



Religious Moderation, Five Loves, and National Values in Islamic Religious Education Learning

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to reconstruct the integration of religious moderation, Panca Cinta (Love), and national values in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. The background of this study is based on the still partial approach to PAI learning that tends to separate the spiritual, social, and national dimensions. This study uses a qualitative approach with library research, which analyzes various primary and secondary sources related to religious moderation, the concept of mahabbah in Islam, and national values in the Indonesian context. The results show that religious moderation functions as an epistemological framework, Panca Cinta as an ontological-axiological foundation, and national values as an orientation for social praxis. These three concepts have an interdependent relationship that can be constructed in an integrative learning model based on ontology-epistemology-axiology. This model produces transformative, inclusive, and contextual PAI learning, and is able to shape the religious-national character of students. This study provides a theoretical contribution to the development of PAI learning designs based on value integration that is relevant to the challenges of the plurality of Indonesian society.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 30 April,
2026

Revised 25 May, 2026

Accepted 22 June,
2026

Keywords: Religious Moderation, Five Loves, National Values, and Islamic Religious Education Learning.

Journal Homepage <https://ojs.staialfurqan.ac.id/IJoASER/>

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INTRODUCTION

Strengthening religious moderation is a national strategic agenda developed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia through implementation in the 2020–2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) and Presidential Regulation Number 58 of 2023 concerning Strengthening Religious Moderation as a response to increasing social polarization, intolerance, and tendencies towards religious-based extremism in the Indonesian public sphere. "Religious moderation is understood as a perspective, attitude, and practice of religion that is fair, balanced, non-extremist, and respects diversity within the framework of national and state life. In contemporary literature, religious moderation is seen as a learning strategy capable of shaping inclusive character through cognitive, affective, and social practical approaches (Muhibbi et al., 2025; Fauzi et al., 2025).

In learning practices, particularly in Islamic Religious Education (PAI), the value of religious moderation is often conveyed through conceptual and normative teaching materials. This approach tends to position moderation as cognitive content, rather than as a pedagogical paradigm internalized in the learning process. As a result, the internalization of values has not fully addressed the affective and practical dimensions of students' social lives. In many cases, religious moderation is taught as knowledge about tolerance, rather than as a reflective awareness that shapes national character (Ritonga & Nurmawati, 2025; Sumianti et al., 2025).

On the other hand, national values in learning are often positioned within the realm of

civic education and have not been fully integrated systematically with the dimensions of religious spirituality. Yet, in the context of pluralistic Indonesia, the relationship between religious education and national values must be integrative and mutually reinforcing. Contemporary educational and policy figures such as Yaqut Cholil Qoumas (Minister of Religious Affairs 2020–2024), who advocated for the certification of preachers with national insight to strengthen religious moderation, demonstrated the importance of synergizing religiosity and nationalism in constructive educational and da'wah practices. Furthermore, contemporary studies of moderation education highlight that the integration of principles such as *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawassuth* (balance), and *ta'adul* (justice) into the Islamic Religious Education curriculum can strengthen the national insight of students in Indonesia's pluralistic society (e.g., *Integration of Religious Moderation into the Indonesian Islamic Religious Education Curriculum*, Fathunnajih et al., 2025). The lack of integration between religious education and national education has the potential to create a dichotomy of identity between religiosity and nationalism that is contrary to the character of Indonesian society which is both religious and plural.

The concept of *Panca Cinta*, which includes love for God (Allah and the Messenger), fellow human beings, science, the environment, and the homeland, offers an affection-based educational approach and value transformation in the context of contemporary Islamic education. The Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) which includes the values of *Panca Cinta* has been developed by the Directorate General of Islamic Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2025, showing that the value of love is not only a moral value but also a holistic educational framework that connects the spiritual, social, and national dimensions in the process of character formation of students (studies on the Love-Based Curriculum show the importance of love in forming humanist, nationalist, and socially caring attitudes). This paradigm has the potential to be an integrative bridge between the spiritual, social, and national dimensions because love is not only a feeling but also an axiological foundation in the formation of a moderate character and commitment to the nation. In the tradition of Islamic thought, the concept of *mahabbah* or spiritual love is also found in the teachings of Imam Al-Ghazali (11th century) who emphasized that love for God is a form of deep inner relationship and is the peak of human spiritual transformation. According to Al-Ghazali, love is not just an emotion, but rather the foundation for human relations with God and others, which is relevant in building the experience of the values of *Panca Cinta* in contemporary education.

Theoretically, religious moderation is rooted in the concept of *ummatan wasathan* as stated in QS. Al Baqarah: 143, namely a balanced, just community that rejects extremism in religious practices, as analyzed in contemporary semantic studies that review the term *wasatan* in the Qur'an (Amalia, Bashori & Sanusi, 2025). Contemporary moderation is understood as a religious paradigm that prioritizes balance between text and context as well as between faith commitment and social openness, which is historically associated with the concept of *fiqh alwasathiyah* developed by Yusuf al-Qaradawi in the study of Islamic moderation *fiqh* (discussed in contemporary literature even though al-Qaradawi's original text is not labeled 2021–2025). The official document of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia within the framework of the 2021–2024 Religious Moderation Roadmap and its implementation studies emphasizes four main indicators of religious moderation: national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodating to local culture, which serve as a reference for the moderation education strategy in Indonesia (these indicators are widely cited in the latest moderation education studies).

Epistemologically, religious moderation is not merely an ethical norm, but is a framework of thought that forms a balanced orientation of religious interpretation and social practice, as discussed by Sudarmin & Amaluddin (2025) in their study of the role of Islamic Religious Education in internalizing religious moderation in the context of educating the younger generation.

However, pedagogically, religious moderation often stops at the normative-conceptual level. It is taught as material, not as an epistemic paradigm for learning. This means that moderation is not yet a full-fledged learning approach, but rather merely learning content. This is where a theoretical problem arises: how to transform moderation from a normative

concept into a learning structure?

If religious moderation is the epistemic framework, then Panca Cinta can be positioned as the ontological-axiological foundation, while national values become practical manifestations in the socio-political sphere. However, to date, these three concepts have been discussed more fragmentarily. Previous research generally examined:

1. Religious moderation in policy or curriculum perspective (Muhibbi et al., 2025; Fauzi et al., 2025)
2. Character education based on the values of love or religious humanism (ICOERESS, UIN Jambi, 2022; Nyak Cut Fadhillah et al., 2025)
3. Religious nationalism in the context of Indonesianness (Ritonga & Nurmawati, 2025; Sumianti et al., 2025)

Few studies have reconstructed the ontological, epistemological, and axiological relationships of these three within a coherent theoretical framework for learning. Based on this, a conceptual reconstruction is needed that integrates religious moderation, the Five Love Principles, and national values within a systematic, transformative, and contextual learning framework. This integration is crucial not only for strengthening students' cognitive dimensions but also for fostering affective awareness and a commitment to national practice rooted in inclusive Islamic spirituality. Thus, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is no longer merely a matter of transmitting doctrine but also a space for the formation of a moderate religious national character oriented toward national unity.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on a conceptual analysis of the integration of religious moderation, the Five Loves, and national values in Islamic Religious Education learning.

The data sources in this study consist of:

1. **Primary sources**, including:
 - a. Official document of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia regarding Religious Moderation within the framework of the 2021–2024 Religious Moderation Roadmap and its implementation (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022–2023).
 - b. Contemporary studies on fiqh al-wasathiyah by Yusuf al-Qaradawi discussed in modern literature (Misbah, 2022; Fathunnajih et al., 2025).
 - c. The concept of mahabbah in Islamic education as reinterpreted in contemporary educational studies (Ahmad Arif, Muhammad Nur Amin & Eka Prasetiawati, 2023; Nyak Cut Fadhillah et al., 2025).
2. **Secondary sources**, in the form of national and international scientific journal articles published in 2021–2025 that are relevant to the themes of religious moderation, character education based on the value of love, and religious nationalism (Ritonga & Nurmawati, 2025; Sumianti et al., 2025; Arifin & Huda, 2024; Arikarani et al., 2024; Ichsan et al., 2024).

Data collection techniques were conducted through documentation studies, namely by identifying, classifying, and reviewing relevant literature. Data analysis used content analysis techniques, with the following steps: (1) data reduction, (2) concept categorization, (3) interpretation of meaning, (4) theoretical synthesis.

To maintain data validity, this study employed source triangulation, comparing various conceptually relevant references. The analysis results were then structured within an ontological, epistemological, and axiological framework to produce an integrative and systematic learning construct.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Conceptual Relationship of Three Variables

The analysis shows that religious moderation, the Five Loves, and national values have an interdependent relationship that forms a conceptual framework for transformative learning. In detail:

1. Religious Moderation → Inclusive Thinking Framework: Religious moderation serves as an epistemological dimension, namely a balanced, critical, and dialogical way of thinking in understanding religious texts and social realities. Students who understand religious moderation are trained to balance religious principles with the context of life, avoid extremism, and appreciate diversity. Thus, religious moderation is not merely normative content, but a framework that guides students in developing an inclusive and reflective awareness.
2. Five Loves → Affective Foundation: Five Loves act as the initial ontological and axiological dimensions, forming the moral, affective, and spiritual foundations of students. By internalizing love for God, others, knowledge, the environment, and the homeland, students gain moral energy that drives ethical and empathetic actions. Five Loves serve as the foundation for building a deep awareness of values, so that every action carried out in the learning and social context is not merely a formality, but a reflection of moral and spiritual awareness.
3. National Values → Social Practical Orientation: National values occupy the axiological dimension as a practical result of moral awareness and an inclusive framework of thought built through the Five Love Principles and religious moderation. This practical orientation encompasses concrete actions in social life, respect for diversity, commitment to unity, and active participation in community development. National values serve as a concrete indicator that the internalization of spiritual and epistemic values has been translated into actions oriented towards social good and diversity.

Interdependence of Three Variables

These three variables are systemically related to each other:

- a) Religious moderation provides a method of critical thinking that balances spiritual and social understanding.
- b) Panca Cinta provides moral energy and affective motivation to internalize values.
- c) National values become a real manifestation of moral awareness and moderate ways of thinking.

This interdependence demonstrates that without a foundation of love (Panca Cinta), religious moderation can lose its affective depth, and without a moderate framework, the internalization of love can lose its rationality and social direction. Conversely, national values as a social practice ensure that the affective foundation and epistemic framework are not confined to theory but are applied in real-life contexts.

Thus, this conceptual relationship forms an integrative learning paradigm: ontology (Panca Cinta) → epistemology (religious moderation) → axiology (national values). This model is a strong and novel theoretical contribution, as it simultaneously connects spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions in accordance with the demands of Islamic Religious Education learning that is transformative, contextual, and relevant to the reality of the Indonesian nation.

Integrative Construction in Learning

This research formulates an integrative learning construct that systematically connects the Five Loves, religious moderation, and national values. This model results in transformative learning. This concept aligns with the updated transformative learning theory in contemporary literature, emphasizing that learning must transform students' perspectives through critical reflection on experiences and social realities (Taylor, 2022; Cranton & King, 2023).

This construction is built in three stages of integration, which reflect the ontology-epistemology-axiology flow:

1. Internalization Spiritual (Value Formation - Ontological)

The first stage emphasizes the foundation of students' moral and spiritual

awareness. Learning begins with an exploration of the meaning of love for God and fellow human beings, according to the principles of the Five Loves. In this stage:

- a. Students understand vertical (*hablum minallah*) and horizontal (*hablum minannas*) relationships, so that moral values are not only theoretical.
- b. Focus on internalizing affective values and intrinsic motivation, so that learning penetrates cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions.
- c. Methods: reflection, narrative of experience, thematic discussion, and analysis of moral stories.

This stage ensures that students' affective and spiritual foundations are solid before proceeding to critical analysis of social and national issues.

2. Moderate Dialogue (Cognitive Engagement – Epistemological)

The second stage emphasizes the development of critical and inclusive thinking through religious moderation. Students are encouraged to:

- a. Analyze issues of diversity, social conflict, and national values reflectively.
- b. Using the principles of *tawassuth*, *tasamuh*, *i'tidal*, *tawazun* as a framework of thought that balances religious principles and social context.
- c. Methods: constructive debate, case studies, conflict simulations, and analysis of local social phenomena. With this approach, religious moderation is not merely normative material, but becomes an epistemic framework that guides students in critical, dialogical, and proportional thinking.

3. Actualization of Nationality (Civic Practice – Axiology)

The third stage emphasizes the implementation of national values as a practical result of spiritual foundations and a moderate framework of thought. Students apply learning through:

- a. **Community-based and collaborative social projects.**
- b. **Environmental action or community care activities.**
- c. **Active participation in cross-cultural or religious activities that strengthen unity.**

This stage emphasizes that national values are not merely a civic doctrine, but are the result of a mature spiritual and dialogical internalization process, which is realized in real actions.

d. Pedagogical Implications

1. Holistic (Cognitive–Affective–Psychomotor)

- a. Learning not only emphasizes cognitive aspects (understanding religious moderation and national values), but also forms affective dimensions (internalization of the Five Loves) and psychomotor (practical actions in society).
- b. This model enables students to understand why (ontology), how (epistemology), and what (axiology) simultaneously, so that learning is integrative and transformative.

2. Inclusive

- a. Using religious moderation as an epistemic framework, students are encouraged to appreciate differences and develop healthy dialogue between religious communities and social groups. This approach aligns with the principles of multicultural education, which emphasize students' ability to understand, accept, and live within diversity, as discussed in contemporary literature (Banks & Banks, 2022; Grant, 2023).
- b. This approach creates awareness of plurality and prevents the emergence of exclusive or intolerant attitudes in educational environments and society.

3. Contextual to the Reality of Indonesian Nationality

- a. National values applied as social practices strengthen the connection between classroom learning and real life.
- b. Students learn to translate the principles of love for the homeland and tolerance into real actions, such as community activities, social projects, and environmental actions, so that learning becomes relevant to local social and cultural conditions.

4. Oriented towards the Formation of Religious National Character
 - a. The integration of the three variables enables the formation of students' character to be religious, critical, tolerant, and socially responsible.
 - b. This character is in line with the goals of contemporary Islamic education: to form people who are faithful, have noble morals, and are committed to the unity and integrity of the nation.
 - c. This approach bridges the spiritual (Panca Cinta), epistemic (religious moderation), and socio-practical (national values) dimensions so that learning becomes holistic and sustainable.

Thus, the pedagogical implication of this integrative construction is the creation of an Islamic Education learning model that is transformative, contextual, and relevant to the challenges of Indonesia's plurality, while simultaneously strengthening national commitment based on inclusive spirituality and moral values.

CONCLUSION

Based on theoretical and conceptual analysis, it can be concluded that religious moderation, the Five Loves, and national values have an integral relationship in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. Specifically:

- a. Religious moderation functions as an epistemic framework, namely a guide to critical, dialogical, and inclusive thinking in understanding religious texts and social realities.
- b. Panca Cinta acts as an axiological and ontological foundation, building moral, affective, and spiritual awareness in students as a basis for internalizing values.
- c. National values become the orientation of social practice, namely a real manifestation of moral foundations and a moderate framework of thought in social and national life.

The integration of the three produces a transformative learning model, which emphasizes not only cognitive aspects but also affective and socio-civic aspects. This model is:

- a. Religious: affirms spiritual foundations and moral ethics.
- b. Inclusive: respecting diversity and encouraging social dialogue.
- c. Contextual: relevant to the reality of Indonesia's plurality and diversity.

The novelty of this research lies in the systematic construction that connects religious moderation, the Five Loves, and national values within a single integrated pedagogical framework, differing from previous research that discussed the three concepts partially or independently. This integrative approach provides clear ontological-epistemological-axiological guidance for Islamic Religious Education educators, so that learning is not merely a transfer of knowledge, but also forms religious, critical, and socially and nationally responsible individuals. Contemporary literature emphasizes that the reconstruction of Islamic education is necessary to be able to respond to the challenges of the times with an integrative, contextual approach, and oriented towards the formation of a complete character of students (Fathunnajih et al., 2025; Arifin & Huda, 2024).

Thus, this research contributes to the development of transformative, holistic, and contextual Islamic Religious Education learning designs, while also supporting the strengthening of religious moderation and national character in Indonesia's plural and multicultural era.

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