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Religious Moderation in Yogyakarta Madrasahs: An Evaluation Study

M. Abzar Duraesa

UIN Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris Samarinda

abzar@uinsi.ac.id

Anggie Nadia Dinihari

UIN Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris Samarinda

anggie.nadiadinihari@yahoo.com

Abstract

Discrimination and extremism undermine social cohesion, underscoring the need for character education, particularly religious moderation, in madrasah curricula. However, Society 5.0's learning needs necessitate higher-order thinking methods, such as Computational Thinking. To address the challenges of Society 5.0, this study evaluates a religious moderation program integrated into Islamic education materials that employs computational thinking (CT). This qualitative descriptive study focused on context, transactions, and outcomes using Stake's Countenance evaluation paradigm. 112 professors and 1,276 students were interviewed at madrasahs in the Yogyakarta Special Region. To maintain trustworthiness, we conducted interviews, coded the data, and rechecked the data. The earlier review shows that program preparation and requirements met the Ministry of Religious Affairs' objectives, including teacher aid to internalize religious moderation through CT-oriented instruction. Classroom learning and school culture activities, such as Islamic education recitals and Rohis, are used to demonstrate the program's implementation, according to the transaction evaluation. The outcome review shows that coaching, workshops, and training sessions on religious moderation and critical thinking continue throughout school hours, disrupting learning. Criticism, as a digital-era competency and a comprehensive educational framework for religious moderation in Islamic education, enhances academic discourse. It adapts Stake's Countenance concept to the values of madrasah education. It provides empirical evidence from a large cohort of participants on the translation of policy criteria into everyday learning. It finds a real-world governance gap—training scheduling—that can

reduce program effectiveness even in ready contexts. Program managers can use it to link character education goals to instructional time. It also proposes evaluating other contexts that seek to integrate CT with religious moderation. Finally, it links cognitive talents to social and ethical resilience in schooling to boost Society 5.0 discussions.

Keywords: *computational thinking; Countenance Stake model; Islamic education; madrasah; religious moderation*

Abstrak

Diskriminasi dan ekstremisme menyoroti pentingnya pendidikan karakter, terutama moderasi agama dalam kurikulum madrasah sejalan dengan kebutuhan pembelajaran dalam Masyarakat 5.0 yang memerlukan metode pengajaran berpikir tingkat tinggi seperti *Computational Thinking*. Untuk mengatasi tantangan tersebut, studi ini mengevaluasi program moderasi agama yang terintegrasi ke dalam bahan ajar pendidikan Islam menggunakan *Computational Thinking* (CT). Studi deskriptif kualitatif ini berfokus pada konteks, transaksi, dan hasil menggunakan paradigma evaluasi Countenance Stake. 112 guru dan 1.276 siswa diwawancara di madrasah-madrasah di Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta. Untuk menjaga keandalan, wawancara kembali, *coding*, dan memeriksa data kembali dilakukan. Tinjauan awal menunjukkan bahwa persiapan program dan persyaratannya sesuai dengan tujuan Kementerian Agama, termasuk bantuan guru untuk menginternalisasi moderasi agama melalui pengajaran berorientasi CT. Aktivitas pembelajaran di kelas dan budaya sekolah seperti pembacaan pendidikan Islam dan Rohis menunjukkan implementasi program, berdasarkan evaluasi transaksi. Tinjauan hasil menunjukkan bahwa bimbingan, lokakarya, dan sesi pelatihan tentang moderasi agama dan pemikiran kritis terus berlangsung selama jam sekolah, mengganggu proses pembelajaran. Kritik sebagai kompetensi era digital dan kerangka kerja pendidikan komprehensif untuk moderasi agama dalam pendidikan Islam meningkatkan diskursus akademik. Hal ini menyesuaikan konsep Countenance Stake dengan pendidikan nilai-nilai madrasah. Ini menyediakan bukti empiris dari kelompok peserta besar tentang penerapan kriteria kebijakan dalam pembelajaran sehari-hari. Ditemukan adanya kesenjangan tata kelola nyata penjadwalan pelatihan yang dapat mengurangi efektivitas program bahkan dalam konteks yang siap. Manajer program dapat menggunakannya untuk menghubungkan tujuan pendidikan karakter dengan waktu pembelajaran. Ini juga mengusulkan evaluasi tempat lain yang ingin menggabungkan CT dengan moderasi agama. Akhirnya, ini menghubungkan bakat kognitif dengan ketahanan sosial dan etis dalam pendidikan untuk meningkatkan diskusi tentang Society 5.0

Kata Kunci: *Madrasah, model Countenance Stake, moderasi agama, pemikiran komputasional, pendidikan Islam*

A. Introduction

Indonesia is one of the world's largest multicultural nations, where ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity shapes everyday social life (Pabbajah et al., 2021). While diversity is a national strength, it also creates a social landscape in which prejudice, stereotyping, and exclusion can escalate into identity-based tensions and conflict. In this context, intolerant attitudes manifested through discriminatory behavior and extremist tendencies signal a socio-cultural challenge that cannot be addressed solely through legal or security approaches. Education is therefore positioned as a strategic arena for strengthening civic values, social cohesion, and multicultural awareness through character formation and tolerance-oriented learning (Fita Mustafida, 2020).

Religious moderation provides a value framework for reducing polarization and cultivating constructive interfaith relations within educational settings (Warsah, 2017). In Indonesia, this agenda is institutionalized through formal initiatives, particularly those promoted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which emphasize values such as balance, tolerance, deliberation, reform, exemplary conduct, civic commitment, nonviolence, and respect for local culture (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019). These values are expected to guide not only personal piety but also social ethics, how students respond to differences, manage disagreements, and participate in plural public life (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019). At the school level, learning strategies that encourage deliberation, collaboration, and problem-solving are frequently recommended to foster peace-oriented and diversity-respecting dispositions (Samsul, 2020), and Islamic religious education is often regarded as a means of internalizing responsible religiosity within civic norms (Muchlis, 2020).

Madrasah, as a major Islamic educational institution embedded in local communities, is strategically positioned to promote religious moderation, as it serves learners from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. However, preliminary field observations indicate that the implementation of religious moderation in learning activities has not consistently translated into the social competencies essential to diverse communities. Instruction tends to emphasize individual and vertical religiosity over horizontal social capacities, such as empathic dialogue, conflict management, and cooperative citizenship. In addition, classroom practices may remain predominantly theoretical and normative, with limited opportunities for students to engage with authentic socio-religious challenges encountered in daily life. These conditions risk producing religious understanding that is conceptually recognized yet weakly enacted in practice, thereby reinforcing the need for systematic program evaluation.

The implementation challenge becomes more complex in the Society 5.0 era. Society 5.0 emphasizes human-centered development supported by technology to address increasingly complex social problems (Daheri & Warsah, 2019). This context requires learners to develop higher-order competencies critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving to navigate uncertainty and participate responsibly in digital and plural public spaces (OECD, 2016; Tsai & Tsai, 2018). In religious moderation education, these competencies are relevant because intolerance and

polarization today may spread not only through direct interaction but also through mediated environments in which students must interpret information, evaluate claims, and respond ethically.

Computational Thinking (CT) is increasingly recommended as a structured approach to systematic problem-solving across disciplines. CT involves abstraction, pattern recognition, algorithmic reasoning, and reflective evaluation (including review and debugging) that help learners break down problems, identify essential elements, generate solution steps, and assess consequences (Maharani, 2016). Although CT is often associated with STEM, its logic can support moderation-oriented learning when used to frame ethical decision-making, perspective-taking, and civic problem solving, particularly in contexts where students must negotiate differences and resolve disagreements through reasoned, evidence-based processes.

Despite this potential, the integration of CT into religious moderation programs in madrasahs remains understudied from a program-evaluation perspective. Existing literature commonly discusses moderation values and policy directions (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019; Warsah, 2017) and calls for educational modernization in response to contemporary challenges (Daheri & Warsah, 2019; OECD, 2016), yet fewer studies examine whether the program is implemented as intended across classroom practice and school culture, and whether it results in observable student dispositions and behaviors. Early indications suggest an “implementation gap,” where students may understand moderation concepts theoretically but demonstrate limited preventive attitudes and everyday practices aligned with those values. This aligns with the argument that moral socialization is less effective when values remain abstract, when collaboration among school, family, and community is weak, and when stakeholders hold divergent perspectives in lived experience (Chang, 2004).

Therefore, this study evaluates the implementation of a religious moderation program in Islamic education at madrasah within the Society 5.0 context, positioning computational thinking as a learning process intended to strengthen students' readiness for contemporary challenges. Using Stake's Countenance model, the evaluation examines antecedents (standards and preparedness), transactions (implementation in learning processes and school culture), and outcomes (program results and constraints). The study aims to identify congruence and gaps between intended program objectives and observed practice, and to formulate evidence-based recommendations to strengthen program effectiveness and sustainability.

B. Methods

This research employed a descriptive qualitative evaluation design, using Stake's Countenance model, to investigate the application of religious moderation in Islamic education through a Computational Thinking (CT) framework within the Society 5.0 environment. The model underscores the importance of description and evaluation of antecedents, transactions, and results to juxtapose desired standards with actual practices and pinpoint implementation deficiencies.

The study was carried out in two madrasahs in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, MAN 1 Yogyakarta and MAN 4 Sleman, chosen deliberately for their implementation of CT-related activities, participation in the Bebras Challenge, and the promotion of religious moderation within their educational programs. Participants were intentionally selected from school administrators, Islamic education and CT-related teachers, and students engaged in pertinent learning activities.

Data were gathered via classroom and school activity observations, structured and semi-structured in-depth interviews, and document analysis (e.g., program plans, lesson materials, activity reports, and student records. Before fieldwork, evaluation criteria were established in accordance with policy and school standards, encompassing readiness, implementation quality, and outcomes. These criteria were employed to analyze the alignment between program aims and empirical realities. The data analysis was conducted interactively, with data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions and verifying them repeated iteratively. Triangulation across methodologies and sources bolstered credibility by ensuring that interpretations were substantiated by converging evidence.

C. Results and Discussion

Table 1. Antecedents Summary

Antecedent	Observation	Evaluation implication
Policy and standards	Strong policy mandate and coordination structure (Rofik & Misbah, 2021)	Clear standards exist to guide program preparation
Teacher readiness	Training on moderation + CT; MGMP support; Bebras exposure	Implementer preparedness is relatively strong
Student readiness	Some students are still unclear about moderation and CT	The learner readiness gap may reduce implementation consistency

As shown in Table 1, the religious moderation program is underpinned by a clear policy mandate. The Minister of Religious Affairs Decree No. 328/2022 outlines key duties for strengthening religious moderation, including coordination, guidance provision, program design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and cross-sector collaboration (Rofik & Misbah, 2021). The policy then details program preparation, teacher capacity-building, and initial assessments of students' understanding of religious moderation in CT-based learning.

Teacher readiness appears comparatively strong (Table 1). It began with teacher training organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and associated agents of change, followed by capacity-building for CT, supported by Bebras Indonesia. As mentioned in the teachers' interview, *"I got the guidance provision from the ministry. In that training program, we learn about the religious moderation program and how to integrate in the learning process along with CT"*. This readiness was further

reinforced through professional support networks (MGMP), which were described as effective in strengthening instructional preparedness. Another teacher adds the information about it "*MGMP helps us in developing learning administration and how to implement the lesson plan in the class. We also discuss the problems that occur.*" The study involved 112 teachers and 1,276 students from MAN 1 Yogyakarta and MAN 4 Sleman, offering a substantial implementation base for observing early readiness patterns. Teachers predominantly indicated sufficient understanding of religious moderation and regarded CT-oriented instruction as essential for contemporary requirements, implying that implementer preparedness is both supported and operationally feasible.

However, Table 1 also shows the primary antecedent gap: student readiness is uneven, with some students still unclear about the meaning of religious moderation and the expectations of CT-oriented learning. One of the students stated, "*I still do not get the meaning of the program.*" Interpreting this pattern through Islamic education scholarship, PAI is understood as an educative interaction aimed at shaping students' Islamic personality and values through conscious and structured learning (Hanafi et al., 2018; Karolina, 2018). In this sense, strong policy design and teacher readiness are necessary conditions but not sufficient because the program's intended outcomes depend on students' early comprehension and engagement. This mismatch matters because religious moderation in PAI seeks to cultivate tolerant and multicultural orientations that counter intolerance and extremism (Hanafi et al., 2018). Therefore, readiness must be evidenced not only in implementer capacity and institutional standards, but also in students' baseline understanding at the start of implementation, particularly when CT-oriented learning is positioned to support the development of Society 5.0 competencies.

Table 2. Transactions Summary

Transaction focus	Observation	Evaluation implication
Classroom implementation	Moderation values implemented through learning stages (Chadidjah et al., 2021)	Program is running in instruction, but depth may vary
Teacher professional support	PPKB GPAI strengthens implementation capacity (Chadidjah et al., 2021)	Implementation is supported by ongoing development
School culture vehicles	Rohis and Pentas PAI support moderation culture (Chadidjah et al., 2021)	Culture strengthens continuity beyond classrooms
Implementation risk	Potential ideological diversity and digital influence risks (Alim & Munib, 2021)	Requires active supervision and innovation to prevent drift

As summarized in Table 2, religious moderation in Islamic education at a CT-based madrasah was implemented through staged classroom instruction and school culture activities. The teacher stated that "The program is not only implemented

inside the classroom but also in the overall school program, *such as rohis and pentas PAI*." In instruction, teachers emphasized strengthening students' confidence and trust, cultivating compassion, building ethical awareness, promoting civility and mutual respect, and developing positive habits in school and community (Chadidjah, 2021). Implementation capacity was also supported through the Ministry's continuous professional development for Islamic education teachers (PPKB GPAI), intended to strengthen moderation activities and improve teacher competence (Chadidjah et al., 2021). At the school-culture level, Rohis and *Pentas PAI* functioned as vehicles for extending moderation messages beyond the classroom (Chadidjah et al., 2021). Students stated, "We have an interesting pentas PAI in school. This program is not included in the classroom activities." However, this transactional context also reflects a key gap: although activities are visible and routine, implementation quality may vary, and the madrasah environment remains vulnerable to ideological diversity and digital media influence, which can increase the risk of exclusionary interpretations if not actively supervised and innovated (Alim & Munib, 2021).

Table 3. Outcomes Summary

Outcome focus	Observation	Evaluation implication
Process quality	Strong emphasis on planning, motivation, participation, facilities	Implementation is supported by procedural quality controls
Result evaluation domains	Knowledge measured more consistently than attitude/behavior	Risk of "knowing moderation" without "doing moderation"
Assessment imbalance	Affective and psychomotor outcomes less systematically assessed	Limits evidence of real-life moderation internalization

Table 3 synthesizes the main patterns identified in the domain of Stake's Countenance evaluation, indicating that program implementation is generally reinforced by procedural quality controls, systematic planning, teachers' efforts to motivate students, active participation, and supportive facilities; thus, process quality becomes a primary marker of success. Consistent with this pattern, interviews and observations indicate that success is often attributed to well-prepared lesson planning (annual/semester programs, syllabi, lesson plans), teacher-driven motivation, active classroom engagement, and adequate learning facilities, suggesting that implementation is sustained by managerial and instructional routines. However, evidence of outcomes remains uneven: learning outcomes are documented more consistently in the cognitive domain than in attitudes and behaviors, creating a core gap: students may understand the concept of moderation conceptually without reliably practicing it in everyday interactions. The table, therefore, highlights an assessment imbalance in which affective and psychomotor outcomes are less systematically assessed, limiting the credibility of claims about real-life internalization of religious moderation values an important

concern because PAI moderation targets internalized dispositions and lived practices, not only knowledge gains (Hanafi et al., 2018; Karolina, 2018).

D. Conclusion

Overall, the evaluation indicates that the religious moderation program in CT-based madrasahs is supported by clear policy standards and relatively strong teacher readiness, and is implemented through both classroom instruction and school culture activities. However, two gaps reduce the strength of effectiveness claims: student readiness is uneven at the outset, and evaluation practices still prioritize cognitive achievement over attitudes and observable behavior, creating a risk of “knowing moderation” without consistently “living moderation” in daily interactions. Strengthening the program, therefore, requires more systematic efforts to build students’ initial understanding and engagement. It also requires outcome measures that capture affective and behavioral change, so that moderation is evidenced in practice rather than merely as knowledge.

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