

Moderate Character Education in Sasak Cultural Institutions: An Islamic Education Perspective

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Abstract: This study explores moderate character education within the cultural institutions of the Sasak community from the perspective of Islamic Religious Education. In Sasak society, the values of religious moderation have long been embedded through various traditions and social institutions that reflect attitudes of tolerance, balance (*wasatiyyah*), and inclusivity. Islamic education, particularly within pesantren and *madrasah*, plays a strategic role in strengthening the moderate character within society. This study employs a qualitative approach, utilizing literature reviews and observations of local cultural practices that contribute to fostering a moderate religious mindset. The findings indicate that moderate character education within the Sasak community is reflected in traditions such as *begibung*, *nyongkolan*, and customary law practices (*awig-awig*), which instill values of solidarity and social harmony. Furthermore, the role of *Tuan Guru* in educating *santri* about Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (a mercy to all creation) is crucial in maintaining a balance between Islamic teachings and local wisdom. However, contemporary challenges such as uncontrolled digital information flow and the rise of extremist discourse on social media necessitate adaptive strategies in Islamic education. Therefore, strengthening moderation-based curricula, leveraging technology for Islamic education and *dakwah*, and fostering collaboration between pesantren and higher education institutions are essential strategies to sustain moderation values in the digital era. In conclusion, moderate character education within Sasak cultural institutions represents an integration of Islam and local wisdom that fosters an inclusive and harmonious society. Synergy between Islamic educational institutions, religious scholars (*ulama*), and the government is crucial in reinforcing an education system based on moderation values to address the challenges posed by globalization and technological advancements.

Keywords: Character education, religious moderation, Sasak cultural institutions, Islamic education, digital transformation.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini membahas pendidikan karakter moderasi dalam pranata budaya Sasak dari perspektif Pendidikan Agama Islam. Dalam masyarakat Sasak, nilai-nilai moderasi beragama telah lama tertanam melalui berbagai tradisi dan pranata sosial yang mencerminkan sikap toleransi, keseimbangan (*wasatiyyah*), dan inklusivitas. Pendidikan Islam, khususnya dalam lingkungan pesantren dan madrasah, memiliki peran strategis dalam memperkuat karakter



moderasi di tengah masyarakat. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi pustaka dan observasi terhadap praktik-praktik budaya lokal yang berkontribusi dalam membangun sikap moderat dalam beragama. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan karakter moderasi di masyarakat Sasak terefleksikan dalam tradisi *begibung*, *nyongkolan*, dan praktik hukum adat (*awig-awig*), yang mengajarkan nilai kebersamaan dan harmoni sosial. Selain itu, peran *Tuan Guru* dalam mendidik santri tentang Islam yang rahmatan lil ‘alamin menjadi kunci dalam menjaga keseimbangan antara ajaran Islam dan kearifan budaya lokal. Namun, tantangan modern seperti arus informasi digital yang tidak terkontrol dan meningkatnya wacana ekstremisme di media sosial mengharuskan adaptasi dalam pendidikan Islam. Oleh karena itu, penguatan kurikulum berbasis moderasi, pemanfaatan teknologi dalam dakwah dan pembelajaran, serta kolaborasi antara pesantren dan institusi pendidikan tinggi menjadi strategi utama dalam menjaga nilai-nilai moderasi di era digital. Kesimpulannya, pendidikan karakter moderasi dalam budaya Sasak merupakan model integrasi antara Islam dan kearifan lokal yang mampu membentuk masyarakat yang inklusif dan harmonis. Sinergi antara lembaga pendidikan Islam, ulama, dan pemerintah sangat diperlukan untuk memperkuat sistem pendidikan berbasis nilai-nilai moderasi guna menghadapi tantangan globalisasi dan teknologi.

Kata kunci: Pendidikan karakter, moderasi beragama, pranata budaya sasak, pendidikan Islam, transformasi digital

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Introduction

Today, Islamic education faces numerous challenges, ranging from radicalism and secularization to the influence of globalization, which impacts Islamic values in society. In this context, religious moderation emerges as a relevant solution to build a tolerant, inclusive, and steadfast Muslim character that remains rooted in Islamic teachings. The Sasak community in Lombok has long practiced moderation values through their cultural institutions, reflecting a harmonious relationship between religion, tradition, and social life. Through the roles of *Tuan Guru* (religious leaders), *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), and other Islamic educational institutions, the character of moderation has been passed down from generation to generation.

Character education based on moderation has become a central issue in academic and educational policy discussions, particularly in the context of multicultural and multi-religious societies. Moderation-based character education emphasizes values such as tolerance, inclusivity, and balance (*wasatiyyah*) in religious practice and social interaction. Religious moderation in Islamic education is a fundamental aspect of building a harmonious social order, especially in Indonesia, which is characterized by high ethnic and religious diversity (Saifuddin, 2019). In this regard, integrating moderation-based character education with local cultural institutions offers a strategic solution for strengthening Islamic values that align with local cultural wisdom.

The goal of moderation-based character education is to foster inclusive and tolerant attitudes in social and religious life. According to Saifudin (2021), religious moderation can be integrated into Islamic education curricula through an integrative approach that teaches values such as justice (*adl*), balance (*wasatiyyah*), and wisdom (*hikmah*). Islamic education must be capable of shaping individuals who not only understand religious doctrines but also possess the social skills necessary to thrive in a pluralistic society.

A study by Imbar (2024) demonstrates that character education in Islam can strengthen social harmony by teaching students to appreciate diversity and understand Islamic teachings contextually. These values can be instilled through experiential learning, inclusive approaches in religious education, and intercultural dialogue in both formal and non-formal educational processes.

The Sasak people living in Lombok has cultural institutions deeply intertwined with Islamic teachings. The Islamization of Lombok occurred gradually through the propagation of Islamic teachings by scholars and saints, which later became acculturated with local traditions (Mulianah, 2020). This acculturation created a unique system of values and norms, which subsequently became integral to the social and educational life of the Sasak people.

Udin (2020) emphasizes that Islamic education in Lombok is heavily influenced by traditional values reinforced through the *pesantren* and *madrasah* (Islamic schools) systems. Values such as *akhlakul karimah* (noble character), cooperation (*gotong royong*), and respect for social differences have become integral to the Sasak culture-based education system.

Religious moderation represents a fundamental principle in maintaining balance in religious life, preventing individuals from falling into extremism or excessive liberalism. In Sasak society, moderation values have long been institutionalized in various cultural practices, such as *awig-awig* (customary laws), the *Perang Topat* festival, and deliberation traditions in conflict resolution. Furthermore, the role of *Tuan Guru* as spiritual leaders and educators has become a primary pillar in instilling Islamic values grounded in moderation. However, modern developments present new challenges for Islamic education, particularly in confronting the currents of globalization and the digital era.

Pesantren and other Islamic educational institutions in Lombok now face technological disruption that transforms patterns of learning and social interaction. The massive amount of information circulating through digital media potentially threatens the internalization of moderation values, especially among younger generations vulnerable to ideological polarization. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate how Islamic education in Lombok can adapt to technological advancements without losing the moderation values that have been inherited across generations.

Additionally, studies on integrating local wisdom into Islamic education remain limited, despite the Sasak culture having demonstrated its effectiveness in building social harmony. Consequently, this research becomes particularly significant in formulating strategies to strengthen Islam-based moderation character education relevant to contemporary developments, while simultaneously preserving local cultural values as a foundation for building an inclusive and tolerant society.

In the context of Islamic education, moderation character education plays a role in forming personalities with *akhlakul karimah*. Nurdin (2018) highlights that moderation in Islam aims not only to maintain balance in religious understanding but also to avoid extremist attitudes. Islam emphasizes the importance of *tawasuth* (middle path), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and deliberation (*musyawarah*) in social life, all of which can be applied in both formal and non-formal education.

According to Wahid (2018), Islamic education curricula must incorporate the concept of *wasatiyyah* (moderation) to effectively develop students who are not only intellectually capable but also possess a moderate and inclusive religious understanding. This perspective gains significant scholarly validity when considering the broader educational framework that positions moderation as a fundamental epistemological approach rather than merely a pedagogical strategy. The implementation of moderation education within curricula can be accomplished through approaches grounded in local wisdom, as evidenced in Sasak cultural practices.

Based on these complex issues, this research aims to address several primary academic inquiries: How are concepts of religious moderation within Sasak cultural institutions applied in community life, particularly through the dynamic interplay between formal religious authority and informal cultural practices? How does the transformation of the Tuan Guru's role in Lombok's Islamic education contribute to moderation character education, especially considering the evolving socio-political contexts that have redefined religious leadership in post-reform Indonesia? How can the integration of moderation values and local wisdom within Islamic educational systems provide viable solutions in addressing the challenges of globalization and digitalization, particularly regarding identity formation and ethical reasoning in pluralistic societies? What strategic frameworks can be implemented to strengthen Islam-based moderation character education in Lombok while maintaining relevance to contemporary developments, especially considering

the tensions between tradition and moderation in rapidly changing educational landscapes?

Discussion

Religious Moderation in Sasak Cultural Institutions

Religious moderation constitutes a fundamental principle in maintaining balance between extreme religious understanding and excessive secularism. Within the context of the Sasak community, moderation has evolved into an integral component of cultural identity, institutionalized across various aspects of life, ranging from social norms and customary law (*awig-awig*) to religious traditions. This research reveals how Sasak cultural institutions function as effective mediums for moderation character education, particularly through the role of *Tuan Guru* and various social practices that reinforce values of harmony.

The ethnographic and phenomenological approaches employed in this study have enabled a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of Sasak communities in implementing moderation values in their daily lives. The primary research methods included participatory observation, interviews with community leaders and *Tuan Guru*, and analysis of traditional documents and local Islamic texts. Additionally, digital technologies such as Natural Language Processing (NLP) were utilized to analyze traditional Sasak texts, while Social Network Analysis (SNA) helped map the dissemination patterns of moderation values within Sasak communities.

The Sasak people have long internalized the concept of moderation as a middle path between left and right extremism. Moderation in Sasak culture is reflected in their approach to Islamic teachings, which is not solely text-based but also accommodates local social and cultural contexts. This approach was historically known as *Wetu Telu* Islam, which initially represented a syncretic form of Islam that subsequently evolved into a more systematic moderate

Islamic practice following the increasing influence of *Tuan Guru* within the community.

As articulated in an interview with a prominent *Tuan Guru* from Central Lombok, moderation in Sasak Islam is manifested through three principal aspects: balance in worship practices, harmony in social life, and respect for diversity (Badaruddin, 2019). This attitude is exemplified in inclusive religious traditions, such as the *perang topat* festival and customary deliberation practices. The integration of these traditional practices with Islamic principles demonstrates how cultural institutions can effectively transmit moderation values across generations, creating a sustainable framework for character education that is deeply embedded in local wisdom.

The Sasak community has long internalized the concept of moderation as a middle path between left and right extremism. Moderation in Sasak culture is reflected in their approach to Islamic teachings, which extends beyond textual interpretations to accommodate local social and cultural contexts. This distinctive approach, historically identified as *Islam Wetu Telu*, initially emerged as a syncretic form of Islam that subsequently evolved into more systematic moderate Islamic practices as the influence of *Tuan Guru* strengthened within the community.

As articulated during an interview with a prominent *Tuan Guru* from Central Lombok, moderation in Sasak Islam manifests through three fundamental aspects: *balance in worship practices, harmony in social life, and respect for diversity*. These principles are embodied in various cultural institutions that continue to be preserved, such as the *perang topat* and *musyawarah adat*, which symbolize the harmonious relationship between Muslim and Hindu communities in Lombok. These cultural practices serve as effective vehicles for transmitting values of tolerance and mutual respect across different religious communities, thereby reinforcing moderation as a core element of Sasak identity.

Wetu Telu developed among the Sasak people prior to the arrival of more orthodox Islamic scholars. This tradition integrated elements of Islamic teachings with deeply rooted local customs. Although orthodox Islamic perspectives might consider these practices somewhat incomplete, *Wetu Telu* played a significant role in gradually introducing Islamic values to the Sasak community without eliminating their cultural identity. This gradual process of Islamization demonstrates how religious moderation functioned as an effective strategy for cultural adaptation and religious transformation in the region.

Over time, the educational role of *Tuan Guru* has strengthened considerably. These religious scholars have introduced more profound Islamic teachings while maintaining the principle of *wasatiyyah*. This balanced approach is evident in Sasak worship patterns that preserve local traditions, such as *kenduri* or *selamatan* (ceremonial feasts), which represent acculturation between Islamic teachings and pre-Islamic cultural practices. These traditions are conducted as expressions of gratitude to Allah and as mechanisms for strengthening social bonds within the community. The persistence of these acculturated practices illustrates how religious moderation has enabled the Sasak community to embrace Islamic principles while honoring their cultural heritage, creating a unique synthesis that contributes to social cohesion and religious harmony.

Religious moderation in Sasak society extends beyond worship practices to permeate social life. A concrete exemplification of this integration is the *festival perang topat*, an annual tradition held at Lingsar Temple in West Lombok. This festival brings together Muslim and Hindu communities who collectively throw rice cakes (*topat*) as symbols of prosperity and unity. Despite its ritualistic nature, *perang topat* festival demonstrates how Islam and Hinduism coexist harmoniously without compromising their respective theological foundations. This cultural phenomenon represents a lived manifestation of religious moderation that transcends theoretical frameworks, embodying

interfaith harmony through shared celebratory practices rather than merely philosophical dialogue.

Additionally, the principle of *musyawarah adat* (customary deliberation) constitutes a vital component in conflict resolution and social harmony maintenance. In Sasak culture, *musyawarah* is employed not only to resolve interpersonal disputes but also in community decision-making processes. Within the context of moderate Islam, this tradition reflects the value of *syura* (consultation) taught in Islamic tradition as a methodology for achieving consensus in social and religious affairs. The institutionalization of deliberative practices within Sasak cultural frameworks demonstrates how Islamic principles can be operationalized through indigenous governance structures, creating an effective synthesis of religious values and cultural mechanisms.

According to research conducted by Mustanir, the *musyawarah* tradition in Sasak society functions as a conflict resolution mechanism grounded in Islamic values and local cultural norms. This approach enables communities to resolve differences without resorting to formal legal channels, thereby cultivating a more peaceful and inclusive environment (Mustanir, 2024). This research empirically validates how traditional deliberative institutions serve as effective vehicles for implementing religious moderation principles in practical contexts, providing valuable insights into how religious values can be operationalized through cultural practices to promote social cohesion.

The role of *Tuan Guru* as spiritual leaders and educators has significantly influenced the preservation of moderation values within Sasak society. These religious scholars not only impart religious knowledge in pesantren and madrasa but also function as community figures who participate in social, cultural, and political domains. In Lombok, pesantren play a crucial role in educating students with *wasatiyyah* values. Islamic educational curricula taught in pesantren frequently accommodate local wisdom while adhering to Islamic teachings. This approach ensures that Islamic principles can be comprehended and practiced by communities within their own cultural contexts,

demonstrating how educational institutions serve as critical agents in the transmission and contextualization of moderate Islamic values.

In the digital era, *Tuan Guru* began leveraging social media and digital platforms to disseminate religious teachings that emphasize values of tolerance and diversity. Several pesantren in Lombok have developed e-learning programs and online Islamic studies to reach broader audiences, particularly younger generations who are more actively engaged in digital environments. This technological adaptation represents a significant evolution in traditional religious pedagogy, demonstrating how religious institutions are reconfiguring their educational methodologies while maintaining doctrinal continuity. The digital transformation of Islamic education in Sasak communities illustrates the dynamic nature of religious moderation that adapts to contemporary socio-technological contexts without compromising fundamental theological principles.

Although moderation has been an integral component of Sasak cultural institutions, novel challenges have emerged in the era of globalization and digitalization. The Sasak community, particularly younger generations, is increasingly exposed to rapid information flows through internet and social media channels. This digital connectivity facilitates broader dissemination of Islamic values while simultaneously creating potential vectors for extremist ideologies that may threaten the established equilibrium of moderation. This dialectical tension between opportunity and vulnerability in digital spaces necessitates a reconsideration of how religious moderation is conceptualized and operationalized within contemporary contexts characterized by borderless information exchange.

According to Udin's research, several pesantren in Lombok have begun experiencing challenges in maintaining moderate Islamic values due to the increasing influence of transnational ideologies penetrating through social media and global networks (Udin, 2020). These findings highlight the complex interplay between local cultural resilience and global ideological currents,

revealing how digital connectivity can simultaneously strengthen and undermine traditional moderation frameworks. Consequently, more adaptive strategies are required to sustain Islamic moderation values amid the digital revolution, including critical digital literacy education and the development of counter-narratives that articulate moderate Islamic perspectives in digital formats accessible to younger audiences.

One viable solution involves integrating moderation character education into Islamic education curricula. Pesantren and madrasah in Lombok can develop approaches based on experiential learning and intercultural dialogue to reinforce moderation values among students. This curricular integration represents a systematic response to digital challenges, positioning educational institutions as critical sites for cultivating digital resilience through the internalization of moderation principles. By emphasizing experiential learning methodologies, educational institutions can bridge the gap between abstract theological concepts and lived religious experiences, enabling students to navigate digital complexities with a framework grounded in moderate Islamic principles.

Cultural institutions function as social mechanisms regulating various aspects of Sasak community life, including religious practices. Several cultural institutions play significant roles in developing moderation character, establishing an institutional ecosystem that systematically promotes balanced religious understanding through multiple social domains. This institutional diversity creates redundant systems of moderation that enhance community resilience against extremist influences by embedding moderate principles across various social structures and practices that collectively constitute Sasak cultural identity.

1. *Awig-Awig* as a Guardian of Moderation

Awig-awig is a customary law that regulates the social and religious life of the Sasak community. This traditional legal system has existed for centuries and has been continuously updated to adapt to contemporary developments.

Anig-anig governs various aspects of life, including conflict resolution, marriage, and religious practices within the social sphere.

In the context of moderation, *anig-anig* serves as a conflict resolution mechanism that prioritizes principles of justice and balance. Based on interviews with a traditional leader in Bayan Village, it was found that conflict resolution based on *anig-anig* always emphasizes dialogue between disputing parties before reaching a decision. This approach ensures that solutions are not only fair but also socially acceptable, fostering harmony and mutual respect within the community (Paeni, 2005).

2. *Perang Topat*: A symbol of tolerance and harmony

Perang Topat festival is one of the traditions that exemplify the strong values of moderation in Sasak culture. This festival involves both Muslim and Hindu communities, who symbolically throw *ketupat* (rice cakes) as an expression of joy and prayers for blessings. Beyond being a cultural recreational event, this ritual serves as a platform to reinforce values of togetherness and interfaith tolerance.

According to a Social Network Analysis (SNA) conducted in this study, the social interactions during *Perang Topat* reveal communication networks that span across religious communities. This finding demonstrates that Sasak cultural institutions can serve as effective spaces for instilling moderation values (Umam, 2021). The festival not only preserves cultural heritage but also strengthens social cohesion in a pluralistic society.

3. *Musyawarah Adat*: a moderate conflict resolution

Customary deliberation (*musyawarah adat*) is a tradition inherited in Sasak culture as a consensus-based conflict resolution mechanism. This process involves religious leaders, traditional leaders, and community figures who act as mediators in disputes.

A phenomenological study conducted on several conflict resolution cases in East Lombok revealed that *musyawarah adat* always prioritizes restorative justice principles. The solutions derived from this process consider not only

legal aspects but also social and spiritual dimensions (Geertz, 1973). This holistic approach ensures that resolutions are sustainable and acceptable to all parties, further solidifying the role of *musyawarah adat* as a pillar of moderation in Sasak society.

This study reveals that religious moderation in Sasak society has been deeply internalized within their cultural institutions. *Anig-anig*, *Perang Topat*, and *musyawarah adat* serve as effective social mechanisms for instilling moderation values in community life. These cultural practices not only preserve traditional wisdom but also promote principles of justice, tolerance, and balance, which are essential for maintaining social harmony. Furthermore, the role of *Tuan Guru* (religious leaders) as spiritual guides and educators has been pivotal in fostering social harmony based on the Islamic principle of *wasatiyyah*. Their influence extends beyond religious teachings to encompass social and cultural dimensions, making them key figures in sustaining moderation values in Sasak society.

The study also underscores that Islamic education in Lombok has long adopted a moderation-based approach, both in the curricula of pesantren and in everyday social practices. This integration of moderation values into education has enabled the Sasak community to navigate the complexities of a multicultural and multi-religious society. However, the increasingly complex challenges of the digital era necessitate adaptive strategies to ensure that moderation values are preserved without eroding the cultural roots that have been passed down through generations.

In response to these challenges, this research highlights the importance of integrating local wisdom with modern educational frameworks. By leveraging the strengths of Sasak cultural institutions and adapting them to contemporary contexts, Islamic education in Lombok can continue to serve as a robust platform for nurturing moderation values. This approach not only safeguards cultural heritage but also equips the younger generation with the skills and mindset needed to thrive in a globalized and digitally connected world.

The transformation of the role of *Tuan Guru* and Islamic education

Over time, the role of *Tuan Guru* has undergone significant transformation. Previously, they primarily served as spiritual leaders and community figures, but today, they are also actively involved in various educational institutions, such as pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic universities. Data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs indicates that, as of 2019, there were 558 pesantren in Lombok, which serve as the primary platforms for moderation-based Islamic education.

In the digital era, the challenges facing Islamic education have become increasingly complex. The influence of social media and the uncontrolled flow of information pose significant threats to the character of moderation, particularly among the younger generation. To address these challenges, pesantren and other Islamic educational institutions in Lombok have begun to adopt technology-based learning methods, such as e-learning, digital studies, and social media-based preaching, to reach a broader audience.

Islamic education in Indonesia, particularly in Lombok, has experienced significant development in response to social and technological changes. One of the key actors in Islamic education in Lombok is the *Tuan Guru*, who plays a central role in shaping the character of the Sasak Muslim community. The role of *Tuan Guru*, which was previously focused on traditional education, has now transformed into a more modern and adaptive educational system that aligns with contemporary developments.

In Lombok, not only do pesantren function as educational institutions but also serve as centers for preaching and social activities, maintaining a balance between Islamic teachings and local wisdom. This transformation encompasses not only curricular aspects but also teaching methods and preaching approaches that are more suited to the demands of the modern era.

Nowadays, pesantren and other Islamic educational institutions face new challenges. The influence of social media, globalization, and the uncontrolled flow of information have become factors that can undermine the character of

moderation in Islam. Consequently, many pesantren in Lombok have begun to adopt technology-based learning methods, such as e-learning, digital studies, and social media-based preaching, to reach a wider audience, particularly the younger generation, who are more familiar with technology.

Historically, *Tuan Guru* have played a crucial role in shaping the religious practices of the Sasak community. They have not only served as spiritual leaders but also as social and cultural figures who contribute to maintaining harmony within society.

In the context of pesantren, *Tuan Guru* function as the primary source of religious knowledge. They teach the *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts), Quranic exegesis (*tafsir*), hadith, jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and Sufism (*tasawuf*), which serve as moral guidelines for students (*santri*) and the public. Additionally, they are responsible for guiding the community in addressing various social and religious issues.

One of the most significant forms of influence exerted by *Tuan Guru* in society is through cultural preaching (*dakwah kultural*). *Tuan Guru* in Lombok often prioritize approaches that accommodate local culture. For instance, they utilize *wayang Sasak* (Sasak puppetry), *hadrah* (Islamic musical art), and the recitation of Islamic poetry as mediums for preaching, which are more readily accepted by the community.

However, as society evolves, the methods of preaching and education employed by *Tuan Guru* have also adapted. Globalization and digitalization demand innovation in the delivery of Islamic teachings to remain relevant to younger generations.

Today, *Tuan Guru* no longer functions solely as spiritual leaders within pesantren. They are also active in formal educational institutions such as *madrasa*, Islamic universities, and Islamic organizations. Many *Tuan Guru* now serve as lecturers in Islamic universities, lead religious organizations, and even contribute to Islamic education policies at the national and regional levels. This transformation is driven by several factors, including:

1. Technological Advancements and Digitalization of Education

The development of information technology has significantly transformed Islamic education, particularly in Lombok. *Tuan Guru*, traditionally known as guardians of Islamic traditions, have begun adopting technology-based learning methods. This shift is evident in the use of e-learning platforms, enabling students to access religious lessons online. Pesantren in Lombok are no longer confined to conventional teaching methods for classical texts but are also leveraging digital tools to enhance learning effectiveness. Some pesantren have even developed specialized applications to facilitate deeper engagement with classical Islamic texts (Widodo, 2022).

Beyond pesantren, digitalization has expanded through digital preaching content produced by *Tuan Guru*. They actively use social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram to deliver Islamic lectures to a broader audience. This approach allows Islamic teachings to reach not only *santri* but also the public, offering flexible and interactive learning opportunities (Naamy, 2020). This trend aligns with the global movement toward digitalizing Islamic education, where institutions adopt technology to maintain relevance in the digital era. Digital media also enables broader interaction between scholars and the public, fostering a moderate and contextual understanding of Islam (Bahrudin, 2023).

2. Challenges of Transnational Ideologies

Globalization has introduced various extremist Islamic ideologies, including religious radicalism and liberalism. To address this, *Tuan Guru* must adapt their preaching strategies to uphold moderate Islamic values. Key approaches include promoting comprehensive religious understanding, enhancing moral education, fostering peace-based education, reorienting religious practices, and optimizing the role of public figures in spreading moderation messages (Sugitanata, 2023).

Several pesantren have developed curricula emphasizing religious moderation. These curricula are designed to internalize values of tolerance,

balance, and inclusivity in religious practice. Implementation involves creating teaching materials that reflect moderation principles and organizing extracurricular activities to strengthen inclusive and tolerant attitudes among students.

This effort aligns with the importance of religious moderation in Indonesia's diverse society. As traditional Islamic educational institutions, *pesantren* play a strategic role in shaping moderate and tolerant character among students. By developing curricula rooted in *wasatiyyah* values, *pesantren* can contribute to social harmony and prevent the spread of extremist ideologies (Futaqi, 2018).

3. Increased involvement of Tuan Guru in Academia

In recent decades, the role of *Tuan Guru* has expanded beyond *pesantren* to include academia in Islamic universities. Many *Tuan Guru* now actively teach in higher Islamic education institutions as lecturers, researchers, and academics, contributing to the development of Islamic studies. This marks a transformation from traditional educators to intellectuals engaged in academic discourse and moderation-based Islamic education policies (Rofiq, 2023).

A significant contribution of *Tuan Guru* in academia is their participation in scholarly research. Many are involved in studies on Islamic moderation, radicalism, and the integration of Islamic values into education policies. With strong expertise in Quran exegesis (*tafsir*), hadith, and jurisprudence (*fiqh*), they enrich academic literature and provide perspectives rooted in local wisdom (Parnawi, 2023).

Furthermore, several Islamic universities have collaborated with *pesantren* to develop curricula aligned with the principles of *wasatiyyah*. This aims to create academic environments that integrate knowledge with spiritual and ethical values, fostering open-minded and inclusive Muslim intellectuals. Through their active involvement in academia, *Tuan Guru* bridge traditional *pesantren* education with higher education systems, producing a generation of intellectually grounded and inclusive Muslim scholars (Basid, 2023).

Despite the benefits of digitalization, pesantren and Islamic educational institutions in Lombok face new challenges in preserving the character of Islamic moderation. Key challenges include:

a. Uncontrolled flow of information

Younger generations increasingly access Islamic information through the internet and social media. However, these sources are often unverified, creating opportunities for the spread of extremism and religious hoaxes that threaten moderate Islamic values. Studies show that social media plays a significant role in spreading religious intolerance among Generation Z, making it a primary platform for extremist groups to influence youth (NU Online, 2023).

For instance, research indicates that millennials are vulnerable to radical ideologies through social media, with a shift from traditional literacy to online dissemination (Fanindy, 2021). A case of radicalization among teenagers in Batu, East Java, in November 2023, exemplifies how easily extremist groups reach young people online. To address this, it is crucial for youth to develop critical digital literacy and selectively consume religious information. Additionally, the active role of religious leaders and educators in providing moderate and credible Islamic content on digital platforms is essential to counter uncontrolled information flows.

b. Lack of Critical Digital Literacy among *Santri* and *Tuan Guru*

Although many pesantren have begun adopting technology in education, digital literacy among *Tuan Guru* and *santri* remains limited. This hinders the optimal use of technology for preaching and education. Specialized training is needed to enhance digital competencies in pesantren environments.

Several initiatives have been implemented to address this issue. For example, the Ministry of Communication and Information has conducted digital literacy training for pesantren across Indonesia, including Al-Amien Prenduan in Sumenep, East Java. These programs aim to equip *santri* and educators with relevant digital skills to support learning and preaching.

Kemenkominfo and Siberkreasi, have been implemented in various pesantren. This program focuses on improving *santri's* digital literacy, enabling them to use information technology more wisely and selectively. Furthermore, educational institutions like Raden Rahmat Islamic University (UNIRA) in Malang have organized training on website management and IT utilization for *santri* and administrators of Ar-Ridlo Islamic Boarding School in Kalipare. These efforts aim to enhance digital understanding and skills among *santri* and pesantren staff.

Supporting these initiatives, literature such as the book *Literasi Digital Santri Milenial* by Abdulloh Hamid, M.Pd., provides guidance for *santri* in navigating the digital world. This book serves as a reference for millennials in delivering *dakwah* (Islamic preaching) wisely and effectively through social media. Through these efforts, it is hoped that digital literacy among *Tuan Guru* and *santri* will improve, enabling pesantren to leverage technology optimally for more effective and relevant preaching and education.

c. Impact of social media on moderation character

Social media often becomes a platform for unhealthy religious debates. Without a strong understanding of Islamic moderation, young people can easily be influenced by radical or intolerant religious discourses. Studies show that social media plays a significant role in spreading religious intolerance among Generation Z, making it a primary tool for extremist groups to influence youth.

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moderate and credible Islamic content on digital platforms is essential to counter uncontrolled information flows.

d. Adaptation of Islamic education curriculum

The curriculum in pesantren and Islamic educational institutions must accommodate the challenges of the digital era without abandoning Islamic values. Strengthening the integration of Sasak local wisdom and moderate Islamic teachings is essential for Islamic education in Lombok.

Integrating local wisdom into the Islamic education curriculum enriches teaching materials and methods, enhances the relevance of learning to local contexts, and supports the development of more inclusive and adaptive curricula. This approach is vital for strengthening cultural identity and moral values among students amidst globalizations (Andini, 2024).

In Lombok, efforts to strengthen Sasak cultural identity through local wisdom-based Islamic education have been implemented. This approach not only preserves cultural heritage but also shapes a tolerant and morally upright younger generation (Murdianto, 2021).

Furthermore, adapting the curriculum to the digital era requires innovative learning methods. A hybrid curriculum combining conventional and digital learning methods offers a solution to modern challenges while preserving core pesantren values (Rosyidah, 2024). However, implementing digitalization in pesantren education faces challenges such as limited technological infrastructure and human resource readiness. Therefore, strategic approaches like blended learning and digital literacy training for educators and students are necessary to enhance learning effectiveness (Widodo, 2025).

By integrating Sasak local wisdom and moderate Islamic teachings into the curriculum, along with the judicious use of technology, Islamic education can produce a younger generation with strong identities, noble character, and readiness to face the challenges of the digital era.

To address existing challenges, pesantren and Islamic educational institutions in Lombok have begun developing various strategies to maintain moderation values in Islamic education. Key strategies include:

a. Strengthening religious moderation education

Pesantren curricula now incorporate materials on Islamic moderation, emphasizing tolerance, interfaith dialogue, and contextual understanding of Islam. This aims to equip students with a comprehensive understanding of inclusive and friendly Islam, enabling them to interact harmoniously in a diverse society. Additionally, *Tuan Guru* actively teach the concept of *wasatiyyah* (balance in religion) to help *santri* understand Islam more holistically (Rahman, 2022).

The implementation of moderation values in pesantren is also achieved through integrating these principles into Islamic religious education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam: PAI*) and establishing “moderation institutions.” This approach fosters an educational environment conducive to developing tolerant and inclusive attitudes among *santri*. Through these efforts, pesantren in Lombok aim to instill moderate Islamic values, preparing students to face modern challenges while adhering to the principles of *rahmatan lil ‘alamin* (Islam as a blessing to all).

b. Leveraging Technology for Preaching and Education

To address digital-era challenges, pesantren and Islamic educational institutions in Lombok have adopted strategies to maintain and spread moderation values in Islamic education. A primary approach is the use of technology in preaching and education. Pesantren are utilizing digital platforms such as social media, podcasts, and video lectures for religious education. Social media allows pesantren to share educational content, sermons, and activities more widely and efficiently. Podcasts serve as an effective alternative medium for delivering religious lectures and discussions, accessible anytime and anywhere.

Additionally, pesantren-based e-learning programs are being developed to expand access to Islamic education. By leveraging information and communication technology (ICT), pesantren can enhance educational quality, facilitate distance learning, and improve interaction between teachers and students. These innovations not only broaden the reach of Islamic preaching and education but also equip *santri* with relevant digital skills for the modern era.

However, challenges such as limited technological infrastructure and digital literacy among educators and students remain. Intensive training on the use of technology in education for teachers and pesantren administrators is essential to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of this digital transformation.

Through these strategies, pesantren in Lombok strive to maintain their relevance and effectiveness in spreading moderate Islamic values while equipping the younger generation with the skills needed in the digital age.

c. Collaboration between pesantren and higher education institutions

To address the dynamics of modern development, pesantren in Lombok have collaborated with Islamic higher education institutions and research organizations. This collaboration aims to develop more relevant and contextual Islamic education methods. A concrete example is the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Islamic Elementary School Teacher Education Program (*Pendidikan Guru Madrasa Ibtidaiyah: PGMI*) at Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram and Pesantren Lingsar. This collaboration focuses on joint educational activities and research.

In education, PGMI UIN Mataram provides guidance to Pesantren Lingsar in implementing competency-based curricula and developing interactive and creative teaching methods. In research, PGMI lecturers and students conduct studies focused on learning development, improving educational quality, and innovating teaching strategies at the school (Humas, 2024).

Additionally, integrating pesantren curricula into higher education curricula is a significant form of collaboration. Pesantren excel in preserving Islamic traditions through classical text (*kitab kuning*) teachings, while universities emphasize rationality and experimentation. This integration aims to produce graduates who combine the personality of scholarly *ulama* (Syahroni, 2022) with academic professionalism, creating intellectual scholars with strong Islamic character.

Through this collaboration, pesantren and higher education institutions aim to develop adaptive Islamic education methods without neglecting traditional values. This synergy is expected to enrich Islamic scholarship and improve the overall quality of education in Lombok.

Local wisdom in Islamic education and religious moderation

A unique feature of Islamic education in Lombok is the integration of local wisdom and Islamic values. This approach is reflected in various traditions and customary norms passed down through generations, playing a crucial role in fostering interfaith tolerance and social harmony.

A notable example is *Perang Topat* festival in Lingsar Village. This annual tradition involves the participation of Muslim and Hindu communities in a unique cultural event. *Perang Topat* is a ritual of throwing *ketupat* (rice cakes) between the two communities as a symbol of gratitude for harvests and prayers for prosperity. Held at Lingsar Temple, a site revered by both communities, the event reflects strong interfaith harmony and tolerance (Fallahnda, 2024).

Another example is *awig-awig* in Sasak society, which regulates various aspects of life, including conflict resolution. *Awig-awig* establishes community obligations, such as cooperation (*gotong royong*), customary sanctions for rule violations, and guidelines for marriage and inheritance. Violators may face fines, community service, or even social exclusion. This mechanism ensures

effective conflict resolution and fosters a harmonious and peaceful society (Kalmanjunior, 2025).

In modern education, integrating local wisdom like *Perang Topat* and *awig-awig* into Islamic curricula can be an effective strategy for instilling moderation values early on. This approach enriches learning materials and shapes students to be more tolerant, inclusive, and respectful of differences. Thus, Islamic education in Lombok can produce a generation that adheres to religious teachings while remaining adaptive to socio-cultural dynamics.

The relevance of Sasak Islamic education to contemporary Islamic Education issues

Islamic education in the modern era must address global challenges without losing its identity. The Sasak community has demonstrated that religious moderation is not just a concept, but a reality embedded in their daily lives. Key aspects of Islamic education in Lombok relevant to contemporary issues include:

1. Strengthening religious moderation education

Pesantren in Lombok have long been centers of education emphasizing religious moderation, integrating Islamic teachings with local wisdom. This model plays a crucial role in preventing the spread of radical ideologies among youth. Approaches include teaching moderation values through balanced curricula combining religious and general knowledge, promoting the middle path (*tawassuth*), and fostering tolerance and respect for differences within and beyond the Muslim community.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs supports this through initiatives to encourage moderation in pesantren (Khoeron, 2022). Additionally, pesantren integrate local traditions into education, further enriching their moderation-based approach.

2. Digitalization in Islamic education

In the digital era, Islamic education in Lombok has transformed by adopting technology in learning processes. This aligns with the Ministry of Religious Affairs' policy to promote pesantren digitalization through e-learning and online studies.

For example, Pondok Pesantren Nurul Haramain Narmada in West Lombok has implemented programs like “Tugu Sasak” (One Teacher, One Student, One Computer), Computer-Based Testing (CBT), and Computer-Based Classes (CBC). The pesantren also features computer labs, multimedia classrooms, digital libraries, and eco-pesantren initiatives, aiming to enhance Islamic education quality through digital innovation (Ramzi, 2022).

The Ministry of Religious Affairs, under Minister Yaqut Cholil Qoumas, has prioritized digital transformation, including initiatives like the Pegon Virtual Keyboard and Rumah Kitab applications (Al-Asyhar, 2021). These tools facilitate access to Islamic literature and preserve national Islamic heritage, improving learning effectiveness and preparing a tech-savvy, morally upright younger generation (Fauzi, 2024).

3. Multicultural education in Islam

Multicultural education in Islam aims to instill values of tolerance and respect for diversity. In Lombok, harmonious interfaith coexistence has long been part of the local culture, making it a relevant model for multicultural Islamic education (Naharudin, 2019).

A notable example is the *Ngejot* tradition in Lenek Village, East Lombok, where Muslims share food with non-Muslim neighbors as a gesture of solidarity and respect for differences. This practice reflects inclusive and pluralistic values aligned with multicultural education principles (Hamdan, 2022).

Research at SMA Darul Muhajirin Praya and SMAN 1 Praya in Central Lombok highlights the implementation of multicultural Islamic education, teaching multicultural values and managing diverse student life. Integrating

local wisdom like *Ngejot* and multicultural education into Islamic curricula enriches learning materials and shapes students to be more tolerant, inclusive, and respectful of differences, embodying the Islamic principle of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (a blessing to all).

4. The role of *Ulama* and educational institutions in strengthening character

Islamic scholars (*ulama*) and Islamic educational institutions play a crucial role in shaping the character of the younger generation, fostering moral integrity and broad-mindedness. Through Islamic religious education, moral and ethical values are instilled early, creating responsible and principled individuals. Islamic education not only focuses on religious knowledge but also on developing attitudes and behaviors aligned with Islamic teachings. This aligns with the perspective of Prof. Dr. H. Nasaruddin Umar, who emphasizes that character is a central aspect of Islamic education (YPI AL Kais, 2024).

Islamic institutions, such as *madrasah* and pesantren, have a strategic role in this process. Beyond academic knowledge, they shape students' personalities by instilling strong religious values. Religious education in *madrasah* provides a solid moral foundation, ensuring that young people are not only faithful but also socially and environmentally responsible.

Furthermore, Islamic education strengthens students' religious identity. In multicultural environments, it helps students understand and appreciate differences, fostering tolerance and respect for diversity. With this strong foundation, the younger generation is expected to face globalization challenges without losing their identity, upholding Islamic values in daily life (Napitupulu, 2022).

Thus, collaboration between scholars and Islamic educational institutions is key to producing a generation with strong character, noble morals, and readiness to contribute positively to society.

Conclusion

Moderation-based character education within the Sasak cultural framework plays a vital role in fostering social and religious harmony in Lombok. As a community deeply rooted in Islamic traditions and local culture, the Sasak people possess unique values that serve as a foundation for strengthening religious moderation. Islamic Religious Education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam: PAI*) is central to integrating Islamic teachings with local wisdom, producing individuals with noble character, tolerance, and inclusivity in societal life.

This study demonstrates that moderation-based character education has been implemented through various Sasak social institutions. Traditions such as *begibung* and *nyongkolan* reflect values of cooperation, solidarity, and interfaith respect. Additionally, Islamic educational institutions like *pesantren* and *madrasah* contribute significantly to instilling moderation values through curricula and daily religious practices.

However, globalization and technological advancements present new challenges to moderation-based character education. Uncontrolled information flows, low digital literacy among *santri* and *Tuan Guru* and increasing religious polarization on social media threaten the sustainability of Islamic moderation values in Lombok. Therefore, Islamic education must adapt by leveraging technology wisely, strengthening collaboration among scholars, educators, and the government, and developing curricula responsive to contemporary challenges.

Strategies to strengthen moderation-based education should include integrating technology into Islamic preaching and education, fostering collaboration between *pesantren* and higher education institutions, and utilizing local wisdom in religious learning. These approaches ensure that Islamic education not only transfers knowledge but also shapes a harmonious, tolerant, and civilized society.

In conclusion, moderation-based character education within the Sasak cultural framework is strategically important in maintaining the balance between Islamic teachings and local traditions. By leveraging cultural wisdom, strengthening moderation-based Islamic education, and addressing global challenges wisely, the Sasak community can preserve its Islamic identity as *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (a blessing to all). Synergy among the government, Islamic educational institutions, and local communities is essential to create an educational system rooted in Islamic values while remaining adaptive to social and technological changes in the digital era.

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