program and religious moderation. In addition, observations were made of student activities in school activities to obtain an empirical picture of the application of character values and religious moderation in the school environment. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data validity was strengthened through triangulation of sources, methods, and time.

The qualitative methods used in this study are similar to those used in other studies at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta, which focused on character development and moderation through habituation of school activities. A similar approach is also evident in this study, which emphasizes the meaning and direct experiences of school members in carrying out activities based on religious and national values.

### C. Results and Discussion

The integration of character values at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta is implemented through habituation activities, teacher role models, and school culture. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers play a crucial role in instilling the values of religiosity, tolerance, responsibility, and discipline through learning and school religious activities (Astuti & Achadi, 2025).

Similar research conducted by Rokib (2025) emphasized that internalizing the value of religious moderation plays a crucial role in fostering tolerance within the school environment. Through collaborative activities and interfaith dialogue, students are able to understand the meaning of diversity as a potential for unity, rather than a divisive difference (Rokib et al., 2025). As supporting field data to strengthen the findings of this study, the researcher included the results of interviews and observations conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta..

Based on an in-depth interview with Mr. Muhajirin, M.Pd.I (Islamic Religious Education Teacher at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta), detailed information was obtained regarding the practice of integrating character values

and religious moderation at the school. He explained that the school holds morning tadarus activities for Muslim students, while non-Muslim students read their respective religious scriptures in their respective religious rooms that have been provided. Tadarus activities and holy book reading are held every morning at 07.00–07.15, except Wednesdays for literacy activities.

This aligns with research by Sanusi et al. (2023), which emphasized that internalization of the value of religious moderation can be done through character development integrated with religious education, which fosters an attitude of tolerance, national commitment, and anti-violence in students (Sanusi et al., 2023). Cross-student religious activities, joint prayers, and respect for differences are part of the implementation of the values of religious moderation in schools (Tamam & Rosyad, 2025).

Following the scripture reading, all students were invited to sing the national anthem (Indonesia Raya) as part of the process of instilling national values and religious moderation. Muzakky (2025) emphasized that the value of *hubbul wathon*, or love of one's country, is an

integral part of multicultural Islamic education. Through nationality-based school activities, students are not only introduced to the value of moderation but also to their responsibilities as faithful and tolerant citizens (Muzakky, 2025).

Mr. Muhajirin emphasized that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in the classroom employs a student-centered approach through group work to instill the values of responsibility, leadership, and cooperation. Before the lesson begins, students are introduced to reciting the Asmaul Husna as a gradual form of religious practice to shape their spiritual character.

The results of this study confirm other findings that the integration of character values and religious moderation is formed not only through formal religious activities but also through the implementation of active learning models. Active learning models have been shown to encourage collaboration, communication, and critical reflection among students in addressing real-life problems (Thesalonika, 2025). These values are closely correlated with the spirit of religious moderation, which guides

students to be fair, open, and respectful of differences.

The values of religious moderation, such as *tasamuh*, *tawassuth*, and *muwathanah*, are applied in religious activities, Islamic Religious Education learning, and social interactions between students (Suratni, 2024). In line with this, Yosita (2023) shows that the values of religious moderation can be integrated into every Islamic education subject through discussion activities, role models, and social actions that foster an attitude of tolerance and togetherness in the madrasa environment (Yosita et al., 2023)

In addition, the 5S school culture (Smile, Greet, Say Hello, Be Polite, and Be Courteous) is implemented routinely to strengthen social ethics and etiquette among school residents at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta. In line with Nailasariy's (2020) research, a religious and disciplined school culture, such as the habit of greeting, smiling, and greeting, strengthens character building (Nailasariy, 2020).

Interfaith programs are also evident, such as the involvement of non-Muslim students in social activities such as slaughtering sacrificial animals, cooking

the food, and sharing the results with the community. This finding aligns with research by Susianti and Nasucha (2025), which shows that sociocultural activities are an effective means of fostering a spirit of tolerance and mutual cooperation across religions (Susianti & Nasucha, 2025). This initiative demonstrates the practice of inclusive religious moderation—respecting differences while still encouraging social cooperation. Consistent with the findings of Taufikurrahman and Zahranah (2023), interfaith social activities are an effective platform for instilling the values of religious moderation and strengthening students' social character in a multicultural environment (Taufikurrahman & Zahranah, 2023).



**Figure 3. Celebrating Eid al-Adha, SMPN 1 Yogyakarta Trains Students in Carrying Out Qurban**  
(Source: <https://jogja.tribunnews.com/2018/08/23/rayakan-idul-adha-smpn-1-yogyakarta-latih-siswa-dalam-pelaksanaan-kurban>)

SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta also held a Blessing Friday activity, which was supported by parents voluntarily, thus fostering the values of mutual cooperation and social empathy in students.

To support Quran reading skills, SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta collaborates with Baznas (National Alms Agency) through the BTQ (Read and Write Quran) program. Each new student's reading ability is tested, and they are grouped into grades A, B, and C, allowing more advanced students to assist those in need. This demonstrates the concrete implementation of the values of social responsibility and intrareligious moderation.

The researchers' observations demonstrated the consistency of these practices in daily school life. Students appeared friendly and polite to teachers and researchers—they bowed as a sign of greeting and knocked before entering the teacher's office. The observations reinforced the finding that the 5S culture and the practice of religious observance are part of the school routine, strengthening character values.

In addition, field observations noted the existence of supporting

facilities that support the integration of these values, such as the Nurul Hikmah Mosque, which is active for Islamic religious education activities; information boards and religious wall magazines; posters prohibiting bullying; a Catholic religious study room; and chopping board crafts bearing the Asmaul Husna, which serve as a medium for internalizing religious values.



**Figure 4. Catholic Room of Yogyakarta 1 State Middle School (Source: researcher documentation, 2025)**

These field findings reinforce the argument that the integration of character values and religious moderation at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta is not only present in the formal curriculum but is also realized through habituation, teacher role models, school facilities, and community involvement (parents/guardians and institutions such

as Baznas). According to Nurhidayah (2024), the religious moderation program in schools is largely determined by the support of the principal, the involvement of interfaith teachers, and the habituation of moderation values in all school activities (Nurhidayah, 2024).

In addition, the CORE model based on the Tri N philosophy (Niteni, Nirokke, Nambahi) is also implemented at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta to foster critical and reflective thinking characters (Abyan & Nursyam, 2024). The principles of Niteni (understanding) and Nirokke (imitating) are in line with the exemplary practices of teachers in this study, which are an important foundation for the formation of Islamic character.

#### **D. Conclusion**

This study found that Islamic Religious Education teachers play a central role in integrating character values and religious moderation at SMP Negeri 1 Yogyakarta. This integration is realized through habituation, role modeling, and religious and social activities that instill the values of tolerance, discipline, responsibility, and social empathy. These results indicate that character education and religious

moderation can be effective when they are part of a religious and inclusive school culture. Based on the literature review and interviews, the strengthening of these values can be expanded through cross-subject collaboration and institutional support such as Baznas, so that the practice of religious moderation in schools is more contextualized to the challenges of modern education. These findings confirm that religious moderation is not merely a theoretical realm but a concrete practice of student character formation through the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers as role models and promoters of moderate national and Islamic values.

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