

## **Analysis of the Level of Religious Moderation of High School Students in Rejang Lebong**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine the level of religious moderation among students in various high schools in Rejang Lebong Regency. This study involved 536 students (376 girls and 160 boys) from five SMA/SMK in the Rejang Lebong area. The non-test strategy was used to collect data in the form of a questionnaire. A questionnaire containing four markers of religious moderation was used in this study: national attitudes, tolerance, anti-violence, and acceptance of local culture. Based on the findings of the distribution of questionnaires to students in Rejang Lebong Regency, students in Rejang Lebong Regency have a high level of moderation. This can be observed in the percentage statistics given to students for each indication of religion. In addition, in an effort to build student religious moderation, schools in Rejang Lebong Regency also carried out PAI subjects which has been substantially proven to be able to form a moderate Islamic character. Educational institutions can also serve as testing grounds for religious moderation in diverse community settings.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Indonesia is a heterogeneous country consisting of ethnicity, race, and religion, which requires tolerance in understanding all existing differences, as well as in educational institutions, and the culture of the population is equally diverse. Religion, language, ethnicity, traditions, cultural norms, and skin color all contribute to Indonesia's diversity (Azizah and Purjatian, 2015). When people work together and synergize to create a homeland, diversity, inclusiveness, and tolerance form extraordinary social forces (Kamal & Junaidi, 2018). The conditions and settings in which the recent violence erupted dramatically. Looking at recent events in Indonesia, it seems the opposite (Kesuma et al., 2019). The growth of extremism and radicalism that seeks to eliminate diversity in Indonesia has raised concerns (Karim, 2019). Therefore, religious moderation is very suitable to be applied in the life of the nation and state, especially among multicultural societies. Religious

moderation as a means of resolving conflicts in both radical and fundamentalist organizations. In order to implement religious moderation in a multicultural society, educational institutions must be the basis of a religious moderation laboratory, and a socio-religious approach to religion and the state must be carried out.

Today, Islam and Muslims face at least two challenges: first is the tendency of some Muslims to be extreme and strict in understanding religious texts and try to impose it on Muslims, even in some cases using violence; the second is another extreme tendency to be loose in religion and subject to negative attitudes and thoughts that come from other cultures and civilizations. Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, is a significant highlight in terms of Islamic moderation. The core teachings of Islam are the teachings of moderation. Moderate Islam is a very important religious perspective in the context of diversity in all aspects, be it religion, culture, race, or the nation itself. Indonesia must develop its own way of thinking and narrating so that it is not bound by the boundaries of social space. At this time, socio-religious moderation is defined as a combination of the essential teachings of religion and the state of society. Multiculturalism in Indonesia can be synergized with the state government's social programs. This knowledge must be increased so that future generations of the Indonesian nation understand that Indonesia is there for all of them. Moreover, Indonesia's diversity is currently being tested, with extreme religious sentiments displayed by some in the name of religion, not only on social media, but also on the streets. Not only in Indonesia, but throughout the world, the emergence of restrictive, volatile, and intolerable communal organizations in the name of religion creates problems.

Every religious individual needs religious moderation (Anwar, 2021). Religious tolerance must be instilled among children, because they are the future leaders of the nation (Christanti & Anwar, 2019). Religious moderation is believing in the highest religious doctrines and allowing others to practice their beliefs (Ali, 2020). The principle of moderation or *wasathiyah* must be preserved as a communal awareness of Muslims in Indonesia (Hiqmatunnisa & Zafi, 2020). The Ministry of Religious Affairs currently carries out a model of religious moderation in the context of inclusive thinking and rebuilding the spirit of mutual cooperation as members of the community (Asrori, 2020).

As a result, we have a better knowledge of moderation. Religion, however, has to be interpreted in its context. Textually, it shows that moderation in religion in Indonesia is not about the country itself, but a way of understanding religion in Indonesia, which has many civilizations, traditions, and customs. According to Lukman Hakim (Minister of Religious Affairs 2004-2019), religious moderation must be realized and even institutionalized in the work system and work unit structure of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, so that the spirit is not attached to the Minister of Religious Affairs, because the Ministry of Religious Affairs will continue to accept the mandate to regulate religious life in Indonesia as long as it is still alive and well. there is. Related to this, Ghufron's writings about the need for a middle way in religion. Moderate religious mainstreaming has a value of urgency that must be consistently strengthened by religious leaders, the academic community of universities, and through various media platforms.

In this study, to be able to analyze the level of student religious moderation, the researcher used 4 indicators of religious moderation proposed by Suardi, (2015) who said there were 4 indicators of moderation in religion, namely; 1) Loyalty in patriotism 2) non-fanaticism, 3) harmony / non-violence, and 4) accommodate regional / local customs.

However, this study only looks at two indicators, namely tolerance and accommodation for local culture.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Understanding Religious Moderation**

Al-wasathiyah is the Arabic term for moderate. A written word of the Qur'an sura al-Baqarah verse: 143 can be found in the Qur'an. In the passage, the term al-Wasath means "the best and most complete". In a very prominent hadith it is also stated that the best difficulty is the difficulty in the middle. In terms of looking at and responding to a problem, moderate Islam tries to take a compromise approach and be in the middle, as well as in addressing differences, both theological differences and schools of thought. Moderate Islam always prioritizes tolerance and mutual respect, while still believing in the truth of the doctrines of each religion (Dawing, 2017).

Furthermore, the term "wasath" has been incorporated into Indonesian, and now has three meanings: 1) mediator, intermediary (for example, in trade, business, etc.), 2) mediator (separator, conciliator) between people who at odds, and 3) a leader in the field of competition. According to Arabic linguists, the expression means "everything that is useful in relation to its object" (Almu'tasim, 2019). In Arabic, the best of everything is said to be in the middle. For example, generosity is an attitude that is between stingy and exaggeration, courage is between fear and recklessness, and so on.

The main message of Islam is moderation. Moderate Islam is a religious concept that is very important in regulating diversity in all aspects, including religion, culture, race, and the nation itself. Yusuf al-Qaradawi is a scholar who wrote a lot about moderation. He also revealed that the signs of moderation include: (1) thorough knowledge of Islam, (2) balance between sharia provisions and social change, (3) support for peace and respect for ummah values, (4) recognition of religion, culture and political plurality, and (5) recognition of minority rights (Kamali, 2015).

Religious moderation is very important to foster tolerance and harmony on a local, national and global scale. Moderation decisions in religion, by rejecting radicalism and liberalism, are the key to maintaining civilization and fostering peace. As a result, each religious group can treat others with dignity, tolerate differences, and live side by side in peace and harmony. Religious moderation may not be an option, but a necessity in a cosmopolitan culture like Indonesia (Abdillah, 2015).

### **Islam's Moderation as Measured by Various Indicators**

The nation's founders have clearly demonstrated a moderate religious attitude. They agreed on Pancasila, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, the 1945 Constitution, and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika as the guidelines for the life of the nation and state. The inter-religious tolerance movement must grow by promoting a culture of conversation and unlimited solidarity through symbols of peace based on local cultural expertise. "Religious moderation is very important because the desire to adopt excessive religious teachings sometimes leads to one-sided truth claims and believing oneself to be the most accurate while others are wrong." In essence, carrying out religious moderation fosters internal harmony between religious communities, ensures that the living conditions of the nation remain peaceful and life continues. said Yaqut Cholil Qoumas, Minister of Religious Affairs

of the Republic of Indonesia, when giving a speech to participants of the Regular Education Program Force. Religious moderation education is an effort to understand and foster understanding of religious diversity, ethnic, racial and cultural (Mazhab) (Suardi, 2015: 55). There are 4 indicators of moderation, namely; 1) Loyalty in patriotism 2) non-fanaticism/tolerance, 3) harmony / non-violence, and 4) accommodate regional / local customs.

### ***Loyalty in patriotism***

Students' national devotion is critical, according to Anwar and Muhayati (2021) must be constructed in an effort to determine the extent to which students are as a group organization, student-related issues, and the manifestation of national ideology, particularly the determination to embrace Pancasila as the state's foundation.

### ***Non-fanaticism/tolerance***

According to Mujizatullah (2020), the madrasa, which consists of numerous schools and ethnicities, students acquire the virtues of religious moderation through intracurricular educational activities that incorporate educational methodologies into religious topics and spiritual activities. Tolerance is synonymous with not claiming that the truest religion is oppression is tolerance between religions and intra-religious tolerance, both of which are related to social and political tolerance (Munir, 2020).

### ***Harmony / non-violence***

According to Fahri and Zainuri (2019), moderate Islamic teachings require an anti-violence attitude among the younger generation (including students), understanding the differences that may occur, prioritizing contextualization in interpreting divine verses, using *istinbath* to apply the latest laws, and using a science and technology approach to justify and overcome the dynamics of problems in Indonesian society.

### ***Accommodate regional / local customs.***

Accommodation for local culture is to see to what extent the willingness to understand the cultures of other tribes and accept religious practices based on virtue, again, as long as these practices do not conflict with the principles in religious teachings. According to Akhmadi (2019), multicultural existence necessitates a knowledge and awareness of multiculturalism that respects diversity, plurality, and a readiness to communicate equitably with anybody. Local knowledge may be utilized to help establish religious moderation, which is under attack from a variety of sources right now (Isang & Dalmasius, 2021). On the other hand, there are also groups that tend to be accommodative of traditions and culture, because practicing traditions and culture in religion will be considered as an act that pollutes the purity of religion.

## **Religious Moderation Practices in Educational Institutions**

Educational institutions are very suitable to be used as "religious moderation laboratories". As previously stated, the Indonesian nation is a nation with various ethnicities and religions, as well as different qualities, but not without problems. Schools as educational institutions can foster a moderate attitude of religion. This is where the importance of the "first stone" of religious moderation in human social relations is created on the foundation

of universal philosophy. Educational institutions are the best places to spread students' sensitivity to diverse diversity. Opening the door to discourse, the teacher explained that religion conveys a message of love, not hate, and that the education system is free to embrace these differences. Furthermore, one of the recommendations from the Jakarta Minutes stated that the government should lead the movement to strengthen moderate religion as the mainstream, emphasizing the value of moderate religious life as spiritual and moral guidelines (Sutrisno, 2019).

### **Building Religious Moderation Through Islamic Religious Education**

Religious education is education that is directed at the development of religion. Although the word "Islam" itself comes from the old Arabic language which means safe to obey and obey. Most of the scholars have different definitions in Islamic Religious Education: First, Islamic Religious Education is a form of coaching and mentoring for participants so that when completing their study they will understand and apply what they have learned and make Islam a way of life. Second, Islamic Religious Education is education that is run based on Islamic teachings. Third, Islamic Religious Education educates through Islamic teachings which refer to coaching and fostering participants so that when they finish their studies, they respect and apply Islamic teachings wholeheartedly and firmly and make Islam their worldview to maintain their lives well in this world and in the world. the afterlife (Nor and Malim, 2014). Islamic Religious Education (PAI) as a basic subject is one of the efforts in building an attitude of religious moderation in students in Rejang Lebong district.

### **METHOD**

This research is a quantitative study that aims to analyze the level of religious moderation of students in several high schools in Rejang Lebong district. Purposive sampling was used, with a total sample of 536 data consisting of 376 women and 160 men from five SMA/SMK in Rejang Lebong district: SMAN 1 Rejang Lebong, SMAN 2 Rejang Lebong, MAN Rejang Lebong, SMK IT Khoiru Ummah and Xavier High School. This research was conducted in December 2021. Data collection was carried out using a non-test approach in the form of a questionnaire.

Before analyzing the data, the researcher conducted instrument trials on 30 students and ran the reliability analysis in order to measure internal consistency of each item. The reliability in this research was measured by using Cronbach Alpha. It is generally used when a researcher has multiple questions with likert scale in a survey/questionnaire to determine if the scale is reliable. In the psychometric test, most descend in the range of 0.75 to 0.83 with at least one asserting a Cronbach's alpha up to 0.90.

**Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha**

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Internal Consistency</b>
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$	Good
$0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$	Questionable
$0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$	Poor
$0.5 > \alpha$	Unacceptable

The data analysis technique in this study uses a percentage analysis technique that uses a Likert scale with five answer options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Adequate, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The following formula is used to calculate the quantitative analysis of the questionnaire results.

$$p = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where  $P$  is the proportion of the findings of the questionnaire analysis,  $n$  is the overall assessment score, and  $N$  is the highest possible score. Table 1 shows the score interpretation model for the Likert scale.

**Table 2. Likert Scale**

Percentage (%)	Category
0% - 20%	Strongly Disagree (SD)
21% - 40%	Disagree (D)
41% - 60%	Adequate (A)
61% - 80%	Agree (S)
81% - 100%	Strongly Agree (SA)

## FINDINGS

The results in this study were obtained from data filling out questionnaires distributed to high school / vocational students in Rejang Lebong district, including: SMAN 1 Rejang Lebong, SMAN 2 Rejang Lebong, MAN Rejang Lebong, SMK IT Khoiru Ummah Rejang Lebong and SMA Xaverius. The results of the responses related to the level of religious moderation of students in Rejang Lebong Regency can be seen in the following:

### National Commitment

**Table 3. National Commitment Percentage**

Indicator	Statement Items	Percentage
National Commitment	Practicing the values of Pancasila actually keeps me away from the religion that I profess	37,9%
	My religion has the best concept to solve the nation's current problems	81,04%
	To solve the nation's problems, it is not enough just to stick to the Pancasila ideology	77,16%
	Pancasila is final as the state ideology, but it is important to evaluate it in practice	82,35%
	Order in the life of the nation and state will be achieved if all citizens consistently apply the values of Pancasila	87,4%
	Pancasila as the state ideology is quite relevant to the condition of the pluralistic Indonesian society	80,9%
	Pancasila, if practiced properly, will be able to provide solutions to various problems of the nation	86,45%
	Although not entirely, the religion that I believe in is still in line with the practice of Pancasila values	83,3%
	Campaigns for the practice of Pancasila values need to be continuously encouraged to build national commitment	81,6%
	Religious organizations that develop in Indonesia should be able to respect the laws that apply in Indonesia	82,8%
Freedom in expressing aspirations should not conflict with the 1945 Constitution and Pancasila	79,2%	



Indicator	Statement Items	Percentage
	Pancasila values actually provide space for freedom to practice the religion they believe in	83%
	I realize that the independence of this nation cannot be separated from the services of the heroes	91%
	No matter how bad the condition of the nation, I always try to contribute according to my ability	85,4%
	<b>Average</b>	<b>79,96%</b>

From the table above, in the first indicator we can see that in terms of maintaining and implementing national commitments, the average percentage is 79.96%. This shows that the majority of students at the high school level in Rejang Lebong Regency have a fairly high national commitment. With such a large percentage, it means that the majority of students in Rejang Lebong Regency agree to maintain the values of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution in their religious life. From their answers to the questionnaire above, they consider that the concepts of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution are considered to be still relevant and truly capable of being a way of life in carrying out state and religious life in Indonesia. Not only that, the majority of these students also strongly disagreed if Pancasila was considered to limit and distance them from the teachings of the religion they professed.

## Tolerance

**Table 4. Tolerance Percentage**

Indicator	Statement Items	Percentage
Tolerance	I prefer to live in a majority religion with me	66,3%
	I usually avoid arguing with anyone about my beliefs	80%
	In choosing friends to hang out with, I don't look at a particular religion	91,56%
	I used to think positively to all followers of other religions	85,4%
	I don't agree if there is a group or group of people who give a heretical label to a religion or religious sect	84,5%
	On social media, I never share news or information that I don't know and understand in order to maintain a conducive situation in society	86,5%
	I worship while taking care not to offend followers of other religions	86,6%
	I can understand and respect the differences of opinion that occur in my religion	85,4%
	In choosing friends to hang out with, I don't look at a particular religion	89,25%
	<b>Average</b>	<b>83,94%</b>

In the second indicator, we can see that in terms of growing and maintaining religious tolerance values, the average percentage is 83.94%. This shows that the majority of students at the high school level in Rejang Lebong Regency have a high tolerance attitude. With such a large percentage, it indicates that the majority of students in Rejang Lebong Regency strongly agree to continue to maintain and foster the values of tolerance towards other religions and they always respect differences of opinion that occur within their own religion. Most of them also stated that it was wiser to use social media to avoid spreading content that could offend and corner certain religions.

## Anti-violence

**Table 5. Anti-violence Percentage**

Indicator	Statement Items	Percentage
Anti-violence	In doing something that is believed, there is no need to sacrifice yourself even though it hinders belief	74%
	In my opinion, sometimes in upholding the truth you need to be a little hard to give a deterrent effect to the perpetrators	84%
	For something that is believed, I always consider the aspects of reason and emotion	79,4%
	For some things, I prefer to prioritize deliberation in solving any problem	86,3%
	Even though they have committed blasphemy, it is better if adherents of the majority religion do not act arbitrarily to adherents of minority religions	83%
	I do not agree in terms of defending religious interests through demonstrations or acts of violence	80,3%
	Even though sometimes I don't reach an agreement, I prefer to have a dialogue in solving problems related to religion	79,85%
	It's good to want fast change, but you have to go through certain stages	86,15%
	In terms of decision making, as much as possible prioritizing deliberation	82,2%
	I try to find out and understand well before I take part in activities/actions in the name of religion	86,3%
	Regarding blasphemy cases, I prefer to leave everything to law enforcement	78,1%
<b>Average</b>		<b>81,78%</b>

Furthermore, in the third indicator where the students were asked about anti-violence attitudes involving elements of religion or belief, they got an average percentage of 81.78%. This means that SMA/SMK students in Rejang Lebong Regency strongly agree to avoid all forms of violence, terror and extreme actions against adherents of other religions under the pretext of defending and justifying the teachings of their religion.

## Accommodation to Local Culture

**Table 6. Accommodation to Local Culture Percentage**

Indicator	Statement Items	Percentage
Accommodation to local culture	In some cases, I voluntarily sacrifice for personal and group interests for something that I believe in or like	75,8%
	I prefer to choose domestic/local products even though the quality is sometimes lower than foreign products	77,6%
	I receive advice or new knowledge about the religion I believe in from anyone who believes in it	81,3%
	Religious teachings that I believe provide space to accept a good culture or tradition that has been going on for a long time in society	81,75%
	In my opinion, the spread of religion is closely related to local culture or traditions	79,85%
	In my opinion, not all cultures or traditions are against the religion that I believe in	80,9%
	I always try to respect and respect every culture or tradition that develops in Indonesia	87,9%
	I believe that a good culture or tradition that develops in society is one of the reinforcements for national unity	85,5%
	<b>Average</b>	



Finally, in the fourth indicator, related to the attitude of students to accommodate local cultures so that they can go hand in hand with their religious life, they get a percentage of 81.3%. This indicates that these students strongly agree to jointly accommodate local cultures so that they can go hand in hand with religious life.

## **DISCUSSION**

To analyze the level of religious moderation of students in Rejang Lebong district, researchers used a questionnaire given to 536 high school students from five schools, namely: SMAN 1 Rejang Lebong, SMAN 2 Rejang Lebong, MAN Rejang Lebong, SMK IT Khoiru Ummah and SMA Xaverius. . The questionnaire consists of four main indicators which are then detailed into several statement items.

In terms of maintaining and implementing an attitude of national commitment, the majority of students in Rejang Lebong Regency agree to implement and maintain this attitude so that their religious life can go hand in hand with the values of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. According to Anwar and Muhayati (2021), students' national commitment is important. to be built as an effort to see the extent to which students are as a group organization, matters related to students and the expression of national ideology, especially the commitment to accept Pancasila as the basis of the state. According to Masnur (2011), Pancasila forms national character education. The values in Pancasila are part of the process of educating character, namely instilling religious values, social values, cultural values, customer values, values of justice that must be in every learning process in schools and community life. For this reason there must be efforts to character education based on religious values as one of the births of the nation's progress. Furthermore, Effendi (2020) said that in developing the nation and state, every Indonesian citizen has balanced rights and obligations to develop a long-term and convincing joint life. If this can be realized, every citizen can become an Indonesian human being, as well as a human being who practices all religions. Instilling national values in students at Rejang Lebong is implemented in their daily lives where they are able to live side by side with fellow students who have different beliefs from them. This is a commitment that must be instilled in students of the Indonesian people in religious moderation, namely religious perspectives, attitudes, and practices, the impact of a person on loyalty to the basic national consensus, especially related to acceptance. Pancasila as the State Ideology, its attitude towards ideological challenges, and nationalism. As part of the national commitment is acceptance of the nation's principles contained in the 1945 Constitution. Therefore, moderation in students' religion becomes the most suitable value and practice to realize the interests of the Indonesian nation. A moderate, fair and balanced mental attitude is the key to managing the nation's diversity in the future.

In terms of cultivating and implementing an attitude of tolerance in religion, in general, students in Rejang Lebong Regency strongly agree to respect, appreciate and live peacefully side by side with followers of other religions. Mujizatullah (2020), in his research at Madrasah Aliyah Private Muhammadiyah Isimu, Gorontalo Regency stated that the madrasa consisting of various schools and ethnicities received learning the values of religious moderation through intracurricular educational activities with educational techniques integrated into religious subjects and extracurricular activities (Spiritual activities), and able to implement tolerance and accommodative behavior towards local culture quite well. Sutrisno (2019) also said that the school environment is very relevant to be a "religious

moderation laboratory” in realizing the values of tolerance for each individual. As has been understood, the Indonesian nation is a nation that has various ethnic groups and religions. The things mentioned above are reflected in the statements of these students which state that they can respect each other. As is well known, Indonesia has unique characteristics, but is full of challenges. Schools as learning institutions can increase the mindset of religious moderation with the condition that exclusive thoughts and acts of violent extremism in religious robes disturb the joints and weaving of a pluralistic nation. In Islamic thought, it is prioritizing tolerance in differences. Openness to accept religion. Both are diverse in school and diverse in religion. The difference does not prevent cooperation, with humanitarian principles. Therefore, schools must increase the application of different religious experiences so that we can carry out cooperation between religious adherents.

Regarding students' commitment to non-violence, overall SMA/SMK students in Rejang Lebong district strongly agreed to always consider the aspects of reason and emotion and prioritize deliberation in resolving issues related to their religion and beliefs. The students also disagreed that in upholding and defending religion it was carried out with violence and extreme ways. Religious disputes in Indonesia are often triggered by an exclusive religious mindset, as well as competition between religious organizations for popular support that is not based on tolerance, because everyone uses their power to succeed, causing conflict. According to Muklis (2016), shura (deliberation) is one example of the application of Islamic moderation, namely every problem that is handled through deliberation to reach consensus with the concept of prioritizing excellence above all else. He also said that religious moderation can be achieved if every religious community does not discriminate against others based on differences in beliefs, customs, or the origin of each individual. Fahri and Zainuri (2019) also emphasize that in accordance with *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*'s mission, moderate Islamic teachings requires an anti-violence attitude among the younger generation (including students), understanding the differences that may occur, prioritizing contextualization in interpreting divine verses, using *istinbath* to apply the latest laws, and use a science and technology approach to justify and overcome the dynamics of problems in Indonesian society. If the points stated above are applied by students in Rejang Lebong Regency, then religious harmony will remain stable and of course religious moderation will be able to be implemented.

The last indicator of the level of application of religious moderation of students in Rejang Lebong Regency is related to their acceptance of local cultures. Diversity is a gift in itself if managed properly; it becomes distinctiveness and strength; however, such pluralism can become a problem if not handled carefully, and can pose a threat of division and conflict that can tear social security apart. Cultural diversity occurs naturally as a result of the convergence of cultural diversity in one location, with individual people and ethnic groups contributing their own cultural behaviors and ways of life. Religious moderation is always associated with culture, especially because the dynamics of people's lives are often controlled by their culture. Culture always affects knowledge, such as a system of ideas or thoughts in the human mind that has become abstract (religion). Related to this, students in Rejang Lebong Regency said there was no problem practicing their religion and beliefs side by side with local culture. The students also said that they tried to appreciate and respect every culture or tradition that developed in Indonesia. Akhmadi (2019) reveals that multicultural life requires understanding and awareness of multiculturalism that respects

differences, plurality and willingness to interact with anyone fairly. Local wisdom can be used as a reference to build religious moderation, which is currently under attack from various sources (Isang & Dalmasius, 2021). In practice, religious moderation that is tolerant of local culture is proven to be able to foster religious harmony. Then, religious moderation must be understood as a shared commitment to maintain balance, so that citizens, regardless of ethnicity, culture, or religion, must be willing to defend each other's feelings, and learn from each other, to practice religious teachings. the ability to manage differences that are oriented to the local wisdom of students in Rejang Lebong Regency, especially local values, norms, and laws.

Building the practice of Islamic moderation in Rejang Lebong Regency certainly cannot be separated from the process of Islamic Religious Education in schools. Efforts to build an attitude of religious moderation through PAI courses in schools in Rejang Lebong Regency are carried out by providing learning to students about the methodology of understanding Islamic teachings. This is done by PAI teachers by providing education about the meaning of respecting the differences of opinion of Muslims and the opinions of adherents of other religions, including differences of opinion among students themselves. From the results of the research obtained by the researcher, it was found that the students in Rejang Lebong had carried out through the existence of PAI subjects which were substantially directed at the formation of Islamic character for students, this was evidenced by the material and submiration in the PAI subjects themselves; in accordance with Islamic commands in calling for benefits and preventing evil in wisdom, good lessons (*Mauizhah Hasanah*), and protesting in a better way.

Building student religious moderation in Rejang Lebong Regency is also carried out through an evaluation process by referring to four indicators of religious moderation, namely nationality, tolerance, non-violence and wisdom for local culture. It is important to do this as a form of improvement in PAI lessons at school if there are students who are still extreme and not moderate. Suharsimi in Betwan (2019) who stated that the purposes of evaluation are: first, to see the level of change achieved in student behavior as an ingredient to improve student behavior improvement. Second, the benchmark and value of the effectiveness of teaching and teaching methods that have been taught or implemented by educators (Betwan, 2019).

## CONCLUSION

The cultural diversity of the Indonesian nation (multiculturalism) is a powerful asset to develop religious moderation, meaning a balanced perspective, attitude, and behavior, always being fair and not extremist in religion. In this regard, students in Rejang Lebong Regency also know and understand that religious moderation, which is characterized by nationalism, tolerance, anti-violence, and being accommodating to local culture, seems to have begun to be adopted. Interaction with students also continues to be carried out in accordance with the norms of religious moderation.

From the results of distributing questionnaires to students in Rejang Lebong Regency, by developing strong relationships between various sects and ethnic groups, students seem to have gained insight into national values, tolerance, anti-violence and have adapted to local culture so that conclusions can be drawn. that the level of religious moderation of students in Rejang Lebong district was quite high. This is reflected in the high percentage of each

indicator of religious moderation given to students. In addition, the development of understanding of the student's religious moderation movement in Rejang Lebong Regency was also carried out by involving the active role of PAI subjects in class which was proven to form an attitude of national commitment, tolerance, non-violence and being able to accept local culture to coexist and go hand in hand with religious life. Therefore, ideally educational institutions serve as the basis for a laboratory of religious moderation in order to realize the notion of religious moderation in the context of a heterogeneous society. Educational institutions are ideal places to build and develop religious moderation in students.

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