



## PRINCIPLES OF MODERATION IN ISLAM

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### **Abstract**

The title in this paper is about the Principles of Moderation in Islam. Moderation is one of the main values developed by Islam. This is one of the purposes of sharia that came to spread it in the lives of Muslims. As Ibn Ashur said, "*Moderation is the first and foremost goal of the Shari'ah*", giving rise to a formulation of the problem, namely What are the principles of moderation in Islam. The method in this study is to use the type of literature research using qualitative data types and by using primary, secondary and tertiary data sources related to the problem under study about the Principles of Moderation in Islam, with the aim of this study to analyze the Principles of Religious Moderation in Islam. Islam. The results of the study concluded that the Principle of Moderation in Islam is based on the meaning of tolerance, simplicity, and justice. The importance of moderation is that it symbolizes the position between the two extremes of exaggeration (*ifrat*) and neglect (*tafrit*); Thus it is the backbone of all virtuous qualities. The concept of moderation has many manifestations. This has to do with the way a Muslim deals with other Muslims, as well as the way he deals with non-Muslims as indicated by 4 indicators of religious moderation that are measured in practice for every individual in Indonesia, namely: 1) national commitment; 2) tolerance; 3) non-violence; and 4) accommodating to local culture.

**Keywords:** Principles, Moderation, and Islam.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The emergence of several phenomena in this country such as the issue of terrorism, Islamophobia, excessive demonstrations, discrimination against one group and blasphemy, finally made the government realize that Indonesia is a big country that has hundreds of tribes and languages. To maintain sovereignty, various ways are needed, one of which is by providing understanding in an education about the application of moderation in everyday life. (Makky & Erihadiana, 2022). Religious moderation that is now being developed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia needs to be supported, because it is a solution to the increase in religious extremism.

Religious moderation is a step forward from the mainstream approach of deradicalisation, as it seeks to make "improvements from within". (Arif, 2020). Linguistically, the word moderation in the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) contains two meanings, namely 'reduction of violence' and 'avoidance of extremes'. More broadly, moderation also means an activity to conduct a review so as not to deviate from the applicable rules that have been set. Through religious moderation, religious people are not positioned as "sources of problems", but as "protégés" who need to be softened their religious understanding. Without having to shout about religious radicalism, religious moderation wants to invite religious people to be moderate in religious practice. (Arif, 2020). A moderate attitude in religion, always choosing the

middle way, will be easier to realize if someone has adequate breadth of religious knowledge so that they can be wise, resist temptation so that they can be sincere without burden, and are not selfish with their own interpretation of truth so that they dare to admit the interpretation of other people's truth, and dare to express their views based on science.

In another formulation, it can be said that there are three conditions for the fulfillment of a moderate attitude in religion, namely: having extensive knowledge, being able to control emotions not to exceed the limit, and always being careful. If simplified, the formulation of the three conditions of religious moderation can be expressed in three words, namely must: knowledgeable, virtuous, and careful. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 20). Religious moderation entrusts religious people not to confine themselves, not exclusive (closed), but inclusive (open), merge, adapt, associate with various communities, and always learn in addition to giving lessons. Thus, religious moderation will encourage each religious community not to be extreme and excessive in addressing diversity, including religious diversity and religious interpretation, but always to be fair and balanced so that they can live in a mutual agreement. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 22).

The phenomenon of extremism has become a bitter experience for Indonesia. A number of acts of terrorism have even claimed hundreds of innocent lives. Violent religious extremism gives a bleak image to the peaceful religious message of the universe. This is also very concerning when viewed in terms of nationality which is by nature plural. The rise of terrorism using violence, as is the case with suicide bombing, makes jihad a justification based on theological grounds. (Saihu, 2021). Acts of radicalism and terrorism in the name of Islam in the world and Indonesia have more or less placed Muslims as the blame, even though in the teachings of Islam itself never teach these extreme things. (Sari, 2012).

Moderation is not only taught by Islam, but also other religions. Furthermore, moderation is a virtue that encourages the creation of social harmony and balance in personal, family and community life to wider human relations. Every religion must have moderate principles in it, as well as Islam. Islam contains moderate teachings in it, which are often known as Islamic Moderation. In its doctrinal structure, Islam has always blended two opposing points of extremity. For example, the teachings of Islam do not only deal with the question of divinity esoterically, but also other matters concerning humanity with implications in everyday life. (Yazid in Adya et al., 2020).

Islamic moderation (wasathiyah) has recently been emphasized as the mainstream of Islam in Indonesia. This idea of mainstreaming is not only a solution to various problems of religion and global civilization, but it is also the right time for the moderate generation to take more aggressive steps. If radicals, extremists, and puritans speak loudly with violence, moderate Muslims must speak louder with peaceful action. (El-Fadl in Saihu, 2021). Therefore it is interesting for the author to explain further with the formulation of the problem What are the Principles of Moderation in Islam?.



## METHOD

The research methods used by the author in this paper are as follows:

### 1. Types of Research

This type of research is *library research*. Literature research is research conducted by collecting data from various literature, both from libraries and other places.

### 2. Data Type and Source

The type of data in this study is qualitative data, which is data in the form of a description aimed at all existing problems that are explanatory in nature related to the problem to be studied. The data needed in this study are in the form of documents related to problems in research, using secondary and tertiary data sources related to the Principles of Moderation in Islam.

### 3. Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques are data collection methods that depend on the type and source of data required. Data collection techniques used in this study through literature studies, using document study techniques, namely by tracing data, reading, studying, and analyzing literature that raises the problems to be discussed.

### 4. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is the process of parsing data. The data collected are then examined, researched, elaborated and present all existing problems firmly and clearly to ensure their truth, categorize and classify the data to be compared with existing theories, the data obtained, analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis techniques (describing, describing and presenting all existing problems). Then the explanations are concluded deductively, that is, drawing a conclusion from statements that are general drawn to the particular, so that the presentation of the results of the study can be understood easily.

### 5. Systematics of Discussion

To lead to a complete and focused understanding, in this discussion of the Principles of Moderation in Islam, the author presents a systematic preparation consisting of Introduction, Research Methods, Discussion or Discussion, and finally Conclusions.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Characteristics of Islam

Islam has many characteristics that distinguish it from other religions. The most prominent characteristic of Islam is *tawassut* (middle way), *tawazun* (balanced), *I'tidal* (firmly straight), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *musawwah* (similarity) the five expressions have very close meanings, all three can be summarized and united into *wasathiyah* (moderate). (Muhajir in Azhari, 2020)

#### 1. Wasathiyah (Taking the middle ground)

The teaching of *wasathiyah*, as explained in its understanding, is one of the characteristics and essence of religious teachings. The word has, at least,

three meanings, namely: first means middle; second means fair; and third means the best. These three meanings do not mean standing alone or unrelated to each other, because the attitude of being in the middle often reflects an attitude of fairness and the best choice. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 25)

The word *al-wasathiyyah* has its roots in *al-wasth* (with the letter sin that is breadfruted) and *al-wasth* (with the letter sin that is fathahkan) which are both *mashdar* (infinitive) of the verb *wasatha*. In addition, the word *wasathiyyah* is also often synonymous with the word *al-iqtishad* with the pattern of the subject *al-muqtashid*. However, applicatively the word *wasathiyyah* is more popularly used to indicate a paradigm of complete thinking, especially with regard to religious attitudes in Islam. (Makky & Erihadiana, 2022)

*Wasatiyah* is a view that takes the middle way by not exaggerating in religion and not reducing religious teachings, this middle way can mean an understanding that combines the text of religious teachings and the context of community conditions. (Hasan, 2021). So that "*wasatiyah*" is a view or behavior that always tries to take a middle position from 2 behaviors that are opposite and overdue so that one of the two behaviors that are interpreted does not dominate in the mind and behavior of a person.

As Khaled Abou el Fadl argues in *The Great Theft*, if "moderation" is an understanding that takes a middle path, it is an understanding that is neither extreme right nor extreme left. (Zuhairi in Hasan, 2021).

An easily digestible example in everyday life is the word "referee". It is a profession of someone who mediates a game, which is required to always do justice and decide the best for the parties. Another example, generosity is good, because it is halfway between extravagance and stinginess. Courage is also good because he is halfway between fear and desperation. And so on. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 25)

The concept of *wasathiyyah* in some Islamic literature is interpreted regularly by scholars. According to al-Salabi the word *wasathiyyah* has many meanings. First, from the root of *wasath*, it is *dzaraf*, which means *baina* (between). Second, from the root word *wasatha*, which contains many meanings, including: (1) in the form of *isim* which contains an understanding between two ends, (2) in the form of a meaningful nature (*khiyar*) chosen, especially, best; (3) *wasath* which means *al'adl* or just; (4) *Wasath* can also mean something that falls between good (*jayid*) and bad (*radi*). (Al-Salabi in Saihu, 2021)

## 2. *Al-'Adl* and *Tawazun* (Balanced)

*Tawazun* is a view of balance not out of line that has been set. If traced the term *tawazun* is rooted from the word *mizan* which means scale. Fair and balanced in viewing, responding, and practicing all the concepts paired above. In KBBI, the word "fair" means: 1) not partial/impartial; 2) side with the truth; and 3) duly/not arbitrarily. The word "referee" which refers to someone who officiates a match, can be interpreted in this sense, namely someone who is not partial, but rather sides with the truth. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 19)



Tawazun can be understood in the context of moderation is to behave fairly, balanced not biased accompanied by honesty so as not to shift from a predetermined line. For injustice is a way of destroying the balance and conformity of the nature that has been ordained by Allah the almighty. (Hasan, 2021). Those who have a balanced attitude mean firm, but not harsh because they always side with justice, it's just that their partiality does not deprive others of their rights so that they are detrimental. Balance can be thought of as a way of looking at doing something in moderation, neither excessive nor lacking, neither conservative nor liberal. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 19)

Mohammad Hashim Kamali (2015) explained that the principle of balance and justice *in the* concept of moderation (*wasathiyah*) means that in religion, a person should not be extreme in his views, but must always look for common ground. For Kamali, *wasathiyah is an important aspect of Islam that is often forgotten by his people, in fact, wasathiyah is the essence of Islamic teachings.* (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 20)

3. *I'tidal* (straight and firm)

The term *i'tidal* comes from the Arabic word *adil* which means equal, in the big dictionary Indonesian fair means not partial, not arbitrary. *I'tidal* is a view that puts something in its place, divides it according to its portion, exercises rights and fulfills obligations. (Department of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in Hasan, 2021). As Muslims we are commanded to do justice to anyone in any matter and are commanded to always be sincere with anyone. Because this justice is the noble value of religious teachings, the nonsense of public welfare occurs in the absence of justice. (Hasan, 2021).

4. *Tasamuh* (Tolerance)

*Tasamuh* when viewed from Arabic comes from the word *samhun* which means to ease. While according to the Big Dictionary Indonesian tolerance means: respect, allow, allow, something different or contrary to one's own stance.

According to Friedrich Heiler, *Tasāmuḥ* (Tolerance) is the attitude of a person who recognizes the existence of religious plurality and respects every follower of that religion. (Yuda in Samsudin, 2021). Religious tolerance according to Islam is respecting or tolerating without crossing the boundaries of the religious rules themselves. Islam explains that *Tasāmuḥ* leads to an open attitude and is willing to acknowledge the existence of various differences, both in terms of ethnicity, skin color, language, customs, culture, language, and religion. These are all *fitrah* and *sunnatullah* which have become decrees of God. (Samsudin, 2021)

So, it can be concluded that tolerance is a behavior of respecting the stance of others, respecting does not mean correcting, especially agreeing to follow and justify it. In matters of religion, tolerance is not allowed in the realm of faith and divinity. Worship procedures must be in accordance with their respective rituals and places. Moderation holds that each religion is true according to the beliefs of its adherents and is not justified in assuming that all

religions are true and equal. Tolerance should only be practiced in the social and humanitarian spheres to maintain harmony and unity. (Hasan, 2021)

5. *Musawah* (equation)

Musawah means equality, Islam never distinguishes humans in terms of their personalities all humans have the same degree among other humans regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, tradition, culture, rank because everything has been determined by the creator man cannot have the right to change the decrees that have been set. Islam has moderated in such a way that beings on earth with differences can respect and love each other. Islam has regulated moderation itself, but sometimes people are mired in something extreme. (Hasan, 2021). Islam has always been moderate in addressing every problem because differences are a necessity that Allah has established. (Adya et al., 2020).

In real-life reality, people cannot avoid opposing things. Therefore *al-Wasathiyyah Islamiyyah* appreciates *the rabbaniyyah* (divinity) and *insaniyyah* (humanity) elements, combines *maddiyyah* (materialism) and *ruhiyyah* (spiritualism), combines revelation and *reason* {*reason*}, between *ammah* *masalah* (al-jamaaiyyah) and individual *masalah* (*Al-Fardiyyah*). As a consequence of the moderation of Islam as a religion, none of the elements or essences mentioned above is harmed. (Yusuf Al Qardawi in Amen, 2014).

### Principles of Moderation

The basic principle of moderation is fair and balanced. One of the basic principles of religious moderation is always to maintain a balance between two things, such as the balance between reason and revelation, between physical and spiritual between rights and obligations, between individual interests and communal masculinity, between must and voluntary, between religious texts and religious figures, between ideal ideas and reality, and the balance between the past and the future.

In KBBI, the word-adil means:

- a. Unbiased/impartial.
- b. Side with the truth.
- c. Deservedly/not arbitrarily.

The second principle, balance, is a term to describe perspectives, attitudes, and commitments to always think about justice, humanity, and equality. The tendency to be balanced does not mean having no opinion. There are five basic principles of Islamic moderation that must be understood and implemented in moderate Islamic life, as follows:

- a. Principles of justice (Al-,adl)

It is agreed by both classical and modern commentators that the true meaning of moderation or *wasathan* is justice and goodness. Even the Prophet (peace be upon him) interpreted *al-wasath* in sura Al-Baqarah: 143 with justice (HR. Bukhari). Since there is no moderation without justice and no justice without moderation, the more moderate



an attitude towards the environment and people, the better their lives. (Sari, 2012)

b. Prinsip Kebaikan (Al-Khairiyah)

The Principle of Goodness Moderation is goodness itself. If an attitude does not bring good and benefit, then it can be ascertained that the attitude is not moderate, on the contrary, extreme, radical and liberal attitudes will give birth to ugliness and even evil both for the perpetrator and for others. (Sari, 2012)

c. Principle Hikmah (Al-Hikmah)

Modersi islam, in addition to having the principle of justice and goodness also has wisdom and wisdom in all forms and dimensions of its teachings, there is no Islamic teaching that does not contain wisdom and there is no sharia that contradicts wisdom. Ibn Qayyim said: ||Indeed, the main building of the Shari'ah, is to stand on the wisdom and benefit of the servant, both in the life of the world and in the hereafter, he is the justice of the whole, mercy of the whole, the benefit of the whole and the wisdom of the whole. Any problem that proceeds from justice to tyranny, from mercy to the opposite, from goodness (maslahat) to corruption (mafsadat) and from wisdom to vain, is not shari'ah, although it seeks to be included in takwil. (Sari, 2012).

d. Consistent Principles (Al-Istiqomah)

Ibn Qayyim Al-Jauziyah divides istiqimah or consistent in 5 dimensions:

- 1) Consistently estimating Allah through desires, words, deeds and intentions, which is called sincerity.
- 2) Consistently ensure the implementation of all charities in accordance with sharia to avoid heresy, called megikutui.
- 3) Consistent in the spirit of charity to obey God according to stability.
- 4) Be consistent in moderate or mid on any charity, avoiding exaggeration and deduction (extreme right and extreme left).
- 5) Be consistent within the limits set by sharia and not be tempted by lust.

e. Principles of Balance (At-Tawazun)

One of the basic principles of wasatiyyah is balance (At-Tawazun), even balance is one of the guidelines of the word adil or "At-Ta'adul". The principle of At-Tawazun also requires moderation in viewing spiritual and spiritual values, so that there is no gap between spiritual and material. Islam is full of spiritual teachings and faith, but it does not forget material things, such as: possessions, eating and drinking, sleeping, getting married and so on.

As is known, the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia has mainstreamed religious moderation programs as an effort to encourage the development of religious moderation in the lives of religious people. By religious moderation we mean moderate religious understanding and practice, which takes the "middle way" between the

extreme right and the extreme left. The extreme right refers to conservative, literal and radical religious beliefs. (Arif, 2020).

Religious moderation, which emphasizes middle-of-the-way religious practices, can be a way out, both to strengthen efforts to internalize religious spiritual moral values, and to create a nonviolent religious life. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 52).

### **Religious Moderation Indicators**

Moderation and moderation in religion always contest with the values that exist on the right and left. Therefore, measuring religious moderation must be able to illustrate how contestation and value struggles occur. A moderate will try to compromise both sides. It can move to the left using its wits, but does not stay extreme in its place. It swings to the right to guide the text, while still understanding the context. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 42). There are 4 indicators of religious moderation that are to measure moderation practiced by someone in Indonesia, and how vulnerable they are. These indicators are: 1) national commitment; 2) tolerance; 3) non-violence; and 4) accommodating to local culture. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 42).

#### 1) National commitment

National commitment is a very important indicator to see the extent to which a person's religious views, attitudes, and practices have an impact on loyalty to the basic consensus of nationality, especially related to the acceptance of Pancasila as a state ideology, his attitude towards ideological challenges that are contrary to Pancasila, and nationalism. As part of the national commitment is the acceptance of the principles of nationhood contained in the 1945 Constitution and regulations under it. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 43).

#### 2) Tolerance

Tolerance is always accompanied by respect, accepting different people as part of who we *are*, and positive thinking. As an attitude in the face of differences, tolerance is the most important foundation in democracy, because democracy can only work when a person is able to hold his opinion and then accept the opinion of others. Therefore, the maturity of a nation's democracy, among other things, can be measured by the extent of the nation's tolerance. The higher the tolerance for differences, the more democratic the nation tends to be, and vice versa. The aspect of tolerance is actually not only related to religious beliefs, but can be related to differences in race, gender, differences in sexual orientation, ethnicity, culture, and so on. (Religion, 2019: 44).

#### 3) Nonviolence

Radicalism, or violence, in the context of religious moderation is understood as an ideology (idea or idea) and understanding that wants to make changes to the social and political system by using violent / extreme means in the name of religion, both verbal, physical and mental violence. The essence of radicalism is the attitude and actions of a person or certain group who use violent means in bringing about the desired change.





Radical groups generally want such changes in a short time and drastically and contrary to the prevailing social system. Radicalism is often associated with terrorism, because radical groups can do any way to achieve their wishes, including terrorizing those who disagree with them. Although many associate radicalism with certain religions, basically radicalism is not only related to certain religions, but can be attached to all religions. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 45).

#### 4) Accommodating Beragama Practices and Behaviors

Religious practices and behaviors that are accommodating to local culture can be used to see the extent of willingness to accept religious practices that accommodate local culture and tradition.

Moderate people have a tendency to be more friendly in accepting local traditions and culture in their religious behavior, as long as it does not conflict with the main religious teachings. Non-rigid religious traditions, among other things, are characterized by a willingness to accept religious practices and behaviors that do not merely emphasize normative truths, but also accept religious practices based on virtue, of course, again, insofar as they do not contradict the principles of religious *teachings*. Conversely, there are also groups that tend not to be accommodating to tradition and culture, because practicing tradition and culture in religion will be considered an act that pollutes religious purity. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019: 46).

## CONCLUSION

Based on what has been described above, the author concludes that the Principles of Moderation in Islam are always to maintain a balance between two things, such as the balance between reason and revelation, between physical and spiritual between rights and obligations, between individual interests and communal benefit, between necessity and voluntariness, between religious texts and *ijtihad* of religious figures, between ideal ideas and reality with 4 indicators of religious moderation that are measurable in practice for every individual in Indonesia, namely: 1) national commitment; 2) tolerance; 3) non-violence; and 4) accommodating to local culture.

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