
Religious Moderation: Concept and Implementation in State Islamic Religious Universities

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the concept and implementation of religious moderation at two State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN), namely IAIN Manado and IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo. In qualitative research with a sociological approach, the research results show that the two PTKINs have successfully implemented the concept of religious moderation by prioritizing moderate attitudes, tolerance, and dialogue between religious believers in the campus environment. However, challenges such as skepticism and negative perceptions of religious moderation remain obstacles. The role of lecturers and education staff has a significant impact in supporting the implementation of religious moderation. Training programs and special initiatives have effectively increased the academic community's understanding and awareness of religious moderation.

Keywords: Religious Moderation, State Islamic Religious College, IAIN Manado, IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo

Moderasi Beragama: Konsep dan Implementasi di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis konsep dan implementasi moderasi beragama di dua Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri (PTKIN), yaitu IAIN Manado dan IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo. Dalam penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan sosiologis, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kedua PTKIN telah berhasil mengimplementasikan konsep moderasi beragama dengan mengedepankan sikap moderat, toleransi, dan dialog antarumat beragama di lingkungan kampus. Meskipun demikian, tantangan seperti skeptisisme dan persepsi negatif terhadap moderasi beragama masih menjadi hambatan. Peran dosen dan tenaga kependidikan memiliki dampak yang signifikan dalam mendukung implementasi moderasi beragama. Program pelatihan dan inisiatif khusus terbukti efektif dalam meningkatkan pemahaman dan kesadaran moderasi beragama di kalangan civitas akademika.

Kata kunci: Moderasi Beragama, Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri, IAIN Manado, IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo

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A. Introduction

Indonesia currently looks increasingly complex with the emergence of various problems. The collapse of multiple characters as national moral values is very worrying. Issues that arise on the surface of society are caused by multiple background aspects of life, including religious, educational, political, legal, cultural, social, and economic factors and other elements. However, what is very important is the spiritual aspect. Even though religion can be a solution to maintaining national unity and achieving harmony in society, religion can also trigger division.¹

The emergence of intolerant attitudes in today's society proves that people with radical thinking provoke conflict. Even though building harmony within the state is the responsibility of all components of humanity itself. All members must play a role in developing the country so that its people can live in harmony and peace as much as possible in their respective activities. One of the main components that play a role in building national unity is a balance in universities considered to have intellectual and scientific competence and standing in thinking to make a moral attitude.²

Darmawan in Sumantri stated that the role of universities must be active in carrying out development. The presence of universities in society is an actor in building social change for the better. Apart from that, the campus is also a source of life that can contribute to those still weak in interacting and thinking independently.³

The responsibility of universities to instill moral values with character is an absolute necessity to be realized. One form of higher education's commitment to maintaining harmony in the surrounding community recognizes the House of

¹ Yedi Purwanto et al., "Internalisasi Nilai Moderasi Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Perguruan Tinggi Umum," *EDUKASI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan* 17, no. 2 (2019): 110–24, <https://doi.org/10.32729/edukasi.v17i2.605>; Murat Somer, "Moderation of Religious and Secular Politics, a Country's Centre and Democratization," *Democratization* 21, no. 2 (2014): 244–67.

² Paelani Setia and M Taufiq Rahman, "Socializing Religious Moderation and Peace in the Indonesian Landscape," *Jurnal Iman Dan Spiritualitas* 2, no. 3 (2022): 333–40.

³ Cecep Darmawan, *Pendidikan Karakter: Nilai Inti Bagi Upaya Pembinaan Kepribadian Bangsa* (Bandung: a Aksara Press, 2011).

House Religious Moderation institution that will become a forum for instilling the values of religious moderation.⁴

Religious moderation among PTKIN is an effort to create harmony in society regardless of religious, ethnic, and cultural background. The presence of PTKIN in the community should be a meter in implementing religious moderation. PTKIN's role must be to contribute broad and deep religious thought and insight to society in the community to make religion a source of values that will maintain national diversity.⁵

As has been understood, in Indonesia, several PTKINs stand firmly among the majority Muslim community, such as IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo. However, on the other hand, some PTKINs are of a pluralistic society with different religious backgrounds, even though some of the people are Muslim though minorities, such as IAIN Manado. The presence of these universities certainly has various concepts in building religious moderation to be implemented in society by the comfort of forming national harmony with Pancasila and diversity.

The presence of PTKIN in areas where the population is predominantly Muslim or minority Muslim must be a role model for the community. So that in implementing the concept of religious moderation, it can be enjoyed directly by the community to the fullest and remains firm in its aqidah beliefs by not leaving the circle of Islamic law for followers of the Islamic religion. Based on this description, the researcher wants to explore the concept of religious moderation and its implementation at PTKIN at IAIN Manado, a higher education institution located in a Muslim minority area, and IAIN Sultan Amai w, in a Muslim majority area.

Previous research that is relevant to this research related to religious moderation can be seen in several references, namely: Agus Ahmadi, in his writings revealed that in people's lives as social creatures, multicultural insight u, understanding, and awareness are needed as a form of expression in performance and appreciating differences so that society can interact somewhat in a circle of

⁴ Abdul Rosyid, "MODERASI BERAGAMA DI LINGKUNGAN PERGURUAN TINGGI KEAGAMAAN," *Tarbawi: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 2 (2022): 101–10.

⁵ Abdurrohman Kasdi, Umma Farida, and Choirul Mahfud, "Islamic Studies and Local Wisdom at PTKIN in Central Java: Opportunities, Challenges, and Prospects of Pioneering Religious Moderation in Indonesia," *Hikmatuna* 6, no. 1 (2020): 51–62.

pluralism. In this case, religious moderation is recognizing differences with other parties and always being tolerant to create harmony and peace in society.⁶

Winarto Eka Wahyudi, in his writing, reveals that the challenge of moderate Islam in realizing a form of religious moderation in the description era is very rapid. Radicalism always attacks society through internet access as a medium that is abstinence the younger generation. The efforts or methods used to overcome the onslaught of radicalism include carrying out massive outreach via social media by stating that the presence of Islam as a religion is a bringer of blessings to all creatures. Apart from that, Islam prioritizes tolerance, justice, open deliberation, friendliness, and non-violence in interactions.⁷

Yedi Purwanto, in his journal, concluded that Islam in religious moderation needs to be internalized to realize diversity as a motto in a pluralistic society in Indonesia. The internalization pattern in applying the values of religious moderation in general universities is carried out through PAI courses. Apart from that, the application of moderation values at public universities is carried out by building character through the example of PAI lecturers who teach at these universities.⁸

Hendri P. Waseso, in his journal, stated that the notion of radicalism in higher education has now increased. One of the causes of the emergence of radicalism in universities comes from the ideology built into the education system at these universities. Thus, religious moderation is needed as a shield in reducing the seeds of radicalism that will develop in higher education.⁹

Rika Riyanti, in her writing, discusses the values of religious moderation and thinking patterns among students in implementing Pancasila-based character education in the world of higher education. In this article, it is argued that the values of religious moderation that emerged from various movements for change

⁶ Agus Akhmadi, "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Keragaman Indonesia Religious Moderation in Indonesia ' S Diversity," *Jurnal Diklat Keagamaan* 13, no. 2 (2019): 45–55.

⁷ Winarto Eka Wahyudi, "Tantangan Islam Moderat Di Era Disruption," *Proceedings of Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars*, no. Series 2 (2018): 922–28.

⁸ Purwanto et al., "Internalisasi Nilai Moderasi Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Perguruan Tinggi Umum."

⁹ H P Waseso and A Sekarinasih, "Moderasi Beragama Sebagai Hidden Curriculum Di Perguruan Tinggi," *Educandum*, 2021, 91–103.; Muhammad Idris and Alven Putra, "The Roles of Islamic Educational Institutions in Religious Moderation," *AJIS: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2021).

have become a mindset for increasing attitudes of religious and social tolerance, as stated in the importance of Pancasila.¹⁰

Mochammad Rizal Ramadhan, in his writing, revealed that implementing religious moderation in the higher education environment is currently a priority considering the emergence of various issues of radicalism that present different diversity, especially at public universities. Religious moderation practices in higher education are needed to build a generation that thinks moderately, understands the situation of plurality, and is not easily provoked by various radical ideas to create tolerance with nuances of harmony between religious communities.¹¹

Based on several research results in the relevant journals above, similarities and differences can be seen between these research articles and this research. The similarity in this research activity is that it parallels the study of discussions about religious moderation. However, this research also has differences, namely the research object. Apart from that, the informants in data collection between previous research and this research also have differences. On this basis, it can be assumed that this research has its style and characters.

B. Research Methods

This qualitative research with a sociological approach aims to investigate the obstacles State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN) faced in developing religious moderation activities through religious moderation houses. This research was conducted at two PTKINs, IAIN Manado and IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo. The data collection in this research used three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out as initial observations before researchers went into the field. Interviews were conducted in-depth at the Religious Moderation House (RMB) at each PTKIN. Interviews were conducted formally but not structured, so informants could have more freedom in explaining. Documentation techniques are also used to collect sources relevant to the research.

¹⁰ Wahyudi, "Tantangan Islam Moderat Di Era Disruption."

¹¹ Mochammad Rizal Ramadhan, "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Keragaman Pada Perguruan Tinggi Umum Di Era Society 5.0: Strategi Dan Implementasi," *Proceedings of Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars* 6, no. 1 (2022): 980–87, <https://doi.org/10.36835/ancoms.v6i1.350>.

C. Results and Discussion

1. The Role of Religious Moderation in Islamic Higher Education

Religious moderation can be interpreted as moderate behavior or attitudes in understanding religion. The concept of moderation in Islam is called wasathiyah, namely understanding the principles of religious moderation, especially from an Islamic perspective. Religious moderation is conceptually taken from the word moderation, which, from English, means moderation, which means a moderate moderated that is not excess.¹²

One of the goals of religious moderation is to establish relationships between fellow humans so that they always live in harmony and peace and love each other. Other people will feel this if individuals or groups experience difficulties or suffering. Likewise, if one individual or group experiences happiness, one feels happy.

Religious moderation is an attitude that prioritizes a balance in interpreting beliefs, morals, and character towards the religious attitudes of individuals or groups who have differences as the meaning of the titration in Arabic, is called washatiah, is defined as a fair itude which that best att, the attitude it is considered balanced, which does not position itself from one of two conflicting or contradictory positions but rather instead the dispute.

Wasathiyah can be interpreted as a commendable attitude and maintaining a balance of not being extreme so that it is not easy to fall into conflicts that occur in society. Moderation can also be interpreted as a form of effort to think and interact with a balanced attitude (tawazun) to respond to conditions or circumstances in focus or societal conflicts.¹³

The same thing was also expressed by Wahbah Al-Zuhaili, who stated that the method of thinking and acting in moderation is an attitude that brings calm and helps

¹² Aceng Abdul Aziz et al., *Implementasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pendidikan Islam* by Aceng Abdul Aziz, Anis Masykhur, A. Khoirul Anam, Ali Muhtarom, Idris Masudi, Masduki Duryat (z-Lib.Org), 2019.

¹³ Muchlis Hanafi, "Konsep Al-Wasathiah Dalam Islam," *Harmoni: Jurnal Multikultural Dan Multireligius* VIII (2009).

individual welfare in building harmony in society as a form of moral honor and glory of Islam.¹⁴

Moderation should motivate realizing social justice, such as religion, faith, and al-maslahah al-ammah. On this basis, al-maslahah al-ammah will become the foundation of public policy that leads to the public sphere. This means that every leader must be responsible and have a role in realizing fair social attitudes as a matter of public interest.¹⁵

Religious moderation in Islam is a character acquired by a Muslim from the Qur'an and hadith due to a commitment to religious spirituality. It is not an attitude born from talents that becomes a method for understanding religion. So, as a Muslim, religious moderation cannot be separated from the religious and spiritual perspective of the prophet Muhammad and his friends.¹⁶

Islamic perspective regarding religious moderation, as stated in the Qur'an, Islam has taught its followers to look for a point of equality in relationships between those of the same religion and those of different faiths. The differences that often occur in humans are not only those of other religions; differences also often occur with the same religion. Faithing for common ground as a common ground in building harmony through religious moderation does not mean mixing up spiritual teachings.

However, building a concept of religious moderation must have spiritual principles so that points related to aqidah or belief, especially mahdhah worship, will be seen as the characteristics of each religious follower. However, as long as these activities are related to social affairs that aim to build statehood as a form of universal human togetherness and do not violate the lines of aqeedah as a form of belief in God, religion requires this. Hopefully, we can unite to form unity and integrity for the nation.¹⁷

The Islamic principle of always prioritizing equality as the main target for religious moderation aims to build harmony so that Islam can more wisely interpret diversity in society. The similarity referred to here is the pattern of relationships between each other

¹⁴ Wahbah Az-zuhaili, *Qadaya Al-Fiqh Wa Al-Fikr Al-Mu'ashir* (Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr, 2006).

¹⁵ Zuhairi Misrawi, *Hadratussyaikh Hasyim Asyari Moderasi, Keutamaan, Dan Kebangsaan* (Jakarta: PT. Kompas Media Nusantara, 2010).

¹⁶ Khairan M Arif, "Concept and Implementation of Religious Moderation in Indonesia," *Al-Risalah: Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Pemikiran Islam* 12, no. 1 (2021): 90–106.

¹⁷ Aziz et al., *Implementasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pendidikan Islam by Aceng Abdul Aziz, Anis Masykhur, A. Khoirul Anam, Ali Muhtarom, Idris Masudi, Masduki Duryat (z-Lib.Org).*; Imam Subchi et al., "Religious Moderation in Indonesian Muslims," *Religions* 13, no. 5 (2022): 451.

so that when interacting, they do not become suspicious of each other, resulting in hostility. However, the emphasis in building religious moderation is establishing tolerance to cooperate with legal, national, and state affairs.

Religious moderation is an approach that emphasizes the importance of maintaining balance and tolerance in spiritual practices. Religious moderation encourages individuals to live their spiritual lives with full respect for the diversity of beliefs and other spiritual traditions.¹⁸ In a society that applies the principle of religious moderation, interreligious dialogue is key in promoting understanding and cooperation between religious believers. This principle also creates a strong foundation for peace and social harmony, reducing the potential for religious conflict.¹⁹

Apart from that, religious moderation also encourages individuals to live their religion with full understanding and wisdom. This means avoiding extremism, fanaticism, or tolerance towards others with different beliefs. Religious moderation also fosters values such as compassion, empathy, and respect for human rights, which are important aspects of living a religious spirituality.²⁰

The concept of religious moderation promotes peace and harmony in society. This creates an environment that supports stable social and economic development. Therefore, religious moderation is important in forming an inclusive, religious, and open society where all individuals can live in peace and respect each other regardless of differences in beliefs.²¹

Religious moderation in Islamic higher education is very important in forming a young generation who understands and lives spiritual teachings with a balanced and tolerant attitude. Several aspects of the role of religious moderation in Islamic higher education,²² namely: First, Education Based on Moderate Values. Islamic universities

¹⁸ Hadi Pajariato, Imam Pribad, and Puspa Sari, "Tolerance between Religions through the Role of Local Wisdom and Religious Moderation," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (2022).

¹⁹ Mohamad Fahri and Ahmad Zainuri, "Moderasi Beragama Di Indonesia," *Intizar* 25, no. 2 (2019): 95–100.

²⁰ Edi Junaedi and others, "Inilah Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Kemenag," *Harmoni* 18, no. 2 (2019): 182–86.

²¹ Khalil Nurul Islam, "Moderasi Beragama Di Tengah Pluralitas Bangsa: Tinjauan Revolusi Mental Perspektif Al-Qur'an," *KURIOSITAS: Media Komunikasi Sosial Dan Keagamaan* 13, no. 1 (2020).

²² Ramadhan, "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Keragaman Pada Perguruan Tinggi Umum Di Era Society 5.0: Strategi Dan Implementasi."; Rosyid, "MODERASI BERAGAMA DI LINGKUNGAN PERGURUAN

that adhere to the principle of religious moderation focus on education based on moderate values, such as tolerance, harmony between religious believers, and respect for differences. This helps students understand the importance of living their religion deeply, without extremism or fanaticism.

Second, Interreligious Dialogue. Islamic universities that implement religious moderation often hold interfaith dialogue activities. This allows students to interact with individuals from different religious backgrounds and promotes a better understanding of religious differences.

Third, Avoiding Radicalism. Religious moderation in Islamic higher education helps prevent radicalism among students. Through curricula and extracurricular activities that promote moderation, universities can help students develop a balanced understanding of religion and curb the potential for involvement in radical movements.²³

Fourth, Contribution to Peace and Social Tolerance. Students who receive an education based on religious moderation are more likely to become agents of change who promote peace and tolerance in their society. They can contribute to building a more inclusive and harmonious community.²⁴

Lastly, Holistic Education. Religious moderation does not only focus on spiritual aspects but also students' personal and social development. Islamic universities implementing religious moderation can provide holistic education that includes moral values, ethics, and social skills.²⁵

Based on the aspects of the role of religious moderation in Islamic higher education above, religious moderation in Islamic higher education helps create people who

TINGGI KEAGAMAAN.”; Benny Afwadzi and Miski Miski, “Religious Moderation in Indonesian Higher Educations: Literature Review,” *Ulul Albab: Jurnal Studi Islam* 22, no. 2 (2021): 203–31.

²³ Ade Arip Ardiansyah and Mohamad Erihadiana, “Strengthening Religious Moderation as A Hidden Curriculum in Islamic Religious Universities in Indonesia,” *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 1 (2022): 109–22.; Arifinsyah Arifinsyah, Safria Andy, and Agusman Damanik, “The Urgency of Religious Moderation in Preventing Radicalism in Indonesia,” *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 21, no. 1 (2020): 91–108.

²⁴ Yudhi Kawangung, “Religious Moderation Discourse in Plurality of Social Harmony in Indonesia,” *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 3, no. 1 (2019): 160–70.

²⁵ Theguh Saumantri, “The Dialectic of Islam Nusantara and Its Contribution To The Development of Religious Moderation In Indonesia,” *Fokus: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman Dan Kemasyarakatan* 7, no. 1 (2022): 57–67.

understand spiritual teachings with depth, tolerance, and respect for all beliefs. This has a positive impact on building a more peaceful and harmonious society.

2. Concept and Implementation of Religious Moderation at IAIN Manado and IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo

Religious moderation, when related to the context of State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN), has varying concepts according to campus. This was conveyed by the Head of the Center for Religious Moderation, IAIN Manado that:

“Religious moderation is a religious attitude that realizes the principle prioritizesness and balance. "In the context of PTKIN, religious moderation must be managed and driven from the campus environment so that the formation of moderate religious understanding, attitudes, and methods begins in educational institutions where knowledge is developed in the form of thoughts and attitudes or behavior.”²⁶

The concept of religious moderation was also conveyed by the Head of the Center for the House of Religious Moderation IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo:

"Religious moderation is not "religious moderation," what is moderated is not a religion but attitudes exclusive (closed) viewpoints from other groups. That is, the concept of religious moderation invites religious adherents to stand between two extreme poles. About to the PTKIN context, for me, our mod, our nation is directly proportional to the echo of PTKIN, which has been voiced everywhere, namely creating superior people, with personality and religious insight without discrediting other parties. "This is the meeting point between religious moderation and PTKIN's ideals, that the four indicators of religious moderation are in the same breath.”²⁷

Regarding the concept of religious moderation explained by each head of the center, Religious Moderation is very important in the context of PTKIN. This concept can help promote tolerance, harmony, and dialogue between religious communities in the campus environment. As stated by that:

“PTKIN is the front line against intolerant groups. But that doesn't mean ignoring the campus itself. PTKIN has made various breakthroughs to promote religious moderation, including Studying religious moderation as part of the learning curriculum. The following are various program activities of institutes, faculties, departments, and even ORMAWA, most concentrating on strengthening religious

²⁶ Mardan Umar, “Interview with the Head of the Center for Religious Moderation, IAIN Manado,” 2023.

²⁷ Arfan Nusi (2023)

moderation. Besides, lecturers' BKD is periodically reviewed so that demands for religious moderation become an important part of the report. "All these methods are carried out to create a campus community ecosystem that is tolerant, humanist, and harmonious."²⁸

Religious moderation (MB) must be developed within the PTKIN environment because nationally, MB is included in the National Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMN); and MB is an priority program of the Ministry of Religion. Apart from that, MB in the context of PTKIN must be studied and discussed scientifically and researched by academics regarding its impact and contribution to religious life in a heterogeneous society.²⁹

The MB concept can be promoted in campus contexts with different ethnic, religious, or cultural backgrounds. These differences must be collaborated into wealth and potential to unite the nation. Dialogue and discussions at PTKIN should make MB one of the focuses of the discussion conference role of IAIN Manado in implementing the concept of religious moderation, as well as the concrete steps that have been taken to strengthen the values of religious moderation, were conveyed by:

"IAIN Manado is very proactive in socializing and strengthening religious moderation in the campus environment. Curricularly, IAIN Manado already has Multiculturalism and Religious Moderation courses in the learning process. Apart from socialization activities and strengthening religious moderation for ASN and students, dialogue activities between religious leaders, organizations, community leaders, academics and security forces have been carried out to accommodate all real problems and conditions in the pluralistic society of Manado. Apart from that, the Religious Moderation House, which developed with the formation of the Religious Moderation Center under LP2M, is proof of IAIN Manado's seriousness in strengthening MB on campus. Cooperation with PTK with PTKN things also supports the development of MB on campus."³⁰

IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo's application of religious moderation is also evident. This can be seen from the concrete steps that have been the values of religious moderation in the campus environment. In this regard, it is stated that:

²⁸ Nusi (2023)

²⁹ Arhanuddin Salim et al., *Moderasi Beragama: Implementasi Dalam Pendidikan, Agama Dan Budaya Lokal*, 2023.

³⁰ Umar, (2023)

"Long before the concept of religious moderation became a trend in the Ministry of Religion, several courses were taught on campus, such as Islam and local culture (4th indicator of religious moderation "respect for tradition"), Pancasila Education (1st indicator of religious moderation "national commitment"), and several other subjects. Religious moderation became a PERMEN and was included in the 2020-2024 RPJMN of IAIN Gorontalo in 2021. Dr. Laha ji held the rectorhe House of Religious Moderation. From here, the program is more specific, not only in the curriculum but also targeting components of the academic community and the external community, such as workshop activities, national seminars, and dialogue on strengthening moderation. Several lecturers have joined ToT and the religious moderation movement."³¹

Based on the explanation above, IAIN Manado and IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo have implemented the concept of religious moderation in their campus environment. The campus has taken concrete steps to strengthen the values of religious moderation, even before it became a trend in the Ministry of Religion.

Establishing a Religious Moderation House is the basis for more specific programs, not only in the curriculum but also involving components of the academic community and outside society. This includes workshops, national seminars, dialogue on strengthening moderation, and training for lecturers in antoor religious moderation.

3. Challenges in Developing Religious Moderation Activities at IAIN Manado and IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo

Regarding the challenges faced in implementing the concept of religious moderation at PTKIN, as well as how to overcome these challenges and promote the values of religious moderation effectively, it is revealed that:

"A priori and pessimistic attitudes towards the MB program still exist among some ASNs. The perception that MB is just a project, the perception that issues about radicalism and terrorism are fabricated reasons to smooth out the MB program, not to mention concerns that the MB concept will distance it from Islamic values or other assumptions that consider the MB program not to be a priority. IAIN Manado carries out outreach and strengthens understanding through various activities. "Including involving officials to participate in religious moderation training at both local and national levels."³²

³¹ Nusi (2023)

³² Umar (2023)

Regarding obstacles or challenges in implementing the concept of religious moderation, they are also faced at IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo. Still, as with other campuses, of course, there are ways to overcome these challenges and promote the values of religious moderation effectively, revealing that:

"I still hear rumors from my fellow lecturers that this religious moderation is just a government project that only dismantles the movements of groups that are indicated as radical, in their opinion. You claim to be moderate, while we are accused of not being moderate." So, I straightened out that perception; if religious moderation is present, it is not oppressive. He always accommodates anyone, any group, and any religion. We are slowly approaching and promoting religious values. I often say in discussion forums, lecture classes, and even in coffee shops that "religion humanizes humans." If they are not your fellow Muslim brothers, not fellow organizations, not fellow believers, then they are fellow human brothers. "Effectively, we always approach those who reject the concept of religious moderation and communicate intensely outside formal spaces."³³

Not only are the methods above used to promote the values of moderation, but lecturers and education staff are also involved in supporting the implementation of the concept of religious moderation at IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo. Arfan revealed that:

"So far, I think that the majority of lecturers and educational staff support the implementation of religious moderation, and several lecturers are even interested in researching the existence of religious moderation at IAIN Gorontalo because religious moderation is discussed in almost every room and corner of the campus. Since its establishment in 2021, the program for strengthening moderation at IAIN Gorontalo has carried out almost 30 activities on the religious moderation website, including seminars, workshops, discussions, dialogue, outreach, assessments, and others. Meanwhile, our special initiative has produced a book on religious moderation. "We are originating a sermon book which will later be distributed in every Gorontalo mosque."³⁴

In connection with the statement of the head of the House for Religious Moderation above, there are also special training programs or initiatives implemented to increase understanding among lecturers and educational staff about religious moderation. This is the same as what is expressed by:

³³ Nusi (2023)

³⁴ Nusi.

"By the decision of the Minister of Religion regarding strengthening religious moderation and technical instructions for the House of Religious Moderation, all ASN within the Ministry of Religion must participate in support So that lecturers and staff are expected to help in strengthening MB. In learning, the lecturers have also conveyed the values of religious moderation and multiculturalism in the classroom. MB workshops and MB-based seminars have also been carried out. This shows the lecturers' support for MB. Several training programs include Moderation Driver Training, Religious Moderation Pioneer Training, and regular MB socialization. Or participate in national level MB training activities as ToT and Master Trainer."³⁵

The statement by the head of the House for Religious Moderation above illustrates that the campus has implemented training programs and special initiatives to increase the understanding of lecturers and educational staff about religious moderation. In addition, various activities have been held. This confirms the commitment of the Religious Moderation House to developing understanding and awareness of religious moderation among lecturers and educational staff, as well as describing the concrete efforts taken in this regard.

D. Conclusion

The concept of religious moderation implemented by the State Islamic Religious College (PTKIN) at IAIN Manado and IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo has similarities in emphasizing the importance of moderate, inclusive religious attitudes, as well as the values of tolerance, harmony, and dialogue between religious communities in the campus environment. Both institutions have taken concrete steps to strengthen the importance of religious moderation by involving religious moderation in the learning curriculum and organizing various programs and activities. Despite facing obstacles such as skepticism and negative perceptions towards religious moderation, IAIN Manado and IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo have overcome these challenges through outreach, training programs, and intensive communication. The role of lecturers and educational staff is very important in supporting the implementation of religious moderation, and both have implemented special programs to increase understanding of religious moderation among the academic community. The campus also carries out various activities

³⁵ Umar (2023)

such as seminars, workshops, dialogues, and book writing to promote religious moderation on campus and in society more broadly.

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