

Integrating Religious Moderation Values in *MATSAMA*: an Innovative Case Study at MIN 2 Sumenep

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Abstract: This study examines the implementation of religious moderation education in the Masa Ta'aruf Siswa Madrasah (MATSAMA) activities at MIN 2 Sumenep, Madura, focusing on institutional policies, activity processes, stakeholder responses, and their implications. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through observation, interviews, focus group discussions, and documentation, and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana. The findings indicate that MIN 2 Sumenep systematically integrates religious moderation into MATSAMA through collaboration with Dharma Wanita Persatuan of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which has designated this program for all madrasahs in Sumenep Regency. Five main policies were identified: formal integration, collaboration, a contextual pedagogical approach, curriculum integration, and evaluation mechanisms. The innovative CINTA BERUTANG approach (Storytelling, Narration, Question and Answer, Singing, and Playing Snakes and Ladders), using a 12-square Snakes and Ladders game representing nine values of religious moderation, effectively facilitates learning for first-grade students aged 6-7 years. Responses from students, teachers, and the Dharma Wanita Persatuan of the Ministry of Religious Affairs indicate successful implementation, with impacts including increased affective, cognitive, and conative understanding. And provides practical implications for other madrasahs in designing innovative MATSAMA activities.

Keywords: Religious Moderation; MATSAMA; Multicultural Education; Educational Game; Islamic Elementary School.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji implementasi pendidikan moderasi beragama dalam kegiatan Masa Ta'aruf Siswa Madrasah (MATSAMA) di MIN 2 Sumenep, Madura, dengan fokus pada kebijakan kelembagaan, proses kegiatan, respons pemangku kepentingan, serta implikasinya. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, diskusi kelompok terfokus, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis melalui model interaktif

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Miles, Huberman, dan Saldana. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa MIN 2 Sumenep mengintegrasikan moderasi beragama secara sistematis dalam MATSAMA melalui kolaborasi dengan Dharma Wanita Persatuan Kementerian Agama yang menetapkan program ini untuk seluruh madrasah di Kabupaten Sumenep. Lima kebijakan utama teridentifikasi, yaitu integrasi formal, kolaborasi, pendekatan pedagogis kontekstual, integrasi kurikulum, dan mekanisme evaluasi. Pendekatan inovatif CINTA BERUTANG (Cerita, Narasi, Tanya jawab, Bernyanyi, Bermain Ular Tangga) dengan permainan Ular Tangga 12 kotak merepresentasikan sembilan nilai moderasi beragama efektif memfasilitasi pembelajaran siswa kelas 1 berusia 6-7 tahun. Respons siswa, guru, dan DWP Kemenag menunjukkan indikator keberhasilan, dengan dampak mencakup peningkatan pemahaman afektif, kognitif, dan konatif. Dan memberikan implikasi praktis bagi madrasah lain dalam merancang kegiatan MATSAMA inovatif.

Kata Kunci: Moderasi Beragama; MATSAMA; Pendidikan Multikultural; Permainan Edukatif; Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

A. Introduction

Exclusivism and intolerance do not emerge suddenly in adulthood; rather, they are rooted in prejudices formed during childhood. At MIN 2 Sumenep, Madura, this phenomenon appears in subtle yet concerning forms. Preliminary observations indicate that children tend to create comfort zones by socializing only with peers from their previous schools, are reluctant to interact with students from different backgrounds, and even make remarks that reflect prejudice toward physical or social differences. More alarmingly, some students display attitudes of superiority based on social status, as illustrated by statements such as, *“My father is a police officer; if anyone dares to bother me, I will report them to my father so they will be arrested.”* This phenomenon serves as an early indicator of prejudice which, if left unaddressed, may develop into persistent patterns of intolerance. In the context of Indonesia’s pluralistic society, characterized by ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity, instilling values of tolerance and moderation from an early age is an urgent necessity to prevent social conflict in the future.

The urgency of religious moderation education is increasingly evident in the context of Sumenep Regency, which is characterized by a deeply religious society with

343 Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) and more than 48,000 active students (*santri*) (Herdiyana, 2025; Media, 2024). Nevertheless, there remains potential for social tension, as reflected in conflicts between NU, Muhammadiyah, and FPI in Bragung Village, which were triggered by differences in religious perspectives (Hendri, 2019). The disparity in students' backgrounds at MIN 2 Sumenep, ranging from socio-economic status and variations in Madurese dialects to the presence of students with physical disabilities, reflects the complexity faced by the madrasah in fostering harmony amid heterogeneity. Without appropriate pedagogical intervention, this heterogeneity risks becoming a source of conflict rather than a valuable asset for learning.

Normatively, religious moderation is aligned with national policies and religious values. The Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs has emphasized religious moderation as a priority agenda to strengthen a harmonious and inclusive national life (*Moderasi beragama*, 2019), in line with the National Education System Law No. 20/2003, which mandates the development of students' character to respect diversity. In Islamic teachings, the Qur'an introduces the principle of *ummatan wasathan* (the middle or balanced community), which emphasizes justice and balance (Kementerian Agama RI, 2025), while the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stress the importance of living harmoniously and avoiding excessiveness in religious practice (Abī Abdillāh Muḥammad bin Yazīd, 2004, Issue 3029). The thoughts of prominent Islamic education figures, such as KH. Hasyim Asy'ari on the importance of moral character (*akhlak*) and tolerance (*tasamuh*) (Mukani, 2017), Abdurrahman Wahid on the indigenization of Islam (*pribumisasi Islam*) (*Pribumisasi Islam (Ringkasan Wawancara)* - *GusDur.Net*, 1989), and Nurcholish Madjid on inclusive Islam (Madjid, 1999) further reinforce the relevance of moderation in the Indonesian context. Multicultural education likewise emphasizes curriculum reform so that learners are able to appreciate differences and internalize values of togetherness (Banks & Banks, 2016).

However, studies on the implementation of religious moderation in Indonesia face significant gaps. Most existing research tends to focus on secondary education, higher education, or *pesantren* environments (Mukarromah et al., 2025), while studies involving children at the elementary school level remain relatively limited. Research by

Dedi Riyan Rizaldi et al. indicates that *MATSAMA* activities in madrasah ibtidaiyah are more often understood as a means of introducing the school environment and management systems (Rizaldi et al., 2021), rather than as a medium for internalizing the values of religious moderation. Similar findings are reinforced by studies at the senior high school level, which show that teachers play a crucial role in instilling the values of religious moderation through the *Merdeka Curriculum* (Balqis et al., 2024; Haris et al., 2024; Nazib & Surachman, 2024), yet these studies have not addressed the realm of primary education. From the philosophical perspective of Islamic education, Maimun emphasizes that humanistic education oriented toward global ethics can serve as a foundation for realizing human harmony (Maimun, 2019), in line with the principles of religious moderation that integrate universal human values.

In the context of Madura, several studies have addressed the theme of religious moderation at the primary education level, such as evaluations of learning at MIN 2 Pamekasan (Aluf et al., 2024) and authentic assessment at SD Al-Qur'an Ummul Quro Pamekasan (Fahmi et al., 2024). However, none have specifically examined the implementation of religious moderation within *MATSAMA* activities at the madrasah ibtidaiyah level through interactive methods. This gap indicates that the implementation of moderation from the earliest educational stages, particularly through student orientation activities such as *Masa Ta'aruf Siswa Madrasah (MATSAMA)*, remains underexplored.

Based on this background, the present study holds a distinct position compared to previous research. While earlier studies have tended to emphasize religious moderation at the secondary education level or within regular classroom learning, this research specifically examines the implementation of religious moderation in *MATSAMA* activities at the *madrasah ibtidaiyah* level. Another unique feature lies in the use of the interactive method CINTA BERUTANG (*Cerita, Narasi, Tanya Jawab, Bernyanyi, Bermain Ular Tangga* - Storytelling, Narration, Question-and-Answer, Singing, and Snakes-and-Ladders Play) as a medium for delivering moderation values during the orientation of first-grade students. The aim of this study is to examine the implementation of religious moderation education during the *Masa Ta'aruf Siswa*

Madrasah (MATSAMA) activities at MIN 2 Sumenep, Madura, focusing on institutional policy, activity processes, stakeholder responses, and their implications. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the literature on multicultural-based Islamic education at the *madrasah ibtidaiyah* level. Practically, it aims to provide recommendations for other madrasahs in designing innovative and contextually relevant *MATSAMA* programs.

B. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative case study design to provide an in-depth understanding of the implementation of religious moderation in the *Masa Ta'aruf Siswa Madrasah (MATSAMA)* activities, supported by data on student numbers, demographics, and activity schedules to strengthen the descriptive analysis (Sugiyono, 2013). The case study approach was chosen because it enables an in-depth exploration of contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly defined (Yin, 2018). The research was conducted at MIN 2 Sumenep, Sumenep Regency, Madura, from July to September 2025, with the *MATSAMA* activities taking place from July 14-19, 2025.

The site selection was based on several strategic considerations. First, MIN 2 Sumenep exhibits a multicultural character, with 120 new students enrolled for the 2025/2026 academic year coming from various districts and diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds (MIN 2 Sumenep, 2025a). Second, the madrasah has a unique feature of operating across two separate buildings approximately 900 meters apart, which contributes to the dynamics of multicultural student interaction. Third, the collaboration with the Dharma Wanita Persatuan (*DWP*) of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Sumenep Regency as facilitators of religious moderation materials during *MATSAMA* demonstrates an inter-institutional synergy that is particularly interesting to study.

The researcher served as a teacher at MIN 2 Sumenep, actively involved as a student mentor during the *MATSAMA* activities. This position provided deep access to the dynamics of learning and student interactions (an insider perspective), while maintaining objectivity through data triangulation across multiple sources and methods.

Research subjects were determined using the purposive sampling technique (Sugiyono, 2013), consisting of the Head of the Madrasah as the policy decision-maker, first-grade homeroom teachers as program implementers, representatives of the *Dharma Wanita Persatuan (DWP)* of the Ministry of Religious Affairs as facilitators, and ten first-grade students (five boys and five girls) as the main participants, randomly selected for a Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

Data were collected using four techniques. First, participant observation was conducted in the role of an accompanying teacher during the *MATSAMA* activities, followed by subsequent observations in the following weeks to identify early implications. Second, in-depth interviews with the Head of the Madrasah, first-grade homeroom teachers, and representatives of the *Dharma Wanita Persatuan (DWP)* of the Ministry of Religious Affairs were carried out in September 2025. Third, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) involving ten first-grade students was conducted in mid-September 2025, approximately two months after *MATSAMA*, to explore students' understanding and attitude changes. Fourth, documentation included activity photos, official schedules, the *Religious Moderation Snakes-and-Ladders* game board, facilitator guidelines, and official madrasah documents.

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, consisting of four stages: data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles et al., 2014). Data validity was ensured through source and method triangulation, by comparing the results of observations, interviews, FGDs, and documentation to achieve consistency and validity of findings (Moleong, 2018). This triangulation was essential to maintain research objectivity, considering the researcher's dual role as both teacher and researcher.

C. Results and Discussion

Policy on Religious Moderation at MIN 2 Sumenep

Educational policy is understood as a formal institutional decision aimed at achieving specific objectives, encompassing planning, implementation, and evaluation (Hasbullah, 2015). According to James E. Anderson, effective public policy contains key elements, including clear objectives, a legitimate basis, implementation

mechanisms, stakeholder involvement, and an evaluation system (Anderson, 2006). This framework serves as the analytical basis for examining the religious moderation policy at MIN 2 Sumenep.

The policy of integrating religious moderation into *MATSAMA* at MIN 2 Sumenep emerged from the convergence between the madrasah's institutional initiative and the structural agenda of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Sumenep Regency. The *Dharma Wanita Persatuan (DWP)* of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Sumenep Regency established the inclusion of religious moderation in *MATSAMA* as a 2025 program for all madrasahs under the Ministry's jurisdiction (*DWP Kemenag Sumenep*, 2025). At the madrasah level, the Head of MIN 2 Sumenep responded to this directive by holding a coordination meeting in June 2025 with first-grade homeroom teachers and the *MATSAMA* committee. During this meeting, the Head emphasized that *MATSAMA* should serve as a strategic moment to instill fundamental values, including religious moderation. Consequently, it was agreed that religious moderation would become a core component of *MATSAMA*, allocated a dedicated time slot and delivered through methods tailored to the developmental stage of first-grade students.

First, MIN 2 Sumenep officially integrated religious moderation materials into the *MATSAMA* schedule, involving all 120 new students (MIN 2 Sumenep, 2025b). The Head of the Madrasah emphasized that “*religious moderation material is highly relevant and important to be introduced to students from the very beginning of their schooling*,” serving as a foundation for developing a balanced understanding of religion (Akh. Mufris, personal communication, September 17, 2025).

Second, the madrasah established a strategic collaboration with the Dharma Wanita Persatuan (*DWP*) of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Sumenep Regency as facilitators. The *DWP* not only acted as resource persons but also as institutional partners providing facilitator guidelines, learning media, activity facilitation, and program evaluation (*DWP Kemenag Sumenep*, 2025). This collaboration generated three key benefits: strengthening program legitimacy, ensuring content consistency in accordance with the Ministry's guidelines, and expanding program impact through replication in other madrasahs.

Third, the madrasah adopted a contextual pedagogical approach suited for children aged 6-7. The Head of the Madrasah stated, *“What matters most is that religious moderation is delivered in creative ways, not merely as theoretical content, especially not through long lectures... If we want good responses from the students, the delivery method must also be good, meaning it must match their age level”* (Akh. Mufris, personal communication, September 17, 2025). The madrasah, in collaboration with DWP Kemenag, agreed to use the CINTA BERUTANG method, designed specifically for young learners.

Fourth, the madrasah implemented religious moderation integration into both the written and hidden curriculum to ensure the continuity of value internalization. The values of moderation are not only documented formally but also practiced in daily habits such as performing *duha* prayers together without discrimination, fostering mutual respect, and promoting the use of inclusive language by teachers (Akh. Mufris, personal communication, September 17, 2025). This policy aligns with the concept of an infused curriculum, in which character values are integrated across all aspects of school life (Lickona, 2009). Thus, students not only learn about moderation but also learn through experience and learn to become moderate individuals.

Fifth, a monitoring and evaluation mechanism was established. Homeroom teachers observed students' behavioral development after *MATSAMA*, while DWP Kemenag conducted systematic evaluations to identify strengths and areas for improvement (M. Astutik, personal communication, September 14, 2025). The evaluation covered indicators such as student enthusiasm, conceptual understanding of diversity, and observable behavioral changes.

The policy of MIN 2 Sumenep aligns with the national regulatory framework while also responding to the local context. Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System emphasizes the development of character that respects diversity (UU SISDIKNAS No. 20 Tahun 2003, 2003), while the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia promotes madrasahs as centers for mainstreaming religious moderation (*Moderasi beragama*, 2019). In the local context, the people of Madura known for their strong religiosity and deep adherence to Islamic traditions (Hefner,

2000), also exhibit potential tendencies toward exclusivism, which need to be balanced by fostering inclusive attitudes from an early age. Therefore, the integration of moderation values into *MATSAMA* serves as a crucial strategy to build harmony between local religious traditions and the inclusive vision of national identity.

The Process of Religious Moderation Activities in *MATSAMA*

The learning process can be understood as a series of systematic stages involving interactions among educators, learners, and learning resources to achieve educational objectives (Gagné, 2005). At MIN 2 Sumenep, the implementation of religious moderation within *MATSAMA* followed five structured processes, representing the direct operationalization of the third policy, a contextual pedagogical approach tailored for students aged 6-7.

The first process involved institutional collaboration between MIN 2 Sumenep and the *Dharma Wanita Persatuan (DWP)* of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Sumenep Regency in designing the religious moderation program. As stated by M. Astutik, “*Religious moderation is a program of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which happens to be entrusted to DWP to deliver both to madrasahs and to the community*” (M. Astutik, personal communication, September 14, 2025). This highlights that the program serves as a national policy implementation extended to the elementary education level.

The preparation stage included setting clear objectives so that students would “*not lean to the right or to the left*” and “*not feel that they are always the most correct*” (M. Astutik, personal communication, September 14, 2025), reflecting the Qur’anic concept of *ummatahan wasathan* (a balanced community) (*Moderasi beragama*, 2019). The preparation also involved identifying the characteristics of 6-7 year old learners, who are prone to forming exclusive peer groups, and strategically scheduling the activity on the third day of *MATSAMA* to allow time for initial social adaptation (MIN 2 Sumenep, 2025b). MIN 2 Sumenep deliberately positions *MATSAMA* as a strategic entry point for instilling the values of religious moderation.

The second process was the selection of the CINTA BERUTANG method. This method is grounded in solid pedagogical theory. First-grade students aged 6-7 are in the

concrete operational stage, meaning they understand abstract concepts more effectively through tangible, experiential activities (Piaget, 1952). The method also aligns with Vygotsky's scaffolding theory, which emphasizes guided learning within a learner's zone of proximal development (Vygotskij & Cole, 1981), and Kolb's experiential learning cycle, which involves four stages, concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation (Kolb, 1984). As noted by M. Astutik, "*We do not immediately explain what religious moderation is with definitions, but we use games that make children happy and help them understand*" (M. Astutik, personal communication, September 14, 2025). This approach reflects the child-centered and play-based learning principles proven effective for early learners.

The third process was the development of the "*Ular Tangga Moderasi Beragama*" (Religious Moderation Snakes and Ladders Board Game), designed with 12 squares representing nine core values of religious moderation (Humanity, Public Benefit, Justice, National Commitment, Balance, Constitutional Obedience, Tolerance, Anti-Violence, and Respect for Tradition (*Moderasi beragama*, 2019).

Table 1. Structure of the Religious Moderation Snakes and Ladders Game

No	Square	Core Value of Moderation	Activity & Moral Message
1	START	Obedience to the Constitution	Opening prayer; starting with spiritual values and discipline
2	I Dare to Apologize	Humanity	Song and story about the courage to apologize and show empathy
3	The Rabbit Story	Obedience to the Constitution	Story of two rabbits; justice and responsibility
4	Ethnic Diversity in Indonesia	Tolerance, Respect for Tradition	Pictures of various ethnic groups; introduction to cultural diversity
5	The Kind-Hearted Sheep	Justice, Anti-Violence	Story of a sheep that remains kind; promoting peaceful conflict resolution
6	Let's Sing Regional Songs	Respect for Tradition	Singing " <i>Gundul-Gundul Pacul</i> " and " <i>Ampar-Ampar Pisang</i> "
7	Story: Good Behavior Toward Parents	Humanity, Balance	Being devoted and respectful to parents
8	Religious Figures	Tolerance, National Commitment	Introduction to the six recognized religions in Indonesia; promoting pluralism
9	Singing "My Body is Precious"	Anti-Violence	Preventing physical, verbal, and sexual violence
10	Pancasila Symbols	National Commitment	Introduction to the symbols of the national ideology; fostering nationalism

11	Places of Worship	Tolerance, Public Benefit	Introduction to mosques, churches, temples, and monasteries
12	FINISH	Obedience to the Constitution, Justice	Appreciation; sense of achievement and motivation



Figure 1. The Religious Moderation Snakes and Ladders Board with 12 Learning Squares

Each square is designed using a multisensory approach (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) to enhance retention. The FGD results confirmed its effectiveness. Students were able to recall that “in Indonesia there are six religions: Islam, Protestant Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. And also Indonesia has many regions” (Aini, 2025). This finding indicates that the abstract values of religious moderation can be concretized through visual-kinesthetic media appropriate to children’s developmental stages.

The fourth process includes: (1) Preparation and conditioning, all new students from four classes were gathered together and divided into small heterogeneous groups to facilitate cross-background interaction (MIN 2 Sumenep, 2025a). (2) Learning implementation followed a structured flow, starting with ice-breaking, playing Snakes and Ladders in small groups, and engaging in activities aligned with each square’s

content (storytelling, singing, reflective Q&A). The facilitator described the interactive dynamics: *“We don’t impose that things must be this way; instead, from the children’s own experiences, we guide them toward what is right”* (M. Astutik, personal communication, September 14, 2025), (3) Educational interaction dynamics involved collaboration between *DWP Kemenag* facilitators and classroom teachers. A noteworthy moment was the spontaneous response to a teachable moment, when a student with a disability initially drew a remark *“why is he like that?”*, the facilitator immediately responded with an inclusive message: *“we are all the same... we are asked to be grateful”* (A. Rahimah, personal communication, September 13, 2025).



Figure 2. Implementation of the Religious Moderation Snakes and Ladders Game during MATSAMA at MIN 2 Sumenep

The fifth process is the internalization of values, which occurs through direct experience and is reinforced by the local Madurese context. Evidence of internalization was visible in the students’ quick behavioral changes for example, their initial surprise at a peer’s physical differences soon shifted into acceptance. Students also expressed their commitment to *“be friends with everyone, not be selective... because it’s fun”* (Aini, 2025), indicating that the value of inclusivity had connected with the affective dimension.

Teachers continued this internalization in daily learning: *“In Grade 1 at madrasah ibtidaiyah, applying religious moderation must be done every day... in every subject it’s always conveyed, always inserted, even when teaching mathematics”* (A. Rahimah, personal communication, September 13, 2025).

Contextualization with local Madurese wisdom, such as *tengka* (ethics), *song-song lombhung* (mutual cooperation), and *abhakte* (filial piety), further strengthened the process of internalization. These local values resonate with the principles of religious moderation, enabling students to perceive continuity between the values taught at school and those practiced at home. Together, these five processes illustrate a logical sequence of how policy is translated into concrete actions, implemented through participatory methods, and reinforced by long-term strategies.

Stakeholders' Responses

Response in the context of educational program evaluation can be understood as the cognitive, affective, and conative reactions of stakeholders toward the implementation of a program, reflecting their levels of acceptance, understanding, and commitment to sustainability (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016). Theoretically, responses consist of three elements: (1) affective response, referring to feelings and attitudes toward the program; (2) cognitive response, referring to the understanding and knowledge gained; and (3) conative response, referring to the readiness to act or apply the values learned (Eagly & Chaiken, 2011).

At MIN 2 Sumenep, stakeholders' responses to the implementation of religious moderation during *MATSAMA* were analyzed from three perspectives: students as direct participants, teachers as agents of continuity, and the *DWP* of the Ministry of Religious Affairs as facilitators and evaluators. This response analysis operationalizes the fifth policy on evaluation mechanisms and serves as an indicator of the success of the five processes described earlier.

Students demonstrated highly positive responses across all three dimensions. From the affective dimension, the *DWP* representative stated, "*The children, alhamdulillah, were happy... they were very enthusiastic and highly motivated; everyone wanted to play, everyone wanted to participate*" (M. Astutik, personal communication, September 14, 2025). This enthusiasm reflects the success of the method and content design in fostering intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

From the cognitive dimension, the results of the focus group discussion (FGD) with 10 first-grade students revealed their ability to recall the number of religions, the

concept of diversity, and six moral values at once: “*we must help each other, love each other, respect each other, be friends, not choose friends, and honor our parents*” (Aini, 2025). From the conative dimension, students expressed concrete commitments: “*to be friends with everyone, not to be selective... because it’s fun,*” and “*we must always respect others and never mock them*” (Aini, 2025). The phrase “*because it’s fun*” indicates that the value of tolerance has been internalized within the affective domain (Goleman, 1996), rather than remaining merely cognitive. The repetitive method through singing and play created strong memory traces (Tulving & Thomson, 1973). These findings demonstrate that the CINTA BERUTANG method effectively facilitated meaningful learning.

Teachers provided responses that reflected full support and empirical observations of the program’s concrete impact. From the affective dimension, Ainur Rahimah stated: “*The inclusion of religious moderation in MATSAMA has many benefits, such as introducing children to friends who are different, for example, in terms of gender and even physical appearance*” (A. Rahimah, personal communication, September 13, 2025). This support indicates that teachers recognize the program’s relevance to the contextual needs of heterogeneous students.

From the cognitive dimension, teachers observed that the participatory approach successfully engaged students with varying literacy levels: “*Even those who cannot read yet, by listening to the instructions, gain a lot of benefits*” (A. Rahimah, personal communication, September 13, 2025). Interestingly, teachers noted very rapid attitudinal changes. This speed indicates high social plasticity among elementary-aged children when given appropriate framing (Aboud & Levy, 2000). From the conative dimension, teachers demonstrated strong commitment to continuing the internalization of values in daily learning. This commitment represents the concrete realization of the policy on integrating moderation into the written and hidden curriculum.

The *DWP* of the Ministry of Religious Affairs as facilitator and institutional partner provided responses that reflected systematic evaluation and a sustainability-oriented perspective. From the affective dimension, *DWP Kemenag* expressed satisfaction with students’ enthusiasm. This satisfaction indicates that institutional

collaboration functioned effectively, with the madrasah acting not merely as a passive program recipient but as an active implementation partner.

From the cognitive dimension, *DWP Kemenag* conducted evaluations focusing on implicit learning: “*How to make children enjoy and understand, and without realizing it, they have already learned how to be moderate*” (M. Astutik, personal communication, September 14, 2025). This focus reflects an understanding of incidental learning, which is often more effective than direct instruction (Reber, 1989). The evaluation process was not merely bureaucratic or administrative but oriented toward continuous improvement. From the conative dimension, *DWP Kemenag* encouraged teachers to continue deepening these values through other school activities, showing that the program was designed as a long-term strategy. The follow-up plan was extended to community religious gatherings (*pengajian*) (M. Astutik, personal communication, September 14, 2025), demonstrating awareness that religious moderation education requires support from a broader ecosystem, consistent with Bronfenbrenner’s ecological development theory. *DWP Kemenag*’s long-term vision emphasizes the elimination of bullying and the creation of harmony (M. Astutik, personal communication, September 14, 2025), underscoring that religious moderation serves as a foundation for a safe and inclusive school environment (Cohen et al., 2009).

Implications of Religious Moderation Education in the MIN 2 Sumenep Environment

In educational research, implications can be understood as the logical consequences or impacts that emerge from research findings, whether on theory, practice, or policy. Theoretically, implications consist of three dimensions: (1) Theoretical implications, referring to the contribution of findings to the development or testing of existing theories; (2) Practical implications, referring to the application of findings to improve instructional or educational management practices; and (3) Policy implications, referring to recommendations for decision-makers in formulating or revising educational policies (Cohen et al., 2009).

At MIN 2 Sumenep, the implementation of religious moderation in *MATSAMA* produced four interrelated major implications, reflecting the success of the policies,

processes, and stakeholder responses described earlier. These implications are not only internal to the madrasah but also have broader relevance for the development of religious moderation education in Indonesia.

The first implication is the observable change in students' attitudes and competencies within a short period of time. The case of a student with a physical disability illustrates this clearly. Another notable outcome is the creation of an inclusive classroom atmosphere, reflecting a growing awareness of the importance of inclusivity. From a competency perspective, students demonstrated multidimensional improvement. Cognitively, they were able to recall the six officially recognized religions and Indonesia's regional diversity accurately. Affectively, students developed empathy and linked the value of inclusivity with positive emotions. Psychomotorically, play-based activities created embodied memory related to collaboration (Wilson, 2002). These findings indicate that values education at an early age fosters not only cognitive change but also holistic affective and behavioral transformation.

The second implication is the transformation of instructional practice. Teachers have become aware of the importance of continuity. This commitment demonstrates that *MATSAMA* has successfully shifted teachers' mindsets from viewing religious moderation as an additional topic to recognizing it as a core value that must be integrated into all aspects of teaching. The practice of embedding moderation values into daily lessons has created a strong hidden curriculum. For example, in mathematics lessons, teachers integrate values of honesty and respect for differences in students' abilities, while in language learning, they use stories that celebrate diversity. This embedding strategy aligns with Lickona's concept of the infused curriculum (Lickona, 2009), in which character values are not taught as a separate subject but are integrated throughout the entire school life.

The third implication is the strengthening of an effective model of institutional collaboration. The *DWP Kemenag* provides qualified facilitators, learning media, and an evaluation framework, while the madrasah contributes infrastructure, teacher commitment, and contextual adaptation. Each stakeholder shares responsibility and resources to achieve common goals.

The fourth implication is the theoretical contribution to the discourse on multicultural and religious moderation education. This study demonstrates that the abstract and complex values of moderation can be internalized by children aged 6-7 years through developmentally appropriate methods, providing empirical evidence that religious moderation education can and should begin at the earliest level. Implementation through educational games offers a significant methodological contribution, showing that experiential and ludic (play-based) approaches are more effective for children than the discursive-cognitive approaches dominant in conventional values education. The CINTA BERUTANG method successfully translates abstract values into concrete experiences that students can see, hear, perform, and feel.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs can develop technical guidelines for implementing *MATSAMA* that integrate religious moderation materials with contextual pedagogical approaches, enabling best practices to be systematically replicated across Indonesia. The effectiveness of the Religious Moderation Snakes and Ladders game highlights the importance of investing in the development of age-appropriate learning media for various educational levels, not only for *madrasah ibtidaiyah* but also for *raudhatul athfal* and *madrasah tsanawiyah*.

D. Conclusion

This study examined the implementation of religious moderation education within the *Masa Ta'aruf Siswa Madrasah (MATSAMA)* program at MIN 2 Sumenep, Madura, focusing on institutional policies, implementation processes, stakeholder responses, and educational implications. The findings indicate that MIN 2 Sumenep has systematically integrated religious moderation into *MATSAMA* through five institutional policies: (1) formal integration into the *MATSAMA* schedule, (2) collaboration with the *Dharma Wanita Persatuan (DWP)* of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Sumenep Regency, (3) adoption of a contextual pedagogical approach suitable for students aged 6-7 years, (4) integration into both the written and hidden curriculum, and (5) establishment of an evaluation mechanism. The implementation of

these policies resulted in a structured learning process encompassing collaborative program design, the adoption of the CINTA BERUTANG method (*Cerita, Narasi, Tanya jawab, Bernyanyi, Bermain Ular Tangga* - Storytelling, Narrative, Question and Answer, Singing, and Snakes-and-Ladders Play), the development of a snakes-and-ladders game board featuring 12 boxes representing nine core values of religious moderation, participatory classroom activities, and value internalization. Responses from the three key stakeholders, students, teachers, and *DWP* Kemenag, showed consistent positivity across affective, cognitive, and conative dimensions, confirming the effectiveness of the pedagogical approach. The implementation produced four major implications: (1) observable changes in students' attitudes and competencies within a short period, (2) transformation of teaching practices that embed moderation values into daily instruction, (3) strengthening of a replicable model of institutional collaboration, and (4) theoretical contributions to the discourse on multicultural and religious moderation education in Indonesia.

Theoretically, this study demonstrates that the values of religious moderation can be effectively internalized among elementary school children through experiential and ludic (play-based) approaches, which are more effective than traditional discursive-cognitive methods. Practically, the MIN 2 Sumenep model offers a replicable reference, suggesting that the Ministry of Religious Affairs can develop technical guidelines for *MATSAMA* implementation that systematically integrate religious moderation materials. However, the study has several limitations: it provides a snapshot of short-term impacts, focuses on a single madrasah, relies on qualitative measurements, and does not yet explore the role of parents and the wider community. Future research employing a longitudinal design is needed to verify long-term impacts, along with comparative studies across diverse madrasah contexts, quantitative assessments of students' attitudinal changes, and in-depth exploration of parental involvement in supporting or hindering value internalization. Religious moderation education from an early age represents a long-term investment in nurturing a generation that is moderate, tolerant, and socially cohesive, an essential strategy for strengthening national harmony and social cohesion amid Indonesia's pluralistic

society.

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