

The Role Of Religious Moderation In The Formation Of Global Citizenship Education

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the relationship between religious moderation and the concept of global citizenship in the context of modern pluralistic societies. Religious moderation is defined as a tolerant and inclusive approach to religious beliefs that supports the formation of a global identity transcending national boundaries. Through conceptual analysis, empirical case studies, and literature review, this article demonstrates that religious moderation can strengthen global solidarity, reduce conflicts, and promote peace. The main findings emphasize the importance of education, interfaith dialogue, and international policies as tools to achieve sustainable global citizenship. The article also discusses challenges such as digital extremism and nationalism, along with practical recommendations for implementation.

Keywords: Religious moderation, Global Citizenship, Tolerance, Pluralism, Interfaith dialogue, Global solidarity, Religious extremism, Multicultural education.

INTRODUCTION

In an era of globalization characterized by large-scale population movements, barrier-free trade, and increased digital interaction, the world faces increasingly complex dilemmas in creating social harmony and maintaining bonds among communities with diverse cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. The movement of individuals across national borders not only intensifies interpersonal connections but also introduces various value frameworks and principles that are sometimes difficult to integrate within the same public forum. According to a publication by the Pew Research Center (2017), more than 4 billion individuals globally are affected by conflicts rooted in religion or identity. This data indicates that differences in beliefs frequently remain a source of social friction with the potential to trigger radicalism and violence in the name of religion.

In this context, a moderate approach to religion emerges as an appropriate strategy to address the complexities of global diversity. Religious moderation is not understood as an attempt to diminish or weaken the level of individual faith; rather, it represents a middle-ground stance that emphasizes principles such as

mutual respect, proportionality, interfaith dialogue, and the rejection of all forms of violence and rigid interpretations. This philosophy aspires for religious practice to be conducted harmoniously, with full appreciation, while maintaining adherence to the core teachings without diminishing the value of others beliefs. Therefore, religious moderation plays a vital role in shaping an open and cultured social order amid global differences.

Meanwhile, the concept of global citizenship functions as an ethical and moral framework in fostering individuals World Health Organization not only limit their thinking to the national scope but also possess awareness as members of the international community. The concept of global citizenship underscores shared responsibility for universal humanitarian issues, including human rights, environmental sustainability, global peace, and social equality, as emphasized by Nussbaum(1997). Within this framework, individuals are expected to contribute substantially to building a more just and harmonious world order by prioritizing humanitarian values above the limited interests of groups, ethnic communities, or religious adherents.

Consequently, religious moderation and global citizenship share a significant relationship. Both require open- mindedness, intercultural understanding, and commitment to broadly applicable humanitarian principles. In todays interconnected society, the collaboration between these two concepts constitutes a crucial foundation for achieving sustainable peace and global solidarity.

This article seeks to examine the role of religious moderation in strengthening the development of global citizenship. Through the application of an interdisciplinary method that synthesizes sociological theories, specific case studies, and empirical data, this research explores the conceptual, practical, and policy- relevant dimensions. The introductory section will be followed by a comprehensive review, evaluation of obstacles, and a conclusion that presents recommendations for practitioners and policymakers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach using the library research method. Data were obtained from various scholarly sources such as books, journal articles, international organization reports, and previous research relevant to the topics of religious moderation and global citizenship. Data analysis was conducted through content analysis by examining, identifying, and synthesizing various theories and empirical findings to generate comprehensive understanding. Through this method, the research aims to provide an in-depth description of the relationship between religious moderation and the development of global citizenship education in the context of the digital and multicultural era.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Religious Moderation

Religious moderation is not a new concept in either religious or social discourse. Its intellectual roots can be traced back to ancient Greek philosophy through Aristotle's concept of the golden mean, which emphasizes balance between two extreme poles in behavior and thought. This principle of equilibrium was subsequently adopted by various world religious traditions such as Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism, all of which affirm the importance of moderate attitudes as the foundation of ethics and spirituality. In Latin

terminology, this concept is known as *moderatio*, which signifies balance, courtesy, and self-discipline values that remain relevant in the modern religious context.

According to Esposito (2011), religious moderation represents an approach to understanding religious teachings that is capable of adapting to social change and evolving times without altering the fundamental values of faith. This approach emphasizes the importance of contextual interpretation of religious teachings to maintain their relevance to societal dynamics. Moderation also encourages profound understanding, openness, and interfaith dialogue as means of building mutual understanding and avoiding confrontation or violence. Thus, religious moderation serves as a bridge between spiritual principles and the reality of pluralistic society.

On a global scale, religious moderation stands as the antithesis to religious extremism and fanaticism that have triggered various conflicts throughout history. For instance, the religious wars in Europe during the 16th century and contemporary sectarian conflicts in the Middle East demonstrate how extreme views can inflict suffering and division upon humanity. Therefore, religious moderation emerges as an intellectual and spiritual response to the necessity of inclusive perspectives that value diversity.

Conceptually, the notion of religious moderation is closely related to the paradigm of religious pluralism proposed by Hick (1989). Hick argues that all religions are essentially different paths leading to a single divine reality, which he terms "The Real." This perspective creates space for appreciation of diverse beliefs as manifestations of humanity's search for spiritual meaning, rather than as threats to any particular religious doctrine.

Consequently, religious moderation plays a crucial role in shaping global citizenship grounded in respect for differences and the spirit of peaceful coexistence. A moderate approach enables individuals to maintain their religious and local cultural identity while remaining open to universal humanitarian values. Within this framework, a person can become part of a global community that upholds diversity, peace, and social justice without losing their spiritual roots.

The Relationship Between Religious Moderation and Global Citizenship

Religious moderation, rooted in Aristotle's concept of the golden mean, emphasizes balance between extremes. Adopted by major world religions, it upholds ethics, courtesy, and self-discipline as timeless principles of spiritual and moral harmony.

According to Esposito (2011), religious moderation represents an approach to understanding religious teachings that is capable of adapting to social change and evolving times without altering the fundamental values of faith. This approach emphasizes the importance of contextual interpretation of religious teachings to maintain their relevance to societal dynamics. Moderation also encourages profound understanding, openness, and interfaith dialogue as means of building mutual understanding and avoiding confrontation or violence. Thus, religious moderation serves as a bridge between spiritual principles and the reality of pluralistic society.

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Global citizenship, as developed by Nussbaum(1997) and Appiah(2006), involves the recognition of shared responsibility for transnational issues. Religious moderation contributes to this by promoting pluralism, where religious differences are viewed as cultural wealth. For instance, initiatives such as the World Faiths Development Dialogue have facilitated dialogue among religious leaders from various traditions, resulting in joint declarations on peace and sustainability.

Empirical analysis from case studies in Indonesia a country with the world's largest Muslim population and high religious diversity demonstrates the positive impact of religious moderation. The "Religious Moderation" program launched by Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs since 2019 has integrated tolerance education into school curricula and community activities. Data from the Wahid Institute(2020) shows a 20% decrease in religious violence incidents in areas implementing this program, with increased interfaith participation in social activities. This indicates that religious moderation can strengthen global citizenship by building empathy and solidarity across boundaries.

At the global level, other examples include the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, which employs interreligious dialogue to address post- 9/ 11 polarization. A study by the United Nations Development Programme(UNDP, 2021) found that countries with high levels of religious moderation, such as Canada and Singapore, have higher global citizenship indices, measured through participation in international initiatives and support for human rights.

Implications and Recommendation

To address the complexities of translating religious moderation and advancing global citizenship, a series of strategic recommendations can be systematically integrated.

1. **Strengthening Multicultural Education:** Fundamental educational content plays a crucial role in directing the formation of moderate and inclusive paradigms. Therefore, the incorporation of religious moderation principles into global educational syllabi must be enhanced, similar to UNESCO's initiatives through the Education for Global Citizenship project. This initiative goes beyond merely cultivating tolerance; it also aims to build awareness of the imperative of communal responsibility that transcends cultural and national boundaries.
2. **Enhancing Interfaith Dialogue:** In the contemporary digital landscape, online channels offer significant potential for facilitating inclusive and

extensive interreligious discourse. Interfaith dialogue platforms need to be supported by adequate regulatory frameworks to contain the proliferation of hate speech, radicalism, and misinformation. Such strategies will strengthen connectivity among religious communities while expanding appreciation for transcendent humanitarian values.

3. **Policy and International Support:** Religious moderation efforts demand policy support from international institutions, including the United Nations. Collaboration among nations can be directed toward establishing a global joint fund supporting research, education, and public campaigns on religious moderation. This funding serves as a tangible means of promoting peace and inter- regional development.
4. **Further Research and Development:** Longitudinal and cross- cultural studies are crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of religious moderation in enhancing global citizenship indices. Findings from this research are expected to provide a scientific foundation for formulating more effective and targeted global policies and strategies.

This analysis demonstrates that religious moderation is not only ethical but also strategic for global sustainability, with the potential to reduce conflict risks and promote sustainable development.

The Role of Technology and Digital Media in Religious Moderation

Technology and digital media play a crucial role in strengthening religious moderation in the era of globalization. Through digital media, moderate religious values can be disseminated more widely, rapidly, and interactively. In the context of global education, technology functions as a bridge for cross- cultural and interfaith communication that strengthens understanding among religious communities (Campbell& Tsuria, 2021). Digital platforms such as social media, educational applications, and Massive Open Online Courses(MOOCs) provide new spaces for global communities to learn, dialogue, and appreciate religious diversity without geographical boundaries.

Main Benefits of Technology in Religious Moderation

Digital technology enables real-time exchange of interfaith ideas. For example, activities such as international webinars, virtual forums, and collaborations among world universities open significant opportunities for participants from various religious backgrounds to discuss issues of tolerance, peace, and global ethics (UNESCO, 2021). Online learning sites such as Coursera and Khan Academy have even provided free courses on global ethics, philosophy of religion, and cross-cultural understanding. Such programs help learners understand that differences are not threats, but rather part of human wealth that should be celebrated (Nugraha, 2023).

Moreover, technology also assists educational and religious institutions in developing more participatory and engaging learning methods. The use of interactive media such as educational videos, podcasts, and virtual discussion rooms enables younger generations to learn about religious values more contextually. This aligns with Wahyudi's (2022) view that digital literacy based on religious values can be an effective means of reducing radicalism potential among students.

Implementation Examples in Indonesia and Globally

In Indonesia, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has launched the "Religious Moderation" application that uses artificial intelligence(AI) to detect and filter extremist content on social media, while promoting peaceful and balanced religious narratives. This application also provides online learning features and interfaith discussion spaces accessible to the general public(Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022).

Globally, UNESCOs" Digital Literacy for Peace" program aims to build public awareness of the dangers of religion- based misinformation in cyberspace. This program educates communities about the importance of critical thinking, source verification, and understanding digital ethics in interfaith interaction(UNESCO, 2021). This effort is concrete evidence that religious moderation can be developed not only through conventional religious institutions but also through digital spaces that reach all levels of society.

Impact on Education and Global Citizenship

The utilization of technology in religious moderation education has a significant impact on character formation of learners in the global era. Through open and collaborative online learning, students can understand other religious perspectives without having to abandon their own religious identity(Rahman, 2020). In remote areas, technology even becomes an important connector in reducing cultural isolation and promoting cross- cultural empathy.

Overall, technology and digital media have great potential to become catalysts for religious moderation, as long as their use is directed toward strengthening tolerance values, digital literacy, and global ethics. With support from government policies, education, and community participation, the digital world can function as a new ruang for the growth of civilized spiritual and social awareness

Challenges and Obstacles in Implementing Religious Moderation in the Modern Era.

The implementation of religious moderation in the modern era faces various complex challenges, particularly in the context of global education. Although the value of religious moderation is increasingly recognized, in reality its implementation in the field is often hindered by social, political, cultural, and technological dynamics. These obstacles not only impede the effectiveness of educational programs but can also strengthen polarization and extremism if not properly anticipated(Azra, 2020).

1. Polarization and Identity Politics

One of the main obstacles in implementing religious moderation is the increasing political polarization and religious identity in various countries. In certain contexts, national policies actually reinforce the exclusivity of particular religions in the name of the majority, thereby reducing space for interfaith dialogue. For example, in some Middle Eastern countries, religious identity politics is often used as a tool for legitimizing power, while in some Western European countries, extreme secularism principles actually generate resistance to values- based religious education(Kettani, 2021).

Similar phenomena also emerge in Indonesia, where religious issues are often commodified politically in electoral contestation. This causes the concept of religious moderation to often be misunderstood as an attempt to" neutralize religion," when in fact it aims to maintain balance and tolerance(Syamsuddin,

2022). Consequently, religious moderation education requires stable political support free from sectarian interests.

2. Misinformation and Digital Media Algorithms

The emergence of social media as a primary information source presents new challenges in the form of religion- based misinformation and hate speech dissemination. Digital platform algorithms tend to prioritize provocative or extreme content because it attracts more user attention(Tandoc et al., 2021). This weakens religious moderation messages that tend to be peaceful and argumentative.

For instance, during the COVID- 19 pandemic, many hoaxes linked the outbreak to " curses from certain religions" or " global religious conspiracies," which worsened interfaith tensions(Wardani& Rahman, 2021). This situation demonstrates the importance of digital literacy based on religious ethics as part of the moderation education curriculum, so that learners can sort information and think critically.

3. Access Gaps and Cultural Resistance

The digital divide remains a major obstacle in implementing technology-based moderation education. In many developing countries, limitations in digital infrastructure, lack of teacher training, and low financial support cause uneven moderation learning(UNDP, 2022). Conversely, in developed countries, obstacles emerge in the form of cultural resistance to globalization narratives or external value interventions perceived as threatening national identity(Lewis& Hussain, 2020).

For example, in some Sub- Saharan African regions, ethnic- religious conflicts complicate moderation education curricula. On the other hand, in the United States, interfaith tolerance education programs are often hindered by political debates regarding the principle of " separation of church and state"(Haynes, 2021). Both conditions indicate that moderation implementation must be adapted to the social and cultural context of each country.

4. Lack of Evaluation and Program Sustainability

Many religious moderation programs are implemented without clear indicators to measure their effectiveness. Evaluations are usually limited to the number of participants or ceremonial activities, not on changes in attitudes and behavior(Rahman& Yusuf, 2023). This lack of assessment systems makes moderation policies difficult to adapt and develop sustainably.

According to UNESCO(2021) research findings, the success of moderation education must be measured through long- term changes in critical thinking, social empathy, and interfaith dialogue capabilities. Thus, data- based evaluation and reflection become key for religious moderation programs to truly impact global community life.

The Role of Individuals and Religious Institutions in Building Religious Moderation

In the context of global education, the role of individuals and religious institutions becomes a primary factor in instilling and strengthening the values of religious moderation. Moderation can not only grow through formal policies or curricula but also through exemplary conduct and real activities carried out by religious leaders, teachers, students, and religious institutions at local and global levels(Azra, 2020). Through their active roles, values such as tolerance, empathy, and appreciation for differences can be realized in daily life and become an integral part of spiritual character education.

1. The Role of Individuals in Religious Moderation

Individuals hold important positions as agents of social change in efforts to build a culture of moderation. Religious leaders, for instance, have significant influence in shaping society's views on religious values. Through sermons, lectures, and social media, they can spread peaceful messages and encourage inclusive religious interpretations. Figures such as the Dalai Lama and Pope Francis are concrete examples of world religious leaders. World Health Organization consistently advocate the importance of interfaith dialogue and empathy across beliefs(Francis, 2020; Gyatso, 2021).

In the educational context, teachers have strategic roles in integrating moderation values into learning. Teachers not only teach religious knowledge cognitively but also instill moral values such as mutual respect and open-mindedness(Wahyudi, 2022). Students, on the other hand, can participate in interfaith collaborative projects, such as student exchanges, virtual discussions, or joint social activities that strengthen the spirit of global humanity(Nugraha, 2023).

Thus, individuals become the spearhead in transforming rigid religious understanding into one that is more open and contextual to the challenges of the modern era.

2. The Role of Religious Institutions

Religious institutions have broader functions in systematizing religious moderation education. Through proselytizing activities, training, and educational programs, these institutions are capable of building interfaith cooperation networks at national and global levels(Haynes, 2021). For example, the Nahdlatul Ulama(NU) organization in Indonesia has long developed the concept of Islam Nusantara, which emphasizes moderation values, tolerance, and nationalism in religious education(Syamsuddin, 2022).

Meanwhile, at the international level, institutions such as the World Council of Churches(WCC) actively hold interfaith conferences and workshops aimed at strengthening cross- belief solidarity on humanitarian issues, peace, and social justice(WCC, 2021). Cross- institutional collaboration is also increasingly developing through partnerships between religious institutions and formal educational institutions to organize tolerance workshops, cross-worship site visits, and moderation- based leadership training(UNESCO, 2021).

3. Impact on Education and Global Character Formation

The active role of individuals and religious institutions brings significant impact on character formation and moderate learning culture in schools and

universities. When students learn directly through practice for instance, through visits to other places of worship, dialogue with different communities, or participation in interfaith social projects they gain real experience about the importance of empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect(Rahman& Yusuf, 2023).

In the long term, the involvement of individuals and religious institutions can create a safe, peaceful, and productive educational ecosystem. This aligns with UNESCOs vision of Education for Global Citizenship, namely to form young generations World Health Organization think critically, appreciate diversity, and actively contribute to world peace(UNESCO, 2021). Therefore, collaboration among individuals, religious institutions, and educational institutions becomes the main foundation for sustainable religious moderation in the global era.

Religious moderation is a sustainable global strategy that transcends mere ethics. It helps eliminate identity-based conflicts, strengthen social cohesion, and foster sustainable development grounded in peace, justice, and universal humanity. Thus, it serves as a vital instrument for building a more peaceful and inclusive world civilization.

CONCLUSION

Based on the conceptual analysis, empirical data, and theoretical discussion presented, it can be concluded that religious moderation is an essential foundation for realizing an inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable global citizenship society. In confronting a world increasingly divided by ideological differences, digital radicalism, and various global humanitarian crises, religious moderation is not merely a moral or ethical concept but a concrete strategy for creating harmony among humans and nations.

In essence, religious moderation encompasses the values of balance(tawazun), justice(itidal), tolerance(tasamuh), and respect for diversity(taaruf). These universal values can serve as common ground for all humanity. By prioritizing these principles, each individual can strengthen their religious identity without disregarding the existence and beliefs of others. Moderation does not intend to reduce the intensity of faith; rather, it positions faith within a constructive, dialogical social framework that respects differences. This is the core that makes religious moderation remain relevant to current world developments.

Within the framework of global citizenship, religious moderation functions as a catalyst for building collective awareness that humanity lives in an interconnected global social system. Referring to the perspectives of Nussbaum(1997) and Appiah(2006), being a global citizen implies moral obligations toward global issues, including social justice, peace, environmental sustainability, and human rights. In this context, religious moderation makes crucial contributions. The values of empathy, solidarity, and responsibility instilled across religious and national boundaries form the spiritual and ethical foundation for the substantive implementation of global citizenship.

Evaluation of case studies in Indonesia confirms the positive influence of religious moderation policies on the social structure of society. Since 2019, the Religious Moderation program initiated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs has been effective in strengthening interfaith dialogue, reducing the potential for

religion- based conflicts, and increasing public involvement in pluralistic social activities. These findings underscore that the internalization of moderation values through education, public policy, and digital platforms effectively cultivates a social order that is cohesive and responsive to diversity. Thus, Indonesia has the potential to emerge as a prototype for religious moderation implementation that contributes to strengthening global citizenship.

At the global level, initiatives such as the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations(UNAOC) and UNESCOs Education for Global Citizenship program affirm that religious moderation is instrumental for international diplomacy. Interreligious and intercultural forums facilitate the strengthening of civilizational dialogue while reducing gaps that are often exploited by extremists to spread hatred. This approach enables religious moderation to function as a " universal language" in efforts to preserve global peace and stability.

Furthermore, long- term and cross- cultural research is essential to assess the extent to which religious moderation can enhance global citizenship indices. This research can measure the direct impact of moderation on social indicators such as tolerance levels, public participation, gender equality, and international solidarity. The results are expected to enrich global citizenship theory and provide scientific guidance for international policymakers in formulating social development strategies based on moderate religious values.

Thus, it can be affirmed that religious moderation is a multidimensional strategy with broad implications: spiritually, it cultivates transcendental awareness and universal empathy; socially, it strengthens cohesion and solidarity among citizens; and politically, it reinforces a peaceful, just, and sustainable world order. The successful implementation of religious moderation in the context of global citizenship depends on the synergy among education, public policy, digital technology, and international collaboration.

Finally, religious moderation is not merely a national or religious agenda but also a vision for future civilization a vision of a world that values diversity without losing spiritual direction, a world that prioritizes humanity above ideological barriers, and a world committed to lasting peace and sustainable development. Within this framework, religious moderation becomes not merely a solution but also hope for the emergence of a more humane, inclusive, and civilized global order.

Technology and digital media play important roles in strengthening religious moderation in the global era by opening wide access to interfaith, intercultural, and international education. Through digital platforms such as social media, educational applications, and online courses, values of tolerance, empathy, and appreciation for differences can be disseminated rapidly and interactively. Its implementation is evident in various programs, such as the Religious Moderation application in Indonesia and UNESCOs Digital Literacy for Peace program at the global level.

However, the implementation of religious moderation faces several challenges, including political polarization and religious identity, digital misinformation dissemination, technology access gaps, and lack of sustainable program evaluation. Therefore, digital literacy based on religious values and inclusive policy support are necessary.

Moreover, individuals and religious institutions have strategic roles in instilling moderation values through exemplary conduct, education, and interfaith collaboration. This synergy among technology, education, and socio-religious roles is expected to form global character that is tolerant, critically minded, and oriented toward world peace. Thus, religious moderation is not merely a moral concept but a global strategy toward a peaceful, just, and civilized civilization.

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