RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES: UNVEILING THE SOCIO-CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF INTERFAITH HARMONY

MODERASI AGAMA DALAM MASYARAKAT MULTIKULTURAL: MEMAHAMI AKAR SOSIAL DAN BUDAYA KERUKUNAN ANTARAGAMA

Hendri Ardianto[1*], I Putu Gelgel[2], Burmansah[3]

[1]Religious and Cultural Department, Hindu University of Indonesia, Denpasar, Indonesia
Email: hendri.ardianto@stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id
[2]Hindu Religious Law Department, Hindu University of Indonesia, Denpasar, Indonesia,
Email: putu_gelgel@yahoo.co.id
[3]Buddhist Education Department, Jinarakkhita Buddhist College of Lampung, Indonesia
Email: burmansah@stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id

*email Koresponden: hendri.ardianto@stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe how local factors affect the practice of religious moderation in Pejambon Village, Negeri Katon District, Pesawaran Regency, Lampung Province. The primary focus of this research lies in the role of local leadership in internalizing and implementing the four main pillars of religious moderation, namely national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation to local culture in the lives of rural communities. This study uses a qualitative approach with a single case study method. Data collection techniques were done through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. The research procedure refers to six stages of case studies according to Robert K. Yin, while the informants were selected using purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques. Data is analyzed through pattern matching, explanation creation, and time series analysis. The study results show that local leadership plays a significant role in contextually building a narrative of moderation through example, deliberation, and social participation. The practice of moderation is not conveyed through formal instruction alone. Still, it is culturally shaped through social interaction, interfaith activities, and strengthening local values that align with national principles. Leadership prioritizing social awareness, openness, and inclusivity has maintained social cohesion and enhanced inter-religious harmony in a pluralistic village. These findings contribute to developing a theory of local leadership based on the values of religious moderation at the grassroots level.

Keywords: Religious moderation, leadership, national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, local culture, multicultural society.

Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana faktor-faktor lokal mempengaruhi praktik moderasi beragama di Desa Pejambon, Kecamatan Negeri Katon, Kabupaten Pesawaran, Provinsi Lampung. Fokus utama penelitian ini terletak pada peran kepemimpinan lokal dalam menginternalisasi dan mengimplementasikan empat pilar utama moderasi beragama, yaitu komitmen kebangsaan, toleransi, anti-kekerasan, dan akomodatif terhadap budaya lokal dalam kehidupan masyarakat desa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus tunggal. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam, dan studi dokumentasi. Prosedur penelitian mengacu pada enam tahapan studi kasus menurut Robert K. Yin, sedangkan informan dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling dan snowball sampling. Data dianalisis melalui pencocokan pola, pembuatan penjelasan, dan analisis deret waktu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan lokal berperan signifikan dalam membangun narasi moderasi secara kontekstual melalui keteladanan, musyawarah, dan partisipasi sosial. Praktik moderasi tidak disampaikan melalui instruksi formal semata, tetapi dibentuk secara kultural melalui interaksi sosial, kegiatan lintas iman, serta penguatan nilai-nilai lokal yang sejalan dengan prinsip kebangsaan. Kepemimpinan yang mengedepankan kesadaran sosial, keterbukaan, dan inklusivitas terbukti mampu menjaga kohesi sosial dan memperkuat harmoni antarumat beragama dalam masyarakat desa yang plural. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi penting bagi pengembangan teori kepemimpinan lokal berbasis nilai-nilai moderasi beragama di tingkat akar rumput.

Kata Kunci : Moderasi beragama, kepemimpinan, komitmen kebangsaan, toleransi, anti-kekerasan, budaya lokal, masyarakat multikultural.

1. INTRODUCTION

A multicultural society is characterized not only by ethnic and cultural diversity, but also by the complexity of religious expression accompanying it. Amid this plurality, there is an urgent need for a value framework that can maintain social cohesion without denying the spiritual identity of each individual (Abqa, 2020). Religious moderation is a normative approach and a praxis that aims to create an equal, open, and peaceful space for interfaith encounters (Hasanah & Abbas, 2023). This concept not only represents a religious attitude that shuns extremism but also emphasizes the importance of social civility, dialogue, and respect for differences.

Historically and sociologically, the practice of religious moderation is not built in a vacuum, but is rooted in the local social and cultural dynamics that shape the habitus of society. In some communities, inter-communal harmony is not idealized alone, but has become part of a collective habit that lives and is passed down across generations (Adiansyah et al., 2023; Tuju et al., 2022). It is essential to understand that internal factors of society, such as local cultural values, the structure of social relations, the community leadership system, and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, strongly influence the success of religious moderation.

However, there is a gap in previous studies on religious moderation. Most studies still focus on formal and macro aspects such as government policies, educational institutions' role,

or religious institutions' theological discourse (Mukni'ah, 2023; Ramadhan & Qolyubi, 2021; Turhamun, 2024). Meanwhile, the contribution of social and cultural factors at the grassroots community level is still rarely raised in depth. The theoretical life of society is often a concrete praxis space for moderation that grows from the bottom up.

This gap is even more relevant when observed through field data, which shows that interreligious conflicts in several multicultural areas in Indonesia still occur frequently. For example, based on a report (Setara, 2024), there were 175 incidents and 333 acts of violations of freedom of religion/belief, an increase compared to the previous year. The 2022 Tolerant City Index (IKT) also showed an average of only 5.03 points on a scale of 1-7, even a decrease compared to 2021 (5.24 points). This data indicates that religious moderation still faces serious challenges in many regions, even though it has normatively become a national agenda.

Ironically, amid these tense conditions, certain multicultural societies show social resilience and success in building harmony between them in a real way, without dominant formal intervention (Darmawani et al., 2021). This raises a crucial question: what allows religious moderation to grow out of ordinary communities, and not from formal institutions?

This research aims to explore the social and cultural roots of religious moderation in the context of a multicultural society. This research departs from the question: why can moderation in religious life be maintained effectively in a pluralistic society? Using a qualitative approach and sociological framework, this paper seeks to uncover the social mechanisms, collective norms, and cultural values that support the realization of interpersonal harmony. The findings of this study are expected to make a conceptual and practical contribution to formulating strategies to strengthen religious moderation at the grassroots community level and enrich the cross-disciplinary academic literature on religious diversity and tolerance.
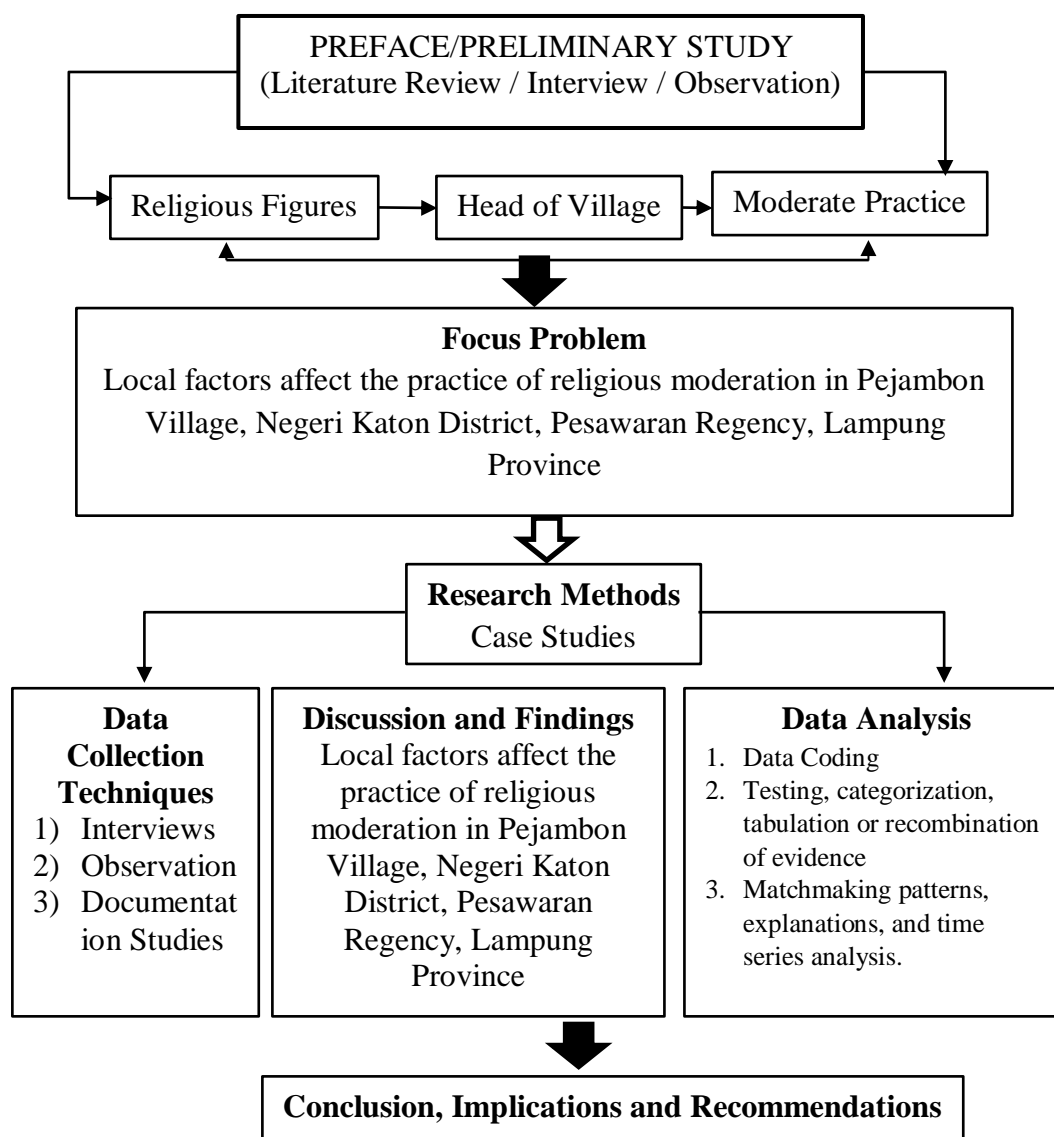
2. RESEARCH METHOD

Research Setting

This research was conducted in Pejambon Village, Negeri Katon District, Pesawaran Regency, Lampung Province, Indonesia. This research was conducted from August 2023 to July 2025.

Research Design

This research is a case study with a qualitative approach that aims to produce descriptive data in the form of narratives, statements, and social actions obtained through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation of community life in rural multicultural environments. This approach was chosen to understand the social dynamics and practices of religious moderation carried out by communities contextually and naturally (Robert K Yin, 2014). The researcher used a single-instrument case study design in this study, focusing on religious moderation in a purposively selected multicultural rural community. Single-instrument case studies allow researchers to intensively dig into one specific phenomenon in a single, limited but information-rich unit of analysis (John W. Creswell, 2017). Thus, the research focuses on how these communities build and care for plurality through social interactions, local traditions, and tolerant and inclusive religious practices amid diverse religious and cultural identities. Meanwhile, the flow of research is depicted in the following image.

Analysis Procedure (Robert K Yin, 2014)
Gambar 1. Research Methods Development Flow Chart
Source: Research Methodology Development

Research Questions

The research questions in this study were formulated to explore the practice of religious moderation that grows in the context of the plurality of rural communities. The primary focus of this study is: Why can the practice of moderation in religious life grow and be maintained

amid multicultural rural societies in Indonesia? This question is the main foothold in exploring the social and cultural dynamics that allow for creating harmonious intercultural relations and understanding how rural communities can nurture plurality through inclusive, peaceful, and meaningful interactions in daily life.

Research Informant

Interviews with informants are a significant source of evidence in case studies, especially since they are directly related to social events and real-life human behavior (Robert K Yin, 2014). The researcher used purposive and snowball sampling techniques to determine relevant informants for the research focus. The informants were chosen based on their qualities, roles, and experiences in religious life and interfaith social interactions in multicultural rural communities. In collecting data, this research involves various parties who represent the community's social dynamics and religious diversity. The informants interviewed included religious leaders (Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Buddhism), traditional leaders, hamlet heads, interfaith youth, village officials, women leaders, and residents active in socio-religious activities. These informants were selected because of their direct involvement in religious moderation in the daily lives of rural communities. A complete list of informants involved in this study is presented in the following table.

Table 1. Research Informant

No.	Informant Code	Name	Status	Position
1.	KDP	Edy Wartoyo	Muslim	Head of Village
2.	BYN	Irul	Muslim	Head of Hamlet
3.	PWBG	Dimin	Buddhist Priest	Buddhist Temple Priest
4.	PBDY	Sudi	Buddhist	Buddhayana Association Priest
5.	KWBG	Pujadi	Buddhist Priest	Head of Buddhist Temple
6.	PSMPN	Sarwoko	Cristian	Head of School
7.	PBDY	Prapto Budaya	Buddhist	Buddhayana Association Priest
8.	KTRT	Robadi	Muslim	Head of Hamlet 2

Source: Research Management Data

Data Collection Techniques

Principles to consider in case study data collection include: (1) using multiple sources of evidence, (2) creating a database of case studies, and (3) maintaining a transparent chain of evidence (Robert K Yin, 2014). This study collected data in various contexts, from multiple sources, and through different techniques. The data collection techniques include participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data was obtained from brochures or information sheets, administrative documents, archival records, interview results, field observations, and physical artifacts. The recorded information is collected through field notes, interview transcripts, and observation protocols, and stored as written notes or digital files on computers. The data collection procedure was carried out directly in the field, without using

mass-produced instruments, as this research is qualitative with a case study approach that emphasizes an in-depth understanding of complex phenomena. The interviewed informants were key figures in the practice of religious moderation in multicultural rural communities.

The three main data collection techniques carried out in this study are as follows: (a) Observation, where the researcher is directly involved in the socio-religious activities of the community and observes the pattern of interaction between religious communities in daily life. (b) Using a semi-structured interview guideline containing the subject matter to be explored, the interview is conducted considering the appropriate situation and time so that the interaction takes place naturally and reflectively. (c) By collecting various documents and data relevant to the focus of the research, the documentation is then analyzed in depth to strengthen the validity of the findings. The results of the interviews are stronger when supported by documents related to the practice of religious moderation in rural communities. The types of documents studied include: (1) personal documents and diaries, (2) personal letters, (3) autobiographies or life experience narratives, (4) official documents such as minutes, minutes of events, or activity reports, (5) photographs or visual documentation, and (6) statistical data and other quantitative documents. All of these documents are treated as written data transcripts that become information products that strengthen the credibility of the research. This category includes personal documents, official documents, and popular cultural documents that describe rural Indonesia's social and religious context.

Data Validity

To ensure the validity of the data in this study, the researcher applied four main strategies: data credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. One of the methods used to increase confidence in data is triangulation, a data examination technique that compares findings from various sources, methods, and theoretical perspectives. In its implementation, researchers use several types of triangulation, including: source triangulation (by comparing information from multiple informants or related parties), triangulation methods (by using more than one data collection technique such as observation, interviews, and documentation), and theoretical triangulation (by reviewing data using various perspectives or relevant theoretical frameworks). This approach is applied to maintain the objectivity and consistency of data so that the research results have high validity and can be scientifically accounted for.

Data Procedure Analysis

The research procedure in this study follows six stages as stated by (Robert K Yin, 2014), namely: designing research planning, compiling case study designs, preparing and distributing roles, collecting data, analyzing data that has been collected, and compiling and sharing research results. The data collection techniques included participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Information was collected from various sources such as field observation forms, official and archival documents, interview transcripts, observation notes, and physical artifacts relevant to religious moderation practices in rural communities.

This study does not use standard instruments or mass-produced measuring tools because the nature of the research is qualitative and exploratory. The resource persons in this study consisted of religious leaders, traditional leaders, village officials, and active residents who are direct actors in interfaith life in the community.

The data analysis procedure involves several stages, ranging from testing the validity of the data, grouping data based on research subfocus, combining data into the form of a matrix or table, to rearranging evidence to draw logical and in-depth conclusions. Data analysis is carried out by testing, categorizing, tabulating, and rearranging the information obtained to suit the initial purpose of the research. The three main strategies used in the analysis process are pattern matching, explanation building, and time-series analysis, as suggested by (Robert K Yin, 2014). This technique helps researchers understand the relationship between data and social phenomena studied more systematically and contextually.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study show that the success of religious moderation in multicultural societies is highly dependent on the capacity of community leaders to build a collective understanding of national values, tolerance, non-violence, and openness to local cultures. Leaders play the role not only as a symbol of authority, but also as facilitators of dialogue, guardians of collective morality, and catalysts of social integration. The following four themes illustrate how these roles are articulated practically.

Leaders Provide Understanding of National Commitment

In a nutshell, this section presents research findings on how community leaders in the village build and internalize national commitment through contextual, participatory, and inclusive leadership practices. Based on the informants' information, one of the main factors determining success in instilling national values is the consistency of leaders in setting an example and integrating the principles of unity, tolerance, and harmony in various social, religious, and community activities. As revealed by the informant 1-PLTW-KDP-RP:

> Community leaders and religious leaders are also very influential. They often hold meetings to discuss harmony-related issues and find solutions together. They also provide examples of how to coexist peacefully and respectfully with each other in daily life. **(SSF2-3Act).**

Furthermore, Informant 6-PMP-SMPS2 NK-RP explained that leaders who consistently apply these approaches can create a social environment conducive to strengthening national values at various levels of society. This is shown through the strengthening of interfaith dialogue in forums such as FKUB (Forum for Religious Harmony), an open forum to discuss differences and find solutions collectively.

Community leaders also play an essential role in building togetherness through social activities involving all religious groups. They often initiate activities such as interfaith cooperation, inclusive celebrations of holidays, and interfaith dialogue that encourage cross-community participation. In this case, the Informant 5-PLTW added that national values are also conveyed through community organizations and the school environment, including leadership training, national dialogue activities, and habituation of tolerant and inclusive attitudes in daily life.

In line with that, religious leaders from various religions, such as Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity, actively build interfaith communication to maintain social harmony. They not only provide spiritual guidance to their people but also take the initiative to organize interfaith meetings to strengthen brotherhood and prevent potential conflicts. This was explained by the informant 6-PMP-SMPS2 NK-RP.

Several events, such as interfaith cooperation in handling tornado disasters, are also necessary to strengthen social solidarity and national commitment. According to the informants, national commitment is not just a discourse, but is manifested in concrete actions that can be directly benefited by the community, such as community service, social service, and the construction of inclusive public facilities (SSF2-3Act)

Education also plays a strategic role in instilling national awareness from an early age. These values are taught through the curriculum, extracurricular activities, and strengthening students' character at school. With this approach, the younger generation is invited to see diversity as a strength, not a threat, and that tolerance is the key to maintaining a harmonious society.

From all the information obtained, it can be concluded that the leadership practices of community and religious leaders in the Village reflect the sustainable integration of national values in daily life. They carry out this practice formally through structured and informal forums and activities, in daily social interactions. Leadership like this is oriented to personal examples and the collective and integrated social life of the community. Thus, national commitment in the Village is an idea and a real practice that lives amid a diverse community.

Leaders Provide Understanding of Tolerance

The values of tolerance are conveyed verbally and integrated into various aspects of people's lives, both in religious, social, and village development activities. Local leaders practice tolerance through inclusive policies and participatory approaches, creating a safe space for all citizens to contribute to community life. Dialogue between citizens, village deliberations, and interfaith forums are essential to building a common understanding of tolerance and peaceful coexistence. Hal ini sesuai dengan yang disampaikan oleh informant 1-PLTW-KDP-RP, "the tradition of cooperation and deliberation also strengthens the relationship between citizens, thereby creating an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect" (SSF1-4AkebLkl).

In practice, the understanding of tolerance is instilled through interfaith joint activities such as collective religious holidays and discussions that aim to broaden horizons and strengthen acceptance of diversity. The Informant 6-PMP-SMPS2 NK-RP explains this.

They often hold joint activities involving various religious groups, such as joint religious celebrations and interfaith discussions that promote understanding and tolerance. In the Buddhist community, during the traditional bhakti puja and in the temple, lectures are routinely given on tolerance between religious people (SSF1-2TI).

Through these various activities, the community gained direct experience building mutual respect between religious communities. The joint celebration of religious holidays strengthens social interaction, forms a space for productive interfaith dialogue, and encourages openness to differences. The delivery of the values of tolerance through religious discourse, including in the Buddhist community, shows the continuity of tolerance learning both formally and informally. In addition, the concrete form of the value of tolerance is reflected in the community's daily activities.

"This practice is reflected in religious holiday activities that help each other, *rewang*, and even death ceremonies," said the informant (SSF3-2DT). He continued, "At that time, all

religions united to provide assistance and support through funds to buy the equipment. This incident taught us that togetherness and tolerance are the main keys in facing common challenges," (SSF3-1DKK; SSF1-2TI).

Tolerance also grows from interaction between community members in routine activities such as recitations, social gatherings, and other socio-religious groups. These activities bring together individuals from different backgrounds, broaden understanding, and strengthen awareness of the importance of mutual respect. Social activities such as cooperation and humanitarian assistance also become a space for interfaith collaboration, enhancing solidarity and building common goals for the common good. As conveyed by the Informant 2-PLTW-PB-VBG.

> The local community in Pejambon Village, such as recitation groups, social gatherings, and other social activities, plays an essential role in encouraging moderation. They often hold joint activities involving various religious groups, such as joint religious celebrations and interfaith discussions that promote understanding and tolerance (SSF1-2TI).

Efforts to build tolerance are also carried out through collaborative programs between village governments, religious leaders, and community organizations. Inter-religious dialogue is essential to discussing diversity issues and developing preventive measures against potential conflicts. This dialogue creates a reflective space for the community and strengthens the collective awareness of the importance of mutual understanding between different groups.

Education is also an essential pillar in strengthening the values of tolerance. Schools and religious institutions play a role in instilling the values of diversity through curriculum, habituation of values, and tolerance literacy activities, such as training and workshops. With this approach, tolerance can be formed from an early age as an integral part of the character of the residents of the Village. Informant 5-PBPL-SUB VBG-RP confirmed this.

> Then, there is also the role of religious leaders and community leaders who often hold social events or light discussions about the importance of living in harmony. For example, in religious recitations or lectures, messages about tolerance and how to maintain good relations with others of different beliefs are often inserted (SSF2-3Act).

From all the information gathered through interviews, it can be concluded that the values of tolerance in the Village are built systematically through various interfaith and social activities. The tradition of cooperation, joint holiday celebrations, and interreligious dialogue is central to strengthening harmonious social relations. The active involvement of local organizations and educational and religious institutions also contributes significantly to instilling these values. Tolerance in this village has not only become a discourse, but has grown into a culture of living together based on respect for differences and the spirit of togetherness.

Leaders Provide Anti-Violence Understanding

Effective leaders in the context of socio-religious life in the Village not only reject all forms of violence in principle but also actively integrate anti-violence values into every aspect of their leadership. These values are realized through inclusive policies, peaceful

communication patterns, and concrete actions in daily interactions with the community. Based on data obtained from in-depth interviews, one of the main factors determining leaders' success in instilling an understanding of non-violence is consistency in setting an example and building a culture of open dialogue. Informant 5-PBPL-SUB VBG-RP revealed:

> They prioritize dialogue rather than a repressive approach. So, while there may be differences, everything can be resolved by deliberation and mutual understanding (SSF2-4Ctrl).

The application of the principles of nonviolent communication is reflected in various approaches taken by leaders, such as training in empathic listening skills, delivering constructive feedback, and creating a safe space for people to express their aspirations without fear. Religious leaders and community leaders also play an essential role in this, according to the informant 5-PBPL-SUB VBG-RP.

> Religious leaders in this village actively build interfaith communication and become role models in maintaining tolerance. They provide spiritual guidance to their people and establish dialogue with other religious leaders to prevent conflict and strengthen the values of togetherness (SSF1-1KomBer).

In addition, leaders at the local level also developed a mediated-based conflict resolution system, in which any differences are resolved through deliberation, without violence or domination of one party over the other. Informant 5-PLTW-SUB VBG-RP said:

> We often sit together on various occasions to dialogue and solve problems. For example, if there is a misunderstanding between the people, religious leaders quickly intervene to dampen the atmosphere and invite the community to discuss with a cool head. That way, any differences can be resolved without conflict (SSF2-4Ctrl).

This approach to direct communication and deliberation reflects the values of non-violence and affirms the value of togetherness, openness, and respect for diversity in the community. According to the analysis of the findings, this strategy allows participatory decision-making and increases a sense of belonging among citizens. Furthermore, informant 5-PBPL-SUB VBG-RP stated, "they prioritize direct communication and deliberation in resolving differences" (SSF2-4Ctrl).

This statement emphasizes that the people in the village have internalized a more humane and democratic pattern of conflict resolution and have avoided open confrontation. In practice, this mechanism helps to form a harmonious collective culture and strengthen social attachment. In line with this, the same informant explained how the role of religious leaders is crucial in shaping public awareness of the importance of peaceful communication:

> But thanks to the role of religious leaders and community leaders who quickly calm down and invite dialogue, the problem can be solved through deliberation. From there, people are increasingly aware of the importance of communication and mutual respect in diversity" (SSF2-4Ctrl).

In addition to the informal role of community leaders, the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB) has also proven to be a strategic forum in expanding interfaith understanding and encouraging collective problem-solving. Informant 6-PMP-SMPS2 NK-RP emphasized that:

Involvement in FKUB not only raises awareness of the importance of nonviolent attitudes but also forms a more open and moderate mindset: "The experience of interacting with different religious backgrounds helps them understand that conflicts can be resolved by dialogical and deliberative means." (6-PMP-SMPS2 NK-RP).

Dialogue built through FKUB and informal meetings between citizens is a crucial space to express views, clarify misunderstandings, and find standard solutions. This reinforces the value of deliberative democracy at the local level and encourages social cohesion amid diversity of beliefs.

Leaders Provide an Accommodating Understanding of Local Culture

In the context of a multicultural society, the role of a leader is not only limited to administrative functions or strategic decision-making, but also includes the capacity to accommodate the cultural diversity that exists in society. The findings from the field show that effective leadership in Pejambon Village is characterized by the ability of leaders to bridge local cultural values with government policies and programs in harmony.

An informant, 5-PLTW-UI KRT4 -RP, affirms that interfaith involvement in religious celebrations is part of accommodative leadership practices. He explains:

> For example, we Muslims celebrate our holidays and participate in other religious celebrations, such as Christmas or Nyepi. This opens up opportunities for citizens to learn about different cultures and traditions, and increase mutual respect. The community responded very positively to this change. They feel richer in cultural experience, strengthening the relationship between citizens (SSF3-4DAKebLk).

This approach is not just a symbolic form, but a socio-cultural strategy that can strengthen social cohesion amid differences. Furthermore, an accommodating approach to local culture is an essential means of enhancing the community's collective identity. Through support for cross-cultural participation, leaders play a role in providing an understanding that involvement in community traditions does not mean stripping away religious identity, but rather enriching spiritual and social experiences. With open and dialogical communication, village communities become more ready to accept change without losing their cultural identity.

One tangible form of cultural accommodation that village leadership facilitates is preserving local customary and cultural activities. Informant 1-PLTW-KDP-RP revealed that the tradition of commemorating the Day of *Satu Suro* in the Village is still maintained and has become a medium to strengthen the value of tolerance:

> Day of *Suro* activity is carried out together by people from various religions, holding joint prayers. Village leaders gave full support to this activity. Apart from being a form of togetherness and tolerance, this activity also plays a role in preserving the culture inherited from generation to generation (1-PLTW-KDP-RP).

Preserving traditions such as Hari Suro not only preserves local cultural heritage but also serves to build emotional bonds across groups. The village government also actively supported the celebration by involving residents from various religious backgrounds, as reinforced by another informant who stated that, "cultural activities such as the celebration of the 1st day of *suro* involve various religions to carry out joint prayer activities" (SSF1-4AkebLkl).

In addition to Suro Day, other cultural activities such as feasts or selamets are social meeting spaces that strengthen the value of togetherness and cooperation. Kenduri, an expression of Javanese culture, is widely accepted by residents of various religions. Informant 1-PLTW-KDP-RP added, "Kenduri activities are not part of certain religious customs, but are a tradition of the Javanese people as a form of expression of gratitude, togetherness, or respect for ancestors." (1-PLTW-KDP-RP).

This is also reinforced by a statement from another informant: "cultural events such as commemoration of the *Suro* day, feasts or *selamet*, both birth events, thanksgiving, and death commemorations. The community responded enthusiastically because they saw firsthand the benefits of cooperation and tolerance, such as creating a more peaceful and harmonious village atmosphere." (SSF3-2DT).

From the series of quotes, a common thread can be drawn that accommodation for local culture in the Village is not something passive, but the result of a culturally conscious leadership process. Leaders are not only facilitators but also role models in encouraging participation, dialogue, and the preservation of traditions. These findings show that accommodative leadership strategies can bridge local cultural values and contemporary socio-religious dynamics. In this context, local culture is not positioned as an obstacle to development, but rather as a social asset that strengthens solidarity, creates spaces for mutual learning, and strengthens communal identity. Thus, the success of leadership in managing diversity in the Village lies not only in formal policies but also in alignment with local values, respect for cultural heritage, and the ability to build an inclusive and civilized collective narrative.

Discussion

The study results show that local factors in Pejambon Village, Negeri Katon District, Pesawaran Regency, Lampung, play an essential role in shaping and strengthening religious moderation practices in people's lives. Local leaders, such as RT Chairmen and spiritual leaders, actively inculcate the values of moderation through concrete actions, open communication, and community involvement in various inclusive socio-religious activities. National commitment, for example, is instilled through cooperation activities, independence ceremonies, and commemorations of national holidays involving all elements of society across religions and ethnicities. The values of nationalism are conveyed verbally and manifest through attitudes and decisions that support unity (Akhmadi & Tohari, 2022; Pratiwi, 2022; Riniti Rahayu & Surya Wedra Lesmana, 2020). The study results show that local factors in Pejambon Village, Negeri Katon District, Pesawaran Regency, Lampung, play an essential role in shaping and strengthening religious moderation practices in people's lives. Local leaders, such as RT Chairmen and spiritual leaders, actively inculcate the values of moderation through concrete actions, open communication, and community involvement in various inclusive socio-religious

activities. National commitment, for example, is instilled through mutual activities, independence ceremonies, and commemorations of national holidays involving all elements of society across religions and ethnicities. The values of nationalism are conveyed verbally and manifest through attitudes and decisions that support unity (Twigg & Parayitam, 2007).

In addition, the value of tolerance for peaceful coexistence is seen in social interactions between religious communities, such as the participation of Muslims in social activities organized by Christians and vice versa (Arafah, 2020; Hamdi et al., 2021). Citizens' forums are an important space for essential dialogue facilitated by community leaders (Chrisantina, 2021). This attitude shows a form of active, not passive, tolerance, as the Ministry of Religious Affairs (2019) intended in the second pillar of religious moderation, which is to respect differences without losing their respective religious identities. In this case, the leadership carried out also resembles authentic leadership, where the leader's personal and real actions are compatible (Harmi et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, the anti-violence attitude is seen in how the people in the Village resolve conflicts or differences of view in religious and social contexts. Every potential conflict is resolved through a deliberation mechanism that prioritizes a persuasive and familial approach (Abidin, 2021). There is no indication of the use of verbal or physical violence in dealing with differences of opinion between individuals or groups. These findings align with the thinking explained by Maring (2022) about conflict transformation, which emphasizes the importance of building a peaceful and sustainable relationship system in a pluralistic society.

An accommodating attitude towards local culture is another crucial aspect of moderation practices in this village. Local traditions such as feasts, earth alms, and interfaith prayers are not only accepted by all groups but are also used to strengthen social solidarity. Leaders accept local cultural practices that intersect with religious traditions, but instead use them as a force to maintain harmony (Gultom, 2022). This approach is in line with the idea from Masruroh et al. (2022) in cultural leadership, which states that effective leaders can make local culture a source of value and social cohesion that strengthens the community structure.

The practice of religious moderation that grew in Pejambon Village shows that these values are not present instantaneously, but are formed by the interaction between internal factors of the community and a local leadership style that is reflective, participatory, and open to social dynamics. Leaders become essential agents in shaping collective consciousness through a way of life that exemplifies moderate values (Anwar & Haq, 2019). This follows the theory of social learning, where people learn from observing the consistent behavior of leaders between speech and action (Sulaiman et al., 2022).

Thus, this study shows that religious moderation can be formed through national policies, formal education, and community-based social leadership practices. This Village is an example of how the four pillars of moderation of national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation to local culture can be carried out simultaneously and mutually reinforced in a pluralistic village community. Leadership rooted in local values, alignment with social harmony, and active involvement in cross-community activities make religious moderation not just a jargon, but a reality that lives in the daily practices of citizens.

4. CONCLUSION

This research shows that the practice of religious moderation in the village grows organically through local leadership that is reflective, participatory, and responsive to the socio-cultural context of the community. The four pillars of religious moderation are commitment to nationality, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation to local culture, which are carried out simultaneously and integrated into villagers' daily lives. Local leaders, such as the hamlet heads and religious leaders, play a strategic role in building a narrative of nationality and diversity that lives through example, deliberation, and socio-religious activities across faiths and tribes. National commitment is instilled through symbols, discourse, and concrete actions that strengthen the sense of unity. Tolerance is manifested in the form of openness and participation in interfaith activities. Anti-violent attitudes are reflected in the peaceful and deliberative resolution of conflicts. At the same time, local cultural values are accommodated as part of religious expressions that do not conflict with the spirit of moderation. These findings reinforce the understanding that religious moderation is not only a product of formal policy but also the result of social leadership rooted in local values and the practice of living together. Thus, a local leadership approach that prioritizes example, dialogue, and appreciation for local wisdom can effectively strengthen religious moderation at the grassroots level, especially in ethnically and religiously plural societies such as Indonesia.

5. REFERENCES

Abidin, A. Z. (2021). Nilai-Nilai Moderasi Beragama dalam Permendikbud No. 37 Tahun 2018. *JIRA: Jurnal Inovasi dan Riset Akademik*, *2*(5). https://doi.org/10.47387/jira.v2i5.135

Abqa, M. A. R. (2020). Partai Politik dan Moderasi Beragama sebagai Pilar Demokrasi di Indonesia. *RESIPROKAL: Jurnal Riset Sosiologi Progresif Aktual*, *2*(1). https://doi.org/10.29303/resiprokal.v2i1.27

Adiansyah, A., Fadhil Yarda Gafallo, M. F. Y. G., Azis, A. A., & Sufyan Tsauri, M. S. T. (2023). Internalization of Multicultural-Based Religious Guidance in Building Religious Moderation in Lembang. *Jurnal Al-Hikmah*, *21*(1). https://doi.org/10.35719/alhikmah.v21i1.144

Akhmadi, A., & Tohari, K. (2022). Evaluasi Pelatihan Penggerak Penguatan Moderasi Beragama di Jawa Timur. *Andragogi: Jurnal Diklat Teknis Pendidikan Dan Keagamaan*, *10*(1). https://doi.org/10.36052/andragogi.v10i1.290

Anwar, F., & Haq, I. (2019). Religious Moderation Campaign Through Social Media at Multicultural Communities. *KURIOSITAS: Media Komunikasi Sosial Dan Keagamaan*, *12*(2). https://doi.org/10.35905/kur.v12i2.1392

Arafah, S. (2020). Moderasi Beragama: Pengarusutamaan Kearifan Lokal dalam Meneguhkan Kepelbagaian (Sebuah Praktik pada Masyarakat Plural). *Mimikri: Jurnal Agama dan Kebudayaan*, *6*(1).

Chrisantina, V. S. (2021). Efektifitas Model Pembelajaran Moderasi Beragama dengan Berbasis Multimedia pada Peserta Didik Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. *Jurnal Edutrained : Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pelatihan*, *5*(2). https://doi.org/10.37730/edutrained.v5i2.155

Darmawani, E., Suryahadikusumah, A. R., Nurlela, N., & Surtiyoni, E. (2021). Contribution of religious moderation to multicultural counseling competence. *Jurnal Konseling Dan Pendidikan*, *9*(4). https://doi.org/10.29210/167100

Gultom, O. (2022). Moderasi Beragama: Cara Pandang Moderat Mengamalkan Ajaran Agama di Indonesia dalam Perspektif Fenomenologi Agama. *Perspektif, Jurnal Agama Dan Kebudayaan*, *17*(1).

Hamdi, S., Munawarah, M., & Hamidah, H. (2021). Revitalisasi Syiar Moderasi Beragama di Media Sosial: Gaungkan Konten Moderasi untuk Membangun Harmonisasi. *Intizar*, *27*(1). https://doi.org/10.19109/intizar.v27i1.8191

Harmi, H., Karolina, A., Fathurrochman, I., Fadila, Daulay, S. H., Apriani, E., & Supardan, D. (2022). Analysis of Multicultural Understanding and Moderation of Religion of PAUD Teachers in Bengkulu Province. *Pegem Egitim ve Ogretim Dergisi*, *12*(4). https://doi.org/10.47750/pegegog.12.04.13

Hasanah, U., & Abbas, A. (2023). Optimizing Religious Moderation through Progressive Islamic Education: A Philosophical Study. *TAFAHUS: Jurnal Pengkajian Islam*, *3*(1). https://doi.org/10.58573/tafahus.v3i1.65

John W. Creswell. (2017). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. CA: Sage Publications.

Maring, P. (2022). Conflict transformation and collaboration in developing social forestry in Flores, Indonesia. *Forest and Society*, *6*(1). https://doi.org/10.24259/fs.v6i1.13199

Masruroh, S. A., Mutmainah, S., Juanita, V., Aziz, M. A., & Huda, S. (2022). Manifestation of Religious Moderation in Multicultural Metropolitan Community Surabaya. *MUHARRIK: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Sosial*, *5*(1). https://doi.org/10.37680/muharrik.v5i1.1461

Mukni'ah. (2023). *Multicultural Education: The Realization of Religious Moderation in the Realm of Education*. https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-044-2_8

Pratiwi, N. F. (2022). Upaya Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Meningkatkan Penanaman Moderasi Beragama Bagi Peserta Didik di Smpn 2 Badegan. *IAIN Ponorogo*.

Ramadhan, D., & Qolyubi, I. (2021). Religious Moderation as A Solution to Interfaith Marriages in a Multicultural Society. *JASSP*, *1*(2). https://doi.org/10.23960/jassp.v1i2.31

Riniti Rahayu, L., & Surya Wedra Lesmana, P. (2020). Potensi Peran Perempuan dalam Mewujudkan Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia. *Pustaka : Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Budaya*, *20*(1). https://doi.org/10.24843/pjiib.2020.v20.i01.p05

Robert K Yin. (2014). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (Sixth Edition). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Setara. (2024, January 15). *329 Pelanggaran KBB Sepanjang 2023*. SETARA Institute.

Sulaiman, Imran, A., Hidayat, B. A., Mashuri, S., Reslawati, & Fakhrurrazi. (2022). Moderation Religion in the Era of Society 5.0 and Multicultural Society: Studies Based on Legal, Religious, and Social Reviews. *Linguistics and Culture Review*, *Vol. 6*(S5).

Tuju, R. S., Robandi, B., & Sinaga, D. C. (2022). Internalisasi Moderasi Beragama dalam Kurikulum Sekolah Tinggi Teologi di Indonesia. *Jurnal Teologi Berita Hidup*, *4*(2). https://doi.org/10.38189/jtbh.v4i2.240

Turhamun. (2024). Implementation of Religious Moderation in Non-Formal Education in Forming a Multicultural Society. *International Journal of Social Science and Religion (IJSSR)*. https://doi.org/10.53639/ijssr.v5i1.196

Twigg, N. W., & Parayitam, S. (2007). Spirituality as a determinant of Transformational leadership: Moderating Effects of Religious Orientation. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *4*(3). https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080709518668