

From Religious Moderation to Social Harmony: Internalizing Tolerance Values in Islamic Religious Education

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia, as a multicultural society, requires religious education that not only strengthens religious understanding but also cultivates tolerant attitudes in social life. This study aims to analyze the concept of tolerance in Islamic Religious Education (PAI), the process through which it is internalized in learning, its implications for students' social lives, and the role of PAI in fostering interreligious harmony. The study employed a qualitative approach using a library-research design structured as an integrative literature review of publications from 2016 to 2026, with the literature search updated through September 2026. Data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis and organized into four analytical foci. The synthesis indicates that tolerance in PAI should be developed through the integration of religious values, contextualized content, dialogical learning, teacher exemplarity, reflection, and an inclusive school culture. Such internalization contributes to strengthening empathy, respect for differences, social cooperation, and resilience to intolerant discourse. This study proposes an integrative framework that traces a pathway from religious values and pedagogical practices to experience and reflection, tolerant dispositions, and ultimately social harmony. Accordingly, PAI plays a strategic role as a space for cultivating moderate religiosity as well as civic ethics within a plural society.



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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a plural society shaped by religious, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and traditional diversity. This diversity constitutes both social capital and an educational challenge, because students are expected not only to develop academic competence but also to acquire the capacity to live peacefully amid differences. In this context, education occupies a strategic position in cultivating a religious outlook that is neither exclusive nor confrontational, but instead enables individuals to maintain firm religious convictions while respecting the rights of others. The concept of religious moderation emphasizes balance, justice, tolerance, the rejection of violence, and respect for Indonesia's plural national reality as foundations for peaceful coexistence (Akhmadi, 2019; Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019; Sutrisno, 2019).

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) bears an important responsibility in this process because religious education cannot be limited to mastery of normative knowledge concerning creed, worship, and Islamic law. PAI must also develop affective and social dimensions that enable students to translate religious teachings into conduct that is just, courteous, empathetic, and respectful of differences. The Islamic value of *tasamuh*, or tolerance, does not imply blurring the boundaries of belief; rather, it teaches respect for human dignity, freedom of religion, and cooperation in social domains that do not conflict with principles of faith. Tolerance should therefore be positioned as an element of religious character that must be internalized through learning experiences rather than merely memorized as a concept (Fauzi, 2018; Nurdin, 2021).

The urgency of strengthening tolerance in PAI has increased as students' lives unfold within increasingly open social and digital spaces. Religious information can be obtained from a wide range of sources, including sources that do not always possess adequate authority, contextual grounding, or educational orientation. Under such conditions, students may be exposed to simplistic, dichotomous religious perspectives or discourses that readily label groups perceived as different. Hefni (2020) shows

that digital spaces have become an important arena for mainstreaming religious moderation, while more recent research underscores the need for religious education to foster critical literacy, dialogue, and the reflective capacity to evaluate diversity. Accordingly, PAI should not be dominated by the transmission of knowledge alone; it must consistently provide opportunities for dialogue, reflection, and social experience through which tolerance can develop into a habitual disposition (Sirry et al., 2024; Güleç, 2026).

A number of studies have shown that religious moderation can be internalized through education when it is intentionally designed as part of the pedagogical process. Purwanto et al. (2019) demonstrate that moderation values can be internalized through religious education by connecting religious content with national and social contexts. Harto and Tastin (2019) emphasize PAI learning informed by the concept of Islam wasatiyah, while Novanshah (2022), Tohari (2023), and Dunan (2023) focus on the internalization of *tasamuh* and the roles of PAI and teachers in cultivating tolerance. More recent findings broaden this picture. Through a study of secondary-school teachers in Indonesia, Sirry et al. (2024) show that educators play a crucial role, although understandings of tolerance and interreligious learning are not always implemented consistently. Aseery and Alfaifi (2025) likewise find that the concept of tolerance in Islamic studies materials may be unevenly distributed across grade levels and curriculum components. Thus, the effectiveness of tolerance education depends not merely on the presence of relevant content, but also on curricular coherence, pedagogical strategies, teacher exemplarity, and learning experiences that create meaningful encounters with difference.

Other studies indicate that the internalization of tolerance has implications extending beyond interpersonal relationships in the classroom. Habibah et al. (2022) position religious moderation as an important instrument for fostering tolerance among Generation Z, while Ariyadi et al. (2017) show that the internalization of tolerance values can strengthen social integration in diverse communities. From a student-development perspective, Ekaningtyas (2020) emphasizes the importance of appropriate communication in the internalization process. More recent comparative evidence suggests that students' participation in civic activities at school is associated with higher levels of tolerance toward minority groups, indicating that structured social experiences should be regarded as an integral component of tolerance education rather than a mere supplement to classroom instruction (Beyer & Brese, 2024). Taken together, these studies suggest a layered chain of influence: value comprehension develops into personal dispositions, which are expressed through patterns of communication and interaction and, ultimately, contribute to more harmonious social relations.

Nevertheless, the existing literature remains relatively fragmented. Some studies emphasize religious moderation at the level of policy and educational discourse; others focus on teaching methods, curriculum, or teacher roles; and still others examine the effects of tolerance on social attitudes within particular contexts. Recent scholarship has also addressed teachers' perspectives (Sirry et al., 2024), the distribution of tolerance themes in Islamic studies curricula (Aseery & Alfaifi, 2025), factors affecting tolerance and prejudice in schools (Güleç, 2026), and inclusive educational models for developing tolerant character (Faridi & Mardiana, 2026). However, these strands of research still leave room for a focused explanation of how tolerance values in PAI move from the normative level to pedagogical mechanisms, students' experiences and reflection, the formation of tolerant dispositions, and ultimately contributions to social harmony. This gap constitutes the central scholarly problem addressed in this article.

The novelty of this article lies in the development of an integrative framework that conceptualizes the internalization of tolerance as a sequential chain of transformation: religious values provide normative orientation; pedagogical practices translate those values into learning experiences; experience and reflection shape tolerant dispositions; and those dispositions support social relations and harmony. This framework differs from studies that separately map teachers' perspectives, curricular content, factors influencing tolerance, or inclusive educational models (Sirry et al., 2024; Aseery & Alfaifi, 2025; Güleç, 2026; Faridi & Mardiana, 2026). The theoretical contribution of this article lies in connecting normative, pedagogical, affective, behavioral, school-culture, and digital-literacy dimensions within a single analytical pathway centered on PAI learning. From this perspective, PAI is understood not merely as a vehicle for delivering content about tolerance, but as a space for value transformation that links religious identity, learning experiences, and civic ethics in a plural society.

Based on this gap, this article aims to analyze the concept of tolerance in Islamic Religious Education, identify the process through which tolerance values are internalized in learning, explain their

implications for students' social lives, and analyze the role of PAI in fostering interreligious harmony. Theoretically, the study is expected to strengthen the discourse of Islamic education by offering a more integrated understanding of the relationship among values, learning processes, attitudinal change, and social life. Practically, its findings may provide a basis for teachers and schools to develop PAI learning that is more dialogical, contextual, inclusive, and oriented toward the formation of tolerant character without diminishing students' commitment to their religious principles.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library-research design structured as an integrative literature review. This design was selected because the study did not seek to test relationships among components statistically, but rather to examine, compare, and synthesize scholarly knowledge concerning tolerance values in Islamic Religious Education (PAI), their internalization in learning, their implications for social life, and their contribution to interreligious harmony. Library research treats academic documents as data sources to be analyzed systematically; therefore, the quality of the review depends on the appropriateness of literature selection, the traceability of the analytical process, and the researcher's ability to construct a synthesis across sources (Sari & Asmendri, 2020; Snyder, 2019).

The units of analysis consisted of scholarly publications and academic documents substantively addressing tolerance, *tasamuh*, religious moderation, Islamic Religious Education, values education, multicultural education, interreligious harmony, and religious education in contexts of diversity. Peer-reviewed journal articles served as the primary sources, while official government documents were used selectively to strengthen the conceptual foundation and policy context. Priority was given to publications from the most recent ten-year period, 2016-2026, except for selected sources with foundational conceptual or methodological relevance. Sources were purposively selected on the basis of their alignment with the research focus, bibliographic clarity, relevance of findings, source quality and traceability, and sufficiency of information for analysis. Popular materials lacking an academic basis, duplicate sources, and materials that did not provide sufficient information were excluded from the synthesis.

Data were collected through documentation and a staged literature-search process. The initial search used Indonesian keywords such as "toleransi," "tasamuh," "moderasi beragama," "Pendidikan Agama Islam," "internalisasi nilai," "pendidikan multikultural," and "kerukunan antarumat beragama." To strengthen international coverage and currency, an updated search through September 2026 employed English equivalents, including "religious tolerance," "religious education," "Islamic education," "multicultural education," "religious moderation," "school tolerance," and "social cohesion." Additional targeted searches were conducted through Taylor & Francis Online, SpringerLink, ERIC, and academic journal or publisher websites that provided verifiable metadata and articles. Selection proceeded through title and abstract screening, followed by full-text examination to assess relevance to the four analytical foci. Because documentation of the number of records retrieved during the pre-revision search was unavailable, this article does not retrospectively reconstruct retrieval and exclusion counts, thereby avoiding speculative procedural data. The final manuscript draws on 27 references, with journal articles constituting the dominant source type.

Data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The analytical process involved repeated reading, coding of key ideas, grouping codes into categories, comparing findings across sources, developing themes, and constructing an interpretive synthesis. Content analysis was selected because it enables the systematic interpretation of patterns of meaning in written documents while preserving the context of the information being analyzed (Bengtsson, 2016). Coding was organized around four analytical foci derived from the research objectives: the conceptualization of tolerance in PAI, mechanisms for internalizing tolerance values in learning, the implications of internalization for social life, and the strategic role of PAI in strengthening interreligious harmony. This deductive framework nevertheless allowed recurrent subthemes to emerge inductively, particularly those related to school culture, digital literacy, dialogical experiences, and authentic assessment.

The credibility of interpretation was strengthened through source triangulation by comparing findings from national and international studies, prioritizing recent sources, and checking consistency among sources, analytical categories, and the conclusions developed. An audit trail was maintained through a literature-review matrix containing source identity, research context, approach, principal findings, codes, themes, and relevance to the research questions. Comparisons were also made with

recent studies employing different designs, including research on teachers' perspectives, curriculum analyses, comparative student studies, mixed-method syntheses, and multi-site studies of inclusive education (Sirry et al., 2024; Beyer & Brese, 2024; Aseery & Alfaifi, 2025; Güleç, 2026; Faridi & Mardiana, 2026). This procedure was used to reduce dependence on a single type of evidence while strengthening the credibility of the synthesis (Fadli, 2021).

Table 1. Analytical Foci of the Literature Review

No.	Analytical Focus	Indicators Examined
1	Concept of tolerance in PAI	Definition of tolerance/tasamuh; Islamic value foundations; relationships among tolerance, moderation, and education.
2	Process of value internalization	Integration into content; dialogical/participatory strategies; teacher exemplarity; learning experiences and culture.
3	Impact on social life	Empathy; respect for differences; cooperation; social integration; prevention of discrimination and conflict.
4	Role of PAI in interreligious harmony	Curricular functions; roles of teachers and schools; formation of moderate character; contribution to harmonious social life.

As shown in Table 1, the four analytical foci were used as a framework for organizing findings and comparing patterns across the literature. This framework maintains consistency among the research objectives, analytical process, and the structure of the results and discussion, allowing each theme presented in the findings to be traced back to the analytical focus established at the methodological stage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The literature synthesis demonstrates that the internalization of tolerance in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) cannot be understood simply as adding a topic on diversity to instructional content. The principal finding of the review is a sequential relationship among religious value foundations, the design of learning experiences, the formation of students' dispositions, and the quality of the social relations that result. Recent evidence reinforces the need to view this process multidimensionally: teachers play a crucial role but require adequate understandings of tolerance and appropriate instructional strategies; curricula need to incorporate tolerance concepts consistently; and school contexts influence the development of both tolerance and prejudice (Sirry et al., 2024; Aseery & Alfaifi, 2025; Güleç, 2026). Tolerance therefore becomes effective when it moves from normative knowledge toward social habits that are experienced, reflected upon, and consistently modeled. The synthesis developed in this study connects these dimensions within a single analytical pathway, enabling PAI to be understood as a space for value transformation that integrates cognitive, affective, behavioral, and social domains.

Table 2. Synthesis of Literature Findings on the Internalization of Tolerance in PAI

Focus	Synthesis of Findings	Analytical Implications
Concept of tolerance	Tolerance is understood as respect for differences, justice, nonviolence, and social cooperation without relativizing religious beliefs.	PAI needs to distinguish firmness of belief from social exclusivism.
Internalization process	Values become stronger when integrated through content, dialogue, reflection, teacher exemplarity, and collaborative experiences.	Learning cannot rely solely on lectures and memorization.
Social impact	Internalization is associated with empathy, respect for differences, healthy communication, cooperation, and social integration.	The success of PAI should be assessed through changes in dispositions and social relations.
Role of PAI	PAI connects normative religious teaching, school culture, religious literacy, and inclusive citizenship.	Harmony requires a supportive school ecosystem, not merely the individual competence of teachers.

Table 2 shows that the four research foci are interconnected rather than independent. The conceptualization of tolerance determines the values to be cultivated; the internalization process explains how those values are learned; the social implications identify the expected indicators of

change; and the role of PAI explains the institutional conditions that make such change possible. This framework also provides the foundation for the discussion that follows.

The Concept of Tolerance in Islamic Religious Education

From the perspective of PAI, tolerance is more appropriately understood as the capacity to navigate differences ethically rather than merely to "allow" others to be different. The literature on religious moderation places tolerance alongside national commitment, nonviolence, and acceptance of tradition as important indicators of a balanced way of practicing religion (Mawarti, 2017; Akhmadi, 2019; Sutrisno, 2019). More recent curriculum research shows that the presence of tolerance concepts in Islamic studies materials requires systematic attention because an uneven distribution of themes can undermine the consistency of the educational message (Aseery & Alfaifi, 2025). In the educational domain, this orientation requires PAI to cultivate an understanding that strong religiosity is not synonymous with social exclusivism. Students may consistently uphold their theological convictions while simultaneously recognizing the rights of other citizens to practice their beliefs, receive fair treatment, and participate in shared social spaces. This distinction is important so that tolerance education is not misconstrued as religious relativism, but understood instead as an ethic of coexistence in a plural society.

This value foundation is reinforced by scholarship on Islam wasatiyah, which regards balance, justice, and the avoidance of extremism as essential characteristics of Islamic education. Harto and Tastin (2019) show that PAI informed by wasatiyah can be directed toward developing moderate religious attitudes among students, while Nurdin (2021) positions moderation as a principle grounded in normative Islamic sources. Together, these strands of scholarship indicate that tolerance in PAI is not externally imposed on the religious tradition; rather, it can be developed through interpretations of Islamic teachings that emphasize public good, respect for human beings, and self-restraint when confronting difference. Consequently, educational approaches that overemphasize group boundaries without simultaneously explaining the ethics of social interaction risk enabling students to master categories of "us" and "them" without developing the skills required for coexistence.

The synthesis also highlights the need to distinguish tolerance in the domain of creed from tolerance in the social domain. Harmony does not require the homogenization of religious doctrines, the blending of rituals, or the abandonment of religious identity. Instead, harmony rests on a willingness to refrain from discrimination, violence, humiliation, and coercion, while building cooperation in humanitarian and civic affairs. Fauzi (2018) situates Islamic moderation within the horizons of civilization and humanity, while Raihani (2018) shows that education for multicultural citizens in Indonesia must connect identity, citizenship, and practices of coexistence. Read together, these arguments broaden the function of PAI: the success of religious education should be measured not only by students' ability to explain Islamic concepts, but also by how they use those concepts to adopt ethical positions when facing real differences.

At this point, tolerance can be conceptualized as a disposition comprising three dimensions. The cognitive dimension concerns an understanding of difference, rights, and the boundaries of tolerance; the affective dimension relates to empathy, openness, and the capacity to manage disagreement; and the behavioral dimension is reflected in communication, cooperation, and the rejection of discriminatory treatment. Although the reviewed literature does not always employ identical terminology, its substantive pattern is consistent. Ekaningtyas (2020) emphasizes the role of communication in the internalization of tolerance, whereas Habibah et al. (2022) demonstrate the importance of internalizing tolerance values among Generation Z within the framework of religious moderation. Tolerance, therefore, is not a single attitude but a configuration of knowledge, moral emotions, and social actions that must be developed simultaneously.

Internalizing Tolerance Values in the PAI Learning Process

The second finding indicates that internalization is the decisive process determining whether tolerance remains merely a form of knowledge or develops into character. Novanshah (2022) shows that the value of *tasamuh* can be internalized through PAI learning, while Purwanto et al. (2019) emphasize that moderation values can be integrated through religious education by connecting religious teachings with lived contexts. Recent research further highlights the importance of pedagogical actors

and environments: Sirry et al. (2024) show that teachers' understandings and approaches to teaching tolerance influence the quality of diversity education, whereas Faridi and Mardiana (2026) emphasize that tolerant character is strengthened when normative learning is connected with inclusive social experiences. The present synthesis therefore adds that integrating content alone is insufficient. Internalization requires consistency among what is taught, how learning takes place, how teachers respond to differences, the social experiences students encounter, and how those experiences are subsequently reflected upon.

At the level of content, tolerance values can be incorporated through discussions of morality, the life of the Prophet and the Medina community, social relations, justice, plurality, and contemporary issues at the intersection of religion and civic life. Such content becomes more meaningful, however, when students are invited to analyze cases, identify the interests of relevant parties, distinguish disagreement from insult, and explain courses of action consistent with Islamic values. This model shifts learning from the reproduction of answers toward moral reasoning. Harto and Tastin (2019) emphasize a *wasatiyah* orientation in learning, while Tohari (2023) underscores the role of PAI in cultivating religious tolerance. The synthesis in this study shows that both perspectives converge on the need to make values tools for interpreting situations, rather than terms that students merely reproduce in examinations.

Dialogical methods are important because tolerance is fundamentally tested when individuals encounter views different from their own. Group discussions, case studies, problem-based learning, written reflection, and collaborative projects create opportunities for students to experience difference in a safe environment. Cross-national evidence indicates that participatory experiences at school are associated with higher levels of tolerance toward minority groups, although classroom diversity does not automatically produce tolerance in the absence of supportive conditions for interaction (Beyer & Brese, 2024). Teachers therefore need to guide students in presenting arguments without demeaning others, listening before judging, and distinguishing criticism of ideas from attacks on identity. Ekaningtyas (2020) likewise shows that the quality of communication influences the internalization of tolerance. Classroom communication is thus not merely a medium for transmitting instructional content; it is part of the moral experience through which students learn to manage difference.

Teacher exemplarity constitutes another important mechanism. The PAI literature consistently positions teachers not only as subject-matter experts but also as actors who shape the psychological and social climate of the classroom. Dunan (2023) and Tohari (2023) both emphasize the role of education and educators in strengthening tolerance. In the synthesis developed here, exemplarity can be observed through several forms of conduct: fairness in allocating opportunities, the language used when describing other groups, the ability to respond to disagreement without humiliating students, and firmness in addressing ridicule or stereotypes. Such conduct has educational force because students encounter an "experienced curriculum," not merely a written one. When teachers explain tolerance while simultaneously using derogatory labels for particular groups, the formal message and the social message undermine one another.

Internalization also requires reflection. Experiences of dialogue or cooperation do not automatically generate tolerance if students are not helped to understand the meaning of those experiences. Reflection enables students to identify prejudices, reassess emotional responses, and connect social action with religious principles. Within this framework, teachers can use reflective questions concerning why a particular action is considered fair, how a statement affects others, or how to respond when personal convictions appear to conflict with the obligation to respect the rights of others. Purwanto et al. (2019) emphasize internalization as a process of values education, and the present synthesis extends this argument by showing that reflection serves as a bridge between experience and the formation of dispositions. Without reflection, collaborative activities may remain mere activities; with reflection, they acquire moral and religious meaning.

Another prominent finding concerns the importance of continuity between classroom learning and school culture. Tolerance is unlikely to become habitual if it appears only in several PAI lessons but is not supported by school rules, communication patterns among teachers, student activities, and mechanisms for addressing discrimination. Sutrisno (2019) positions educational institutions as arenas for the actualization of religious moderation, while Faridi and Mardiana (2026) show that inclusive religious education gains strength when normative knowledge is connected with open and egalitarian social experiences. Güleç's (2026) synthesis likewise emphasizes that tolerance and prejudice in schools

are influenced by contextual factors and students' developmental trajectories. Internalization should therefore be understood as an ecological process: PAI classrooms provide the language and value framework, while school life provides spaces for testing, habituation, and social correction. The connection between these two arenas enables tolerance to move from "lesson content" to a norm of interaction.

The Impact of Tolerance Internalization on Students' Social Lives

The literature analyzed indicates that the impact of tolerance internalization is first visible in the quality of micro-level relationships, particularly in how students respond to differences of opinion and identity in everyday interactions. Habibah et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of tolerance for Generation Z, while Ekaningtyas (2020) links the internalization of tolerance with communication processes. Comparative evidence shows that student participation in civic activities at school is associated with higher levels of tolerance toward minority groups (Beyer & Brese, 2024). On the basis of this synthesis, relevant change should not be overstated as the "elimination of conflict," but rather understood as an increased capacity to manage differences without turning them into hostility. Indicators include a willingness to listen, avoidance of demeaning language, refusal to exclude peers on the basis of background, the ability to cooperate toward agreed goals, and consideration of others' rights in decision-making.

At the next level, tolerance contributes to social integration. Ariyadi et al. (2017) show that the internalization of tolerance values is associated with efforts to strengthen social integration through spaces of intergroup encounter. This finding is relevant to school contexts because classrooms and student activities provide repeated spaces for such encounters. When students become accustomed to cooperating with people who are different from themselves, group identities need not disappear; rather, they can coexist with shared identities as members of a class, a school, and a nation. In this sense, tolerance does not function to eliminate differences, but to prevent difference from becoming the sole basis for determining who deserves trust, cooperation, or fair treatment.

The strengthening of empathy is another outcome identified through the literature synthesis. Empathy does not mean agreement with all of another person's views; rather, it refers to the capacity to understand the social and emotional consequences of one's actions for others. Dialogical and reflective learning allows students to view issues from different perspectives. Ekaningtyas (2020) demonstrates the importance of communication approaches in the internalization of tolerance, while Fauzi (2018) connects moderation with a broader horizon of humanity. Taken together, these perspectives suggest that tolerance education should cultivate sensitivity to human dignity as a basis for moral judgment. Students can therefore continue to express disagreement with an idea while rejecting humiliation, intimidation, or violence toward those who hold it.

A further social implication concerns resilience to intolerant discourse, particularly in digital spaces. Hefni (2020) shows that digital environments are an important arena for mainstreaming religious moderation because religious discourse is widely produced and circulated through digital media. For students, tolerant dispositions need to be integrated with critical literacy: recognizing simplifications that divide society into black-and-white camps, evaluating information sources, distinguishing criticism from provocation, and refusing to redistribute content that demonizes particular groups. This broadens the meaning of internalization. Tolerance is expressed not only in face-to-face encounters with peers who are different, but also in how students choose to comment, share information, and respond to identity-based conflicts online.

Although numerous studies indicate positive tendencies, the relationship between PAI learning and social harmony should not be understood as linear or automatic. Students' attitudes are also shaped by family, peer groups, religious organizations, social media, public figures, and community experiences. Güleç's (2026) synthesis shows that tolerance and prejudice in schools are related to diverse contextual and developmental factors, while Beyer and Brese (2024) demonstrate that diversity in classroom composition alone is not always sufficient without supportive school activities and climates. PAI is therefore an important factor, but not the only one. Schools can strengthen tolerant dispositions and provide constructive alternative experiences, yet their impact is likely to be more sustainable when messages from schools and the broader social environment are consistent. Recognizing this complexity both limits the claims of the present study and clarifies the scope of possible educational intervention.

The Strategic Role of PAI in Fostering Interreligious Harmony

Across the synthesis as a whole, the strategic role of PAI lies in its capacity to connect three domains that are often treated separately: personal religiosity, social ethics, and citizenship. PAI equips students with a normative foundation for understanding their faith; at the same time, it can demonstrate the ethical implications of that faith in relationships with others and in shared civic life. Raihani (2018) emphasizes the need for education for multicultural citizens, while recent research indicates that tolerance education requires capable teachers, consistent curricula, and school environments that provide opportunities for inclusive experience (Sirry et al., 2024; Aseery & Alfaifi, 2025; Faridi & Mardiana, 2026). From this perspective, harmony cannot be built through general moral exhortation alone. It requires mature religious competence: the ability to uphold principles, interpret context, regulate responses, and distinguish matters of belief from domains of social cooperation.

PAI also serves as a corrective space for overly simplistic religious understandings. Students may encounter large volumes of religious information outside school, but such information does not always provide historical context, interpretive methodology, or an ethic of disagreement. Effective PAI learning can provide students with tools for asking who produced a particular opinion, in what context it emerged, whether other perspectives exist within the Islamic tradition, and how principles of public benefit and justice should be applied. Hefni (2020) demonstrates the importance of mainstreaming moderation in digital spaces, while Nurdin (2021) reminds us that moderation has a normative foundation in Islam. By connecting religious literacy with digital literacy, PAI can reduce students' vulnerability to extremist narratives without turning education into political indoctrination.

A further role is to cultivate a culture of civil dialogue. Dialogue in the context of PAI need not always take the form of formal interreligious encounters. In schools with relatively homogeneous student populations, dialogical practice can begin with internal diversity of views, social issues, case studies, or analyses of how other groups are represented in the media. The goal is not to produce agreement on every issue, but to develop ethical procedures for disagreement. Harto and Tastin (2019) provide a foundation for a wasatiyah orientation in learning, while Dunan (2023) and Tohari (2023) emphasize the role of PAI in strengthening tolerance. This synthesis indicates that the quality of dialogue is an important indicator because mature harmony is measured not by the absence of differences, but by the capacity to manage them without symbolic or physical violence.

At the institutional level, PAI teachers cannot work alone. School principals, teachers of other subjects, education personnel, student organizations, and school policies all influence whether messages of tolerance are reinforced or contradicted. Programs designed to strengthen tolerance should therefore be connected with character education, anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policies, rules governing digital communication, social activities, and conflict-resolution mechanisms. Faridi and Mardiana (2026) demonstrate the importance of continuity between theoretical learning and social experience in developing tolerant character, while Güleç (2026) identifies school context as an important factor influencing tolerance and prejudice. The present review therefore underscores a practical implication: PAI can function as a driver of values, but the school must become an ecosystem that provides consistency. Without institutional consistency, internalization tends to depend on the individual quality of teachers and may shift when teachers or school leadership change.

The findings also have implications for learning assessment. If the objectives of PAI include the internalization of tolerance, assessment is inadequate when it measures only students' ability to state the definition of *tasamuh* or cite related religious texts. Assessment should capture students' capacity to reason through cases, provide moral justification, demonstrate attitudes in group work, engage in reflection, and formulate nondiscriminatory responses. Authentic assessment through reflective journals, discussion rubrics, portfolios of social projects, or case analysis can complement conventional knowledge tests. This principle is consistent with the finding that tolerance has cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. Assessments that measure only one dimension risk producing a misleading picture of the success of value internalization.

From the perspective of teacher development, the findings indicate a need for competencies extending beyond mastery of PAI content. Teachers require skills in facilitating dialogue, managing conflict, developing digital literacy, recognizing sensitivities related to diversity, and selecting examples that do not reinforce stereotypes. Strengthening these competencies is important because teachers address issues that can easily activate emotions and group identities. Tohari (2023) and Dunan

(2023) demonstrate the central role of religious education in tolerance, but the present synthesis adds that this centrality creates professional demands: the greater the teacher's role in shaping students' social orientations, the greater the need for reflective, proportionate, and knowledge-based pedagogical practice.

Transforming Religious Values into Social Harmony through PAI Learning

In contrast to earlier and more recent studies that largely emphasize a single dimension—such as the internalization of *tasamuh* values (Novanshah, 2022), teachers' perspectives on tolerance education (Sirry et al., 2024), the distribution of tolerance themes in Islamic studies (Aseery & Alfaifi, 2025), factors influencing tolerance and prejudice in schools (Güleç, 2026), or inclusive educational models for developing tolerant character (Faridi & Mardiana, 2026)—this study proposes a transformation chain focused specifically on PAI learning. The chain comprises four mutually influencing stages: religious values provide normative orientation; pedagogical practices transform values into experience; experience and reflection shape tolerant dispositions; and tolerant dispositions support social relations and harmony. The novelty of the article does not lie in claiming that tolerance is important, but in synthesizing the mechanisms that connect "what values are taught," "how those values are experienced and reflected upon," and "how resulting dispositional changes contribute to social life." The framework also incorporates school culture and digital literacy as conditions that can strengthen or weaken the transformation process.

This framework helps explain why well-designed tolerance content does not necessarily produce tolerant attitudes when the learning process does not support them. It also explains why dialogical methods alone are insufficient when they lack a clear value foundation and reflective process. The effectiveness of internalization therefore depends on alignment among content, process, teacher exemplarity, environment, and assessment. These findings strengthen Purwanto et al.'s (2019) argument regarding the internalization of moderation through religious education and extend Harto and Tastin's (2019) orientation toward *wasatiyah* learning by positioning school culture and digital spaces as part of the ecology of attitude formation. In this model, PAI does not function as an isolated subject, but as a center for articulating values that must be reinforced by social experiences both within and beyond the school.

In practical terms, schools can use the findings of this review to design more coherent PAI learning. Instructional content should address real issues of difference; learning strategies should create opportunities for dialogue and collaboration; teachers should model fair communication; assessment should measure reasoning and behavior in addition to knowledge; and school culture should establish clear standards against discrimination and identity-based bullying. In digital spaces, students should be trained to evaluate source authority and the social consequences of religious content. None of these measures requires the removal of religious identity. On the contrary, they position religious identity as an ethical resource that encourages social responsibility, respect for human dignity, and the rejection of violence.

This study has several limitations. Because it employs library research, its findings represent a synthesis of the literature and cannot be used to estimate the magnitude of the effects of tolerance internalization within a particular student population. The available literature also varies in context, educational level, method, and terminology; consequently, recurring patterns should be interpreted as conceptual tendencies rather than statistical generalizations. In addition, documentation of the number of initial records and exclusions from the search conducted before the revision process is unavailable. This article therefore deliberately refrains from retrospectively reconstructing selection counts and does not claim to be a PRISMA-based systematic review. The source update through September 2026 was undertaken to strengthen currency and international comparison, but the review does not experimentally compare the effectiveness of individual pedagogical strategies. These limitations open an agenda for future research involving multi-site field studies, the development of instruments for measuring tolerant dispositions, longitudinal evaluation, and comparative studies of dialogue, case-based learning, social projects, and digital literacy within PAI.

Nevertheless, the consistency of patterns across the literature indicates that PAI occupies an important position in strengthening harmony when tolerance is treated as a comprehensive internalization process. Harmony is not the immediate outcome of a single lesson; rather, it emerges from the accumulation of understanding, experience, exemplarity, reflection, and social habituation.

The principal contribution of PAI therefore lies in its capacity to form students who are firm in their convictions while also mature in relating to differences. This orientation is relevant to Indonesia's plural society and to the challenges of digital spaces, where students encounter diverse religious narratives on a daily basis. By positioning tolerance simultaneously as a religious and civic competence, PAI can make a more tangible contribution to peaceful and civilized social life.

CONCLUSION

Based on the literature synthesis, the internalization of tolerance values in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) cannot be achieved merely through the normative presentation of the concept of *tasamuh*. Tolerance becomes more meaningful when religious values are translated into contextualized content, dialogical and participatory learning, teacher exemplarity, collaborative experiences, reflection, and an inclusive school culture. Recent literature reinforces the conclusion that the quality of tolerance education is determined not only by curricular content, but also by teachers' understandings, students' participatory experiences, and school conditions that support inclusive interaction (Sirry et al., 2024; Beyer & Brese, 2024; Aseery & Alfaifi, 2025; Güleç, 2026; Faridi & Mardiana, 2026). The novelty of this study lies in its integrative framework, which conceptualizes tolerance internalization as a pathway from religious values, pedagogical practices, experience and reflection, and the formation of tolerant dispositions to the strengthening of social harmony. PAI can therefore be positioned as a space for cultivating moderate religiosity as well as social and civic ethics in a plural society.

On the basis of these findings, PAI teachers are encouraged to develop case-based, dialogical, reflective, and collaborative project learning that allows students to practice responding to differences ethically. Schools should reinforce such learning through a safe communication culture, anti-discrimination policies, collaborative social activities, and digital literacy that enables students to recognize provocation and intolerant narratives. Learning assessment should measure not only mastery of definitions and religious texts, but also attitudes, reflection, and the capacity to respond to issues of diversity. Because this study is based on a literature review, future research should test the proposed integrative framework through field studies, learning experiments, or longitudinal research across different school contexts in order to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of attitudinal change empirically.

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