

STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES TO IMPLEMENTING RELIGIOUS MODERATION AT THE STATE HINDU COLLEGE (STAHN) JAWA DWIPA KLATEN, CENTRAL JAVA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the strategies and approaches used in implementing religious moderation at Sekolah Tinggi Agama Hindu Negeri (STAHN) Jawa Dwipa Klaten, Central Java. Using a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation involving 20 students, 2 Administrative staff, 5 lecturers, and 3 University leaders. The findings indicate that the implementation of religious moderation is carried out through integrative, participatory, and contextual approaches. The integrative approach is reflected in the alignment of religious moderation values within the curriculum and academic activities, while the participatory approach is visible through student involvement in social programs, cultural activities, and community service. Additionally, the contextual approach adapts strategies to local wisdom and campus cultural dynamics. The study concludes that leadership commitment, collaborative academic culture, and supportive institutional policies play a vital role in strengthening tolerance, inclusiveness, and national identity. STAHN Jawa Dwipa Klaten can serve as a model for religious moderation implementation in higher education institutions.

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INTRODUCTIONS

Indonesia is a multicultural nation characterized by extensive diversity in ethnicity, language, culture, and religion. According to Badan Pusat Statistik (2020), there are 1,331 ethnic groups and subgroups spread across the archipelago. This diversity represents a cultural and spiritual asset, yet it also poses challenges for maintaining national unity. Therefore, educational strategies are needed to cultivate respect and appreciation for differences in belief. Religious moderation emerges as a relevant approach to maintaining social harmony. The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2019) defines religious moderation as a perspective, attitude, and religious practice that emphasizes balance, fairness, and respect for differences. This understanding aligns with Shihab (2019),

who views religious moderation as an effort to preserve harmony through inclusive and tolerant behavior without diminishing one's commitment to religious teachings.

In the past two decades, cases of exclusivism and intolerance have increased, including among younger generations. Jamaluddin (2022) highlights that religious-based radicalism often arises from misunderstandings of religious teachings and is then exploited for certain sociopolitical interests. This condition indicates the urgent need for implementing religious moderation in higher education as a preventive measure against the development of extreme ideologies. At STAHN Jawa Dwipa Klaten, the diversity of students from various regions such as Maluku, Papua, and Kalimantan requires a tailored approach to foster religious moderation and prevent social friction.

Students play a strategic role in safeguarding national values and diversity. Abdullah (2020) asserts that strengthening religious moderation among university students serves as a preventive step against intolerance that threatens cohesion. Therefore, the implementation of religious moderation should be integrated into formal curricula, co-curricular programs, and daily campus interactions. Azra (2018) adds that educational institutions hold a moral responsibility to foster a humanistic, adaptive, and peace-oriented understanding of religion. Supporting this, Susanti (2022) shows that strengthening religious moderation in multicultural communities positively influences social tolerance and interfaith solidarity. At STAHN, this integration is crucial, as it ensures that students understand religious moderation not only in theory but also in practice within their diverse cultural contexts.

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Hindu Negeri (STAHN) Jawa Dwipa Klaten, Central Java, is an important representation of religious moderation in Hindu higher education. Students come from diverse regions, such as Maluku, Papua, and Kalimantan, with varied cultural and social backgrounds. This diversity creates opportunities for multicultural interaction yet requires the right approach to avoid social friction. The challenge at STAHN lies in translating the broad principles of religious moderation into concrete strategies that align with the cultural dynamics of the campus community. Rifky (2022) emphasizes that cultivating peace-oriented values in religious-based higher education significantly contributes to shaping inclusive student character. Similarly, Nurlaili et al. (2024) highlight that implementing religious moderation within educational institutions reinforces social harmony and strengthens national identity amid globalization.

To support such implementation, the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2019) identifies four core components of religious moderation: national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and acceptance of cultural traditions. Abdullah (2020) states that these components function as indicators for measuring moderate religious behavior and strengthen respect, solidarity, and national unity. At STAHN, these components are integrated into the curriculum and co-curricular programs, aiming to create a balanced approach that fosters tolerance and national unity among students.

Implementation of religious moderation demands strategic planning and management. Susanti (2022) explains that implementation is a planned and measurable activity aimed at realizing values in society. At STAHN, this implementation must account for the unique challenges posed by the diversity of student backgrounds and the need for locally relevant strategies. Syahri (2021) outlines three implementation stages: planning, execution, and evaluation. Planning involves formulating goals and strategies; execution includes academic and non-academic programs to strengthen moderation; and evaluation aims to measure effectiveness and ensure continuous improvement. The success of implementation is influenced by supporting and inhibiting factors. Leadership commitment and supportive institutional policies are crucial to overcoming barriers such as intolerance, narrow religious understanding, and external influences like social media.

Thus, the implementation of religious moderation at STAHN Jawa Dwipa Klaten not only focuses on theoretical understanding but also strengthens strategies and approaches that foster moderate, open, and socially responsible Hindu students, enabling them to become agents of harmony within society. This study aims to examine the strategies and approaches used at STAHN to implement religious moderation and the role of leadership and institutional culture in its success.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to provide an in-depth description of the strategies and approaches used in implementing religious moderation at Sekolah Tinggi Agama Hindu Negeri (STAHN) Jawa Dwipa

Klaten, Central Java. The qualitative approach was selected because this research focuses on understanding meanings, processes, and institutional strategies used to internalize religious moderation values among students. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is used to deeply understand social phenomena by involving the researcher directly in data collection and interpretation. This approach is relevant because the implementation of religious moderation as an institutional strategy is a complex, contextual, and value-laden social phenomenon. This is consistent with Rinta et al. (2022), who emphasized that qualitative research is effective for exploring multidimensional social phenomena rooted in specific socio-cultural contexts.

The type of research used was field research, which refers to data collection conducted directly at the location where the religious moderation strategies are implemented. This approach enables the researcher to observe how the strategies and approaches of religious moderation are carried out in real-life settings. Jamaluddin (2022) asserts that field-based research allows researchers to capture the dynamics of implementing moderation values through direct observation and interviews with educational stakeholders.

The study was conducted at Sekolah Tinggi Agama Hindu Negeri (STAHN) Jawa Dwipa Klaten, the only public Hindu higher education institution in Central Java, characterized by a diverse student body with different cultural and social backgrounds. The research subjects included lecturers, students, and institutional leaders involved in planning and implementing religious moderation strategies. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, namely selecting individuals intentionally based on their knowledge and involvement in religious moderation programs. Susanti (2022) explains that purposive sampling in qualitative research is essential to ensure that the obtained data are relevant, in-depth, and represent the research context. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. The instruments used for data collection are summarized in the table 1 below:

Table 1. Data Collection Instruments

Instrument	Purpose	Key Topics/Indicators
Interview Guide	To explore strategies, approaches, and activities related to religious moderation	- Strategies for implementing religious moderation - Activities supporting religious moderation - Challenges and opportunities in implementation
Observation Sheet	To observe moderation practices during academic interactions and student activities	- Involvement of students in moderation activities - Interaction between lecturers and students - Campus climate regarding religious tolerance
Documentation Checklist	To collect supporting data such as curriculum documents, policies, and archives	- Curriculum content related to religious moderation - Institutional policies promoting religious moderation - Archives and records of moderation activities

Mahesti (2022) states that the combination of interviews, observations, and documentation results in methodological triangulation, strengthening data credibility. Data analysis was conducted interactively and continuously, following the steps proposed by Miles and Huberman, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data were reduced to select information relevant to the implementation strategies of religious moderation, then presented descriptively to reveal emerging patterns and themes. The final step involved drawing meanings and verification. Rinta et al. (2022) emphasize that qualitative analysis in educational research functions to understand the relationship between social behavior, cultural context, and developing values. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, method triangulation, and time triangulation. The triangulation strategy is summarized below:

Table 2. Triangulation Strategy

Triangulation Type	Purpose	Method of Implementation
Source Triangulation	To ensure data consistency from different sources	- Interviews with lecturers, students, and leaders - Observations and documentation analysis

Method Triangulation	To strengthen data credibility by using different methods	• Combining interviews, observations, and document analysis
Time Triangulation	To account for variations over time	• Collecting data across different academic terms to observe consistency and changes in strategies

Syahri (2021) explains that triangulation is used to examine the consistency of findings through multiple sources and methods. In addition, data validity was strengthened through member checking with informants to ensure that the researcher's interpretation corresponded with the actual conditions in the field. Nurlaili et al. (2024) stress that participatory validation such as member checking is crucial in socio-religious research to maintain objectivity and credibility.

The research procedure consisted of four stages: preparation, data collection, data analysis, and reporting. In the final stage, research findings were compiled into a report describing the strategies, approaches, and supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing religious moderation. Jamaluddin (2022) affirms that research on religious moderation must be carried out systematically and reflectively so that the results can serve as recommendations for strengthening moderation practices within higher education institutions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Hindu Negeri (STAHN) Jawa Dwipa Klaten is the only state Hindu higher education institution in Central Java, with a vision to develop outstanding human resources with an inclusive character. Located in a multicultural environment, STAHN Jawa Dwipa adopts religious moderation as an institutional strategy to cultivate harmony in diversity. Religious moderation is not only positioned as an academic concept but is integrated into the institutional culture, campus policies, and Tri Dharma program planning. The campus philosophy, symbolized by the lotus, fire, and light, reflects the institution's commitment to harmonizing knowledge, wisdom, and spirituality as the foundation for strengthening religious moderation.

Identification of Research Informants

Research data were obtained from university leaders, lecturers, administrative staff, and students. Informants were selected to explore institutional strategies, implementation approaches, and the moderation process within academic activities, program management, and social interactions on campus.

Table 3. Profile of Research Informants

No	Informant Category	Total	Role Description
1	University Leaders	3	Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Head of Department
2	Lecturers	5	Teach courses related to Religious Education, Ethics, and Religious Philosophy
3	Administrative Staff	2	Involved in interfaith activities and academic administration

The collected data were used to explore strategies, approaches, and challenges in implementing religious moderation at the institutional level.

Religious Moderation Implementation Strategies at STAHN Jawa Dwipa Klaten

The implementation strategies involve curriculum-based program planning, learning activities, student organization activities, and institutional policies. These strategies ensure that religious moderation is not merely theoretical but internalized through institutional systems. The university leadership directs curriculum development, lecturers implement moderation-based learning, and student activity units serve as platforms for applying tolerance and diversity.

Table 4. Forms of Religious Moderation Implementation

No	Aspect of Implementation	Concrete Activities	Impact on Students
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1	Curriculum Integration	Courses such as Religious Ethics and Hindu Religious Education discussing tolerance and social harmony	Students' conceptual understanding of moderation increases
2	Training and Workshops	Interfaith workshops, anti-radicalism training, and national seminars	Increased openness and national awareness
3	Student Organizations	Interfaith dialogue, community service, and social programs	Students learn to appreciate differences in practice
4	Extracurricular & Social Activities	Cultural festivals, interfaith arts, community engagement	Increased empathy and solidarity
5	Research Activities	Academic studies on religious moderation conducted by lecturers and students	Strengthening the scientific foundation of moderation

Based on the table above, religious moderation at STAHN Jawa Dwipa Klaten is implemented holistically through academic and social activities. Curriculum integration strengthens conceptual understanding, while student organizational activities, training, and research cultivate practical tolerance. This synergy demonstrates that moderation values have become embedded within the campus culture.

Religious Moderation Elements as the Basis for Implementation Strategies

STAHN Jawa Dwipa applies four elements of religious moderation adopted from the Ministry of Religious Affairs: national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and respect for tradition. These elements guide policy development, learning programs, and social activities to ensure every institutional program promotes harmony and cross-value dialogue.

Table 5. Elements of Religious Moderation Implemented

Element of Moderation	Concrete Implementation	Impact on the Academic Community
National Commitment	Nationalism-based curriculum integration, national seminars, character-building programs	Increased patriotism and national awareness
Tolerance	Interfaith dialogue, joint prayers, multicultural social activities	Development of mutual respect and social empathy
Anti-Violence	Conflict resolution training, anti-radicalism education, peaceful discussion culture	Creation of a safe and inclusive academic environment
Acceptance of Tradition	Cultural festivals, local wisdom-based research, community service	Appreciation of cultural heritage and local identity

The table illustrates that all four elements are applied in real campus activities. National commitment strengthens loyalty to Pancasila and Indonesia's diversity, tolerance fosters mutual respect, anti-violence promotes dialogue rather than confrontation, and acceptance of tradition connects religious values with local wisdom. Collectively, these elements build moderate, nationalistic, and socially responsible student character, aligning with STAHN Jawa Dwipa's vision of harmonizing diversity.

Approaches to Implementing Religious Moderation

Three key approaches are applied in executing religious moderation: integrative, by embedding moderation into policies and curriculum; participatory, by involving all academic members in activities that promote tolerance; and contextual, by adapting programs to local wisdom and community needs.

Table 6. Three key approaches are applied in executing religious moderation

Approach	Main Focus	Implementation on Campus
Integrative	System-based moderation	Moderation integration in curriculum and syllabi
Participatory	Collective involvement	Interfaith workshops, student organization activities
Contextual	Adaptation to local socio-culture	Community service based on local wisdom

The integrative approach ensures policy and curriculum alignment, the participatory approach engages all academic elements, and the contextual approach ensures relevance to cultural settings.

Stages of Strategy Implementation

The implementation of religious moderation is carried out systematically through structured stages to ensure that moderation values are embedded not only in academic activities but also in institutional practices. These stages guide the institution in planning, executing, and evaluating moderation programs in a measurable and continuous manner.

Tabel 7. Stages of Religious Moderation Implementation

Stage	Activities	Objective
Planning	Preparation of curriculum and campus programs	Setting goals and direction
Implementation	Learning, student activities, seminars, community engagement	Internalizing moderation values
Evaluation	Program observation and reflection	Assessing progress and improvement

Through this structured cycle, moderation initiatives are continuously reviewed and refined. These systematic stages ensure consistency and sustainability, reinforcing religious moderation as an institutional identity and enabling the campus to maintain a culture of tolerance and inclusivity.

Narrative Evidence from Fieldwork

In interviews, one student (S1) shared: *"The interfaith workshops have really opened my eyes. I learned how important it is to understand and respect other religions, especially living in such a diverse environment."* A lecturer (L1) emphasized: *"Our curriculum encourages critical thinking about tolerance and religious diversity, which is vital in shaping students who will play an active role in maintaining social harmony."* These statements highlight how the strategies and activities at STAHN have directly impacted students' attitudes and understanding of religious moderation.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that the implementation of religious moderation at Sekolah Tinggi Agama Hindu Negeri (STAHN) Jawa Dwipa Klaten has been carried out systematically, strategically, and sustainably. The values of religious moderation are not only taught through religious courses but are also internalized through social, cultural, and student activities. This strengthens the view of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2019), which states that higher education institutions must position religious moderation as the foundation of education to nurture tolerance, peace, and respect for diversity. In the context of Hindu higher education, religious moderation becomes a strategy for integrating spirituality, knowledge, and social responsibility (Subagiasta, 2024).

However, while the integration of moderation values into the curriculum demonstrates an effective approach, there are challenges related to the consistency of how these values are applied across various departments. For

instance, some lecturers may approach the integration of moderation with differing levels of commitment or understanding, potentially limiting the impact of the curriculum on students. The approach suggested by Azra (2018) to embed moderation continuously is valid, but the effectiveness of this approach depends heavily on faculty training and institutional support, which may not always be uniform. This discrepancy can lead to a situation where some students receive a more robust education in religious moderation than others, undermining the goal of universal applicability across the institution.

The participatory approach in student activities, such as workshops and social programs, also shows promise in promoting religious moderation. However, the voluntary nature of student participation in these activities might result in a mismatch between the students who most need exposure to moderation values and those who are actually engaging in these programs. There is a need for a more structured involvement strategy that ensures broader participation, especially from students who are less inclined to engage with such programs. As Jamaluddin (2022) asserts, moderation education must be grounded in active engagement, yet without mandatory involvement or incentive structures, the reach of these participatory efforts could remain limited to the more proactive students.

Beyond academic activities, religious moderation is strengthened through research and scientific publications. Research focusing on harmony and tolerance forms the foundation for policy development and curriculum design at the institution. This corresponds with Susanti (2022), who states that educational institutions play a transformative role in translating moderation values into scientific knowledge and social practices through applied research and community service. However, there remains a gap in the translation of these academic findings into practical, everyday actions that resonate with students on the ground. The research conducted at STAHN, while contributing to the scientific foundation of moderation, might not always find its way into the daily life of the student body, especially in terms of shifting their attitudes or behaviors.

The results also indicate the successful application of the four core elements of religious moderation: national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and acceptance of tradition. These elements are reflected in campus activities and student interactions that uphold patriotism, respect for diversity, and appreciation of local traditions. This supports Shihab (2019), who defines moderation as a middle path between extremism and liberalism, where religious values should coexist with social realities. In the context of STAHN Jawa Dwipa, the acceptance of local traditions demonstrates the cultural application of moderation in line with Hindu teachings on dharma and rta, which emphasize balance between spirituality and social order (Subagiasta, 2024). However, the practical implementation of these elements can sometimes be contradictory, particularly when national commitment and respect for tradition conflict with more progressive or liberal interpretations of religious moderation. For instance, some students or lecturers may perceive the promotion of certain traditional practices as conflicting with modern ideals of social justice or equality, raising questions about the limits of religious moderation in balancing tradition with contemporary values.

The contextual approach further strengthens moderation implementation through community service, cross-cultural training, and programs based on local wisdom. This approach proves that moderation is not merely idealistic but relevant to societal needs. This finding supports Rofik (2021), who argues that moderation education must be contextual and serve as a solution to social issues stemming from differences in religious perspectives. Through this approach, the campus serves as an agent of social transformation within a multicultural community. However, while local wisdom is crucial for contextualizing moderation, it can also introduce challenges in ensuring that these practices are inclusive and do not inadvertently marginalize other cultural or religious groups. The application of local wisdom must be carefully balanced to avoid reinforcing divisions under the guise of promoting unity.

When compared to Mahesti (2022), who examined the strengthening of *sradha* and *bhakti* at STAHN Klaten Ashrama, this study expands the understanding that moderation in Hindu higher education goes beyond spiritual development to include social and cultural dimensions. This aligns with national policy emphasizing character education and well-being in shaping future generations with Pancasila values. However, it is essential to critically assess whether the focus on character-building might sometimes overshadow the need for more critical discussions and debate around the principles of moderation. While character education is undeniably important, it should not restrict students' ability to question or critique the very principles that underlie moderation, particularly in an academic setting.

Overall, STAHN Jawa Dwipa has successfully positioned religious moderation as an institutional identity through integrative, participatory, and contextual strategies. These efforts create an academic ecosystem that fosters mutual respect, dialogue, and social responsibility while contributing to broader social harmony. Yet, the challenge remains in ensuring that these strategies are applied consistently across all levels and departments, and that they effectively reach all students, particularly those less inclined to engage with the principles of religious moderation. Therefore, STAHN Jawa Dwipa Klaten can serve as a model for implementing religious moderation within Hindu religious higher education institutions in Indonesia, but it must continue to refine its approach to reach its full potential.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of religious moderation at Sekolah Tinggi Agama Hindu Negeri (STAHN) Jawa Dwipa Klaten has been carried out effectively and is fully integrated into both academic and non-academic activities. The core values of moderation—tolerance, national commitment, anti-violence, and respect for tradition are internalized through the curriculum, student activities, training programs, and community-based social initiatives. The institution employs integrative, participatory, and contextual approaches, ensuring that religious moderation does not remain merely conceptual but is reflected in concrete actions within daily campus life.

The findings further indicate that the success of the implementation is supported by visionary leadership, collaboration among all academic stakeholders, and institutional policies that prioritize tolerance and diversity. Through learning activities, research, and community service, students develop greater awareness to appreciate differences and cultivate harmonious social interactions. The implementation of religious moderation has proven to strengthen students' national character, foster inclusive social ethics, and reinforce the institution's identity as a Hindu higher education institution that is humanistic and diversity-oriented.

Therefore, STAHN Jawa Dwipa Klaten serves as a model for religious moderation practices in Hindu religious higher education institutions in Indonesia. The consistent and systematic implementation demonstrates that higher education institutions hold a strategic role in shaping a young generation that is moderate, nationalistic, and socially aware within the context of Indonesia's diversity.

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