

Deradicalization Strategy: A *Wasathiyah* Curriculum for Gen Z in Islamic Boarding Schools

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Abstract:

Islamic Religious Education (*PAI*) faces global challenges due to the infiltration of foreign ideologies that contradict Indonesian moderation values. Generation Z, deeply immersed in technology, is vulnerable to extreme religious interpretations. Previous studies have discussed Islamic moderation, but remain limited in integrating *wasathiyah* values into pesantren curricula that are responsive to the characteristics of Generation Z. This study aims to develop and implement a *wasathiyah*-based *PAI* curriculum at Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4 Islamic Boarding School in Jember, focusing on instilling values of moderation, tolerance, and religious balance. The research uses a descriptive qualitative method with a case study approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, involving participants such as caretakers, administrators, teachers, and students. Data analysis was conducted interactively through reduction, presentation, and verification, with validity tested through source and method triangulation. Results indicate that the *wasathiyah* curriculum enhances understanding of religious moderation, critical thinking skills, and students' inclusive attitudes. The integration of values in *fiqh*, creed, and moral education, along with *pesantren* cultural practices, effectively shapes adaptive religious character. The study concludes that the *wasathiyah* curriculum development is relevant for Generation Z and significantly contributes to creating a harmonious and tolerant society. Continuous evaluation is necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Keywords: *Wasathiyah Curriculum, Generation Z, Islamic Boarding School, Religious Moderation, Islamic Education*

Abstrak:

Pendidikan agama Islam (*PAI*) menghadapi tantangan global akibat infiltrasi ideologi asing yang bertentangan dengan nilai moderasi Indonesia. Generasi Z, yang lekat dengan teknologi, rentan terhadap pemahaman agama yang ekstrem. Penelitian terdahulu telah membahas moderasi Islam, namun masih terbatas pada integrasi nilai *wasathiyah* ke dalam kurikulum pesantren yang responsif terhadap karakter Generasi Z. Studi ini bertujuan mengembangkan dan mengimplementasikan kurikulum *PAI* berbasis *wasathiyah* di Pondok Pesantren Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4 Jember, dengan fokus pada nilai moderasi, toleransi, dan keseimbangan beragama. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi, dengan partisipan pengasuh, pengurus, ustad, dan santri. Analisis data dilakukan secara interaktif melalui reduksi, penyajian, dan verifikasi data, dengan uji keabsahan melalui triangulasi sumber dan metode. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan kurikulum *wasathiyah* meningkatkan pemahaman moderasi beragama, kemampuan berpikir kritis, dan sikap inklusif santri. Integrasi nilai dalam pembelajaran fikih, akidah, dan akhlak serta pembiasaan kultur pesantren efektif membentuk karakter religius yang adaptif. Simpulan penelitian menyatakan bahwa pengembangan kurikulum *wasathiyah* relevan bagi Generasi Z dan berkontribusi

signifikan terhadap terwujudnya masyarakat harmonis dan toleran. Evaluasi berkelanjutan diperlukan untuk memastikan keefektifan kurikulum.

Kata Kunci: *Kurikulum Wasathiyah, Generasi Z, Pesantren, Moderasi Beragama, Pendidikan Islam*

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Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology and globalization presents new challenges for Generation Z in understanding religion, as they are increasingly exposed to radical and intolerant ideologies readily accessible through the internet (Ulfiana & Awla, 2019). This trend raises significant concerns about the potential growth of extremist views that contradict the principles of Islamic moderation, a core value of Indonesian identity (Helmy et al., 2021). For instance, many traditional Islamic educational institutions, such as *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), focus on classical curricula without adapting to contemporary contexts. This approach often lacks relevance for Generation Z, digital natives living in a connected world (Abidin, 2020; Amirudin & Rohimah, 2020). Consequently, developing a curriculum based on Wasathiyah (Islamic moderation) principles emerges as a strategic solution to contextually instill values of moderation, tolerance, and balanced religious practice (Firmansyah, 2022). Therefore, this research addresses the urgent need for an adaptive curriculum relevant to the characteristics of Generation Z and the challenges of the modern era.

The development of a *Wasathiyah*-based curriculum has become a significant focus in Islamic education research, particularly in addressing the challenges posed by Generation Z (M. Hanif, 2025). Previous studies indicate that integrating values of moderation—such as justice, tolerance, and balance—into the curriculum can significantly enhance educational quality and foster inclusive character building (Mubin et al., 2024; Sya'bani, 2021; Yazida Ichsan et al., 2024). For instance, research conducted in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) has demonstrated the effectiveness of the *Wasathiyah* approach in preventing radicalism and improving students' social skills (Azisi et al., 2024). However, research remains limited, primarily exploring implementation within traditional *pesantren* environments and seldom addressing the necessary curricular adaptations for Generation Z, a cohort deeply intertwined with digital technology (Huda et al., 2024). This present study aims to address this gap by developing a *Wasathiyah* curriculum relevant to the needs of Generation Z. It seeks to leverage technology while remaining firmly grounded in the core values of Islamic moderation.

This study makes a unique contribution by integrating the concept of Wasathiyah (Islamic moderation) into the development of an Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum specifically designed for Generation Z in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools). This area has rarely been explored holistically (Riyawi & Febriansyah, 2023). The primary rationale is that most previous research, such as that by Sudrajat et al., (2021), has focused more broadly on religious moderation in general

or formal educational contexts, without adopting a curriculum approach tailored to the digital-native Generation Z. For instance, studies by Nasir & Rijal, (2021) and Ma'arif et al., (2024) remain limited to the implementation of moderation values in madrasahs or among university-level *santri*, without addressing a Gen Z-oriented curriculum design. Furthermore, research by Fitria et al., (2025) extensively discusses moderation from textual and gender perspectives, yet falls short in examining operational curriculum aspects that are adaptive to the characteristics of Generation Z (Moh Muhtador et al., 2025). In contrast, this study combines a classical text-based curriculum with a modern approach derived from the *Cikal* education model—an integration that previous studies have not attempted (Mas'udi, 2024). Therefore, this research addresses a gap in the literature concerning a *Wasathiyah*-based curriculum for Generation Z in *pesantren*, offering a relevant, contextual, and applicable curriculum model for contemporary Islamic education.

This study is essential due to the growing challenges of radicalism and intolerance among Generation Z, which call for relevant and moderate educational approaches (Qadri et al., 2024). A *Wasathiyah*-based curriculum offers a solution by emphasizing values such as balance, justice, and tolerance—principles that align well with the digital-native characteristics of Generation Z (Faradhillah, 2025). For instance, integrating moderation into the teaching of Islamic jurisprudence and theology has been shown to foster inclusive understanding and prevent extremism (Solahudin et al., 2023). Therefore, developing this curriculum is urgent for strengthening a moderate Islamic identity and crucial for shaping an adaptive and harmonious generation within a multicultural society.

This study aims to develop a *Wasathiyah*-based Islamic Religious Education curriculum that meets the needs of Generation Z at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4, Jember. The primary objective is to create a curriculum that fosters moderate, critical, and inclusive character development among students. Specifically, the research is designed to analyze the development process, implementation, and implications of this curriculum within the context of a *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school). The hypothesis being tested is that integrating *Wasathiyah* values into the curriculum can enhance the quality of education and strengthen students' resilience against radical ideologies.

Method

This research focuses on developing a *Wasathiyah*-based Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum for Generation Z in the *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) environment (Naila et al., 2025). This initiative is driven by the urgency to respond to contemporary socio-religious dynamics (Boussebaa, 2021). Generation Z, who are deeply immersed in the digital world, are considered vulnerable to exposure to extremist ideologies (DAVID, 2022). Therefore, an educational approach emphasizing balance, tolerance, and critical thinking is essential. As epicenters of Islamic education in Indonesia, *Pesantren* are viewed as strategic loci for implementing *Wasathiyah* values, given their crucial role in shaping students' character and spirituality (Hakim, 2023). *Pesantren* modernization, which strives to preserve classical traditions while adopting modern curricula, is the specific reason for selecting Pondok Pesantren Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4 Jember as a case study. This institution is actively developing a curriculum that is responsive to the needs of Generation Z.

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design

to gain an in-depth and contextual understanding of the curriculum development process (Adil et al., 2023; Salmona & Kaczynski, 2024). The qualitative approach was chosen for its ability to reveal the meanings and processes behind complex social phenomena, aligning with the research objective of holistically describing curriculum development (Creswell & Poth, 2016; King et al., 2021). The data consist of primary and secondary sources; primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews and participant observation, while secondary data were sourced from curriculum documents, syllabi, and the *pesantren*'s historical records (Islam & Aldaihani, 2022; Silverman, 2023). Data sources were selected purposively, with key informants including the *pesantren* leader, administrators, ustaz (teachers), and santri (students), who were chosen based on their competence and direct involvement in curriculum development.

Data were collected through three primary methods: participant observation to witness the teaching-learning process directly, semi-structured interviews to explore the informants' perceptions and experiences, and document analysis to examine curriculum documents and learning materials (Busetto et al., 2020). The collected data were then analyzed using the interactive analysis model by Sadeghi & Smith, (2024), which involves three stages: data reduction to simplify and focus the data, data presentation in the form of descriptive narratives and matrices, and drawing conclusions and verification to ensure the validity of the findings. Data validity was tested using source and method triangulation techniques to ensure the credibility and reliability of the obtained data (Schlunegger et al., 2024).

Results and Discussion

Result

Development of a *Wasathiyah*-Based Islamic Religious Education Curriculum at Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4 Islamic Boarding School, Jember, 2025

The development of a *Wasathiyah*-based Islamic Religious Education curriculum at the Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4 Islamic Boarding School in Jember represents a strategic effort to modernize the institution's curriculum, making it more responsive to the challenges faced by Generation Z. This curriculum is designed to instill moderate and balanced Islamic values, ensuring their relevance to contemporary social and digital realities. The development process follows a participatory approach, involving the school's leadership, administrators, teachers, and students.

According to research by Mubin et al. (2024) in the Journal of Islamic Educational Studies, integrating the principles of *Wasathiyah* into a curriculum design requires the formulation of contextual and flexible educational objectives. This includes adapting teaching materials and learning methods grounded in values such as justice, tolerance, and interfaith dialogue. Furthermore, the curriculum design at Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4 is also inspired by the humanistic approach adopted from Najela Shihab's "*Cikal*" model, which emphasizes a balance between cognitive, affective, and spiritual development.

Research by Amin & Nasution (2025) demonstrates that emphasizing moderation in Islamic religious education significantly enhances students' critical thinking abilities and social skills. Therefore, this *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) is developing a curriculum that integrates technology and contextual learning while maintaining its foundation in classical texts. This integrated approach is designed to

equip students to respond to the challenges of digitalization and globalization effectively.

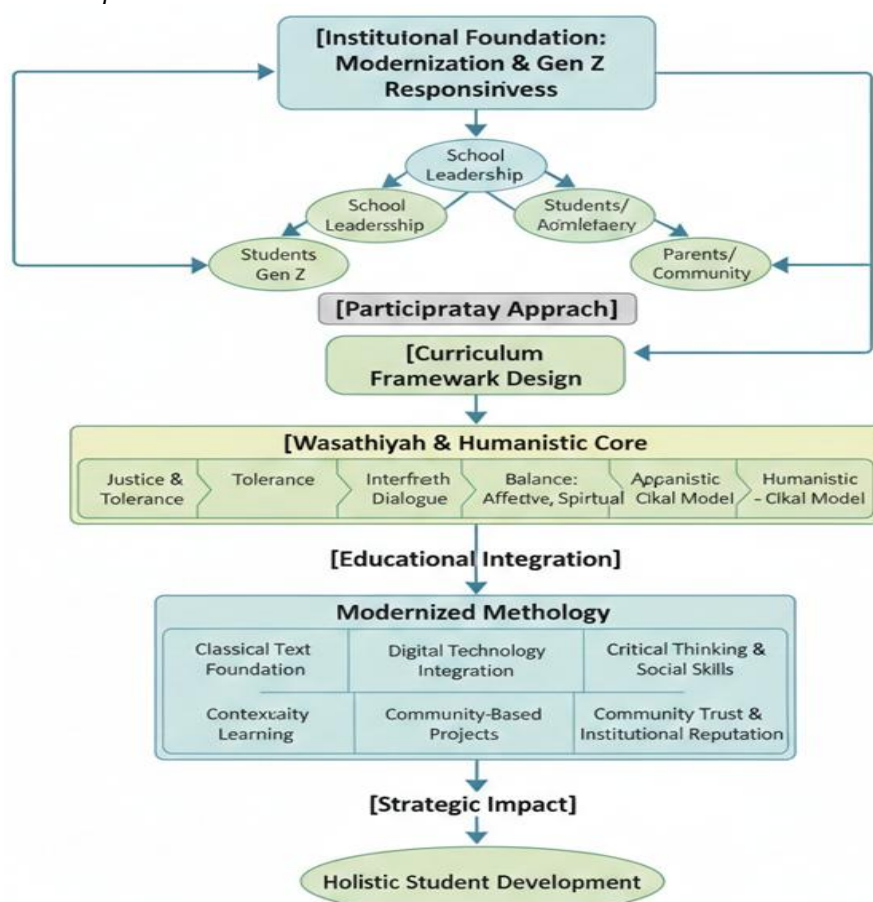
The *pesantren* aspires to become a central and vital part of its surrounding community. To achieve this, it must maintain a strong commitment to its students' education and holistic development, a commitment that is reflected in establishing a clear vision and mission. These guiding principles guide the institution in realizing its defined educational objectives.

Beyond a clear vision and mission, the *pesantren* also aims to earn the trust of the broader community. This trust is built through the consistent delivery of high-quality education, a well-maintained reputation, and the tangible achievements of its students. The public must be confident that the institution provides relevant and quality education, effectively equipping students with the necessary knowledge and skills for their future (Bandur, 2012).

Furthermore, the *pesantren* strives to ensure its educational quality aligns with the needs of both its students and society. This can be realized through continuous curriculum development, involving students and their parents in decision-making processes, and creating opportunities for participation in community-based projects. By adopting such practices, the *pesantren* becomes more open and responsive to the needs of its students – particularly Generation Z, who are typically between 15 and 20 years of age – and can more effectively fulfill the community's expectations (Rukiyati Sugiyo & L. Andriani Purwastuti, 2017).

Chart 1

Curriculum Development Process Flowchart



Note. Illustrates the participatory process and the flow of developing this curriculum.

Consequently, developing a *wasathiyah* (moderate)-based curriculum is viable and relevant, given the *pesantren*'s context, which upholds the values of collectivism and community. *Wasathiyah* is highly appropriate for curriculum integration as it champions the principle of balance. This means advocating for justice, promoting high tolerance, and prioritizing deliberation (*musyawarah*) among people when making decisions.

Implementation of a *Wasathiyah*-Based Islamic Religious Education Curriculum at Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4 Islamic Boarding School, Jember

Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4 Islamic Boarding School in Jember implements a *Wasathiyah* (moderate)-based Islamic religious education. Based on curriculum development research, this implementation is conducted through three primary channels: instruction in the madrasah *diniyah* (Islamic school), activities in the *majelis ta'lim* (religious study assembly), and the habituation of the *pesantren* (boarding school) culture. Within the *madrasah diniyah*, the principles of *Wasathiyah* are integrated into the teaching of *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *aqidah* (creed), and *akhlaq* (morals) using contextual and dialogical approaches.

Table 1

Implementation Pathways and Their Focus

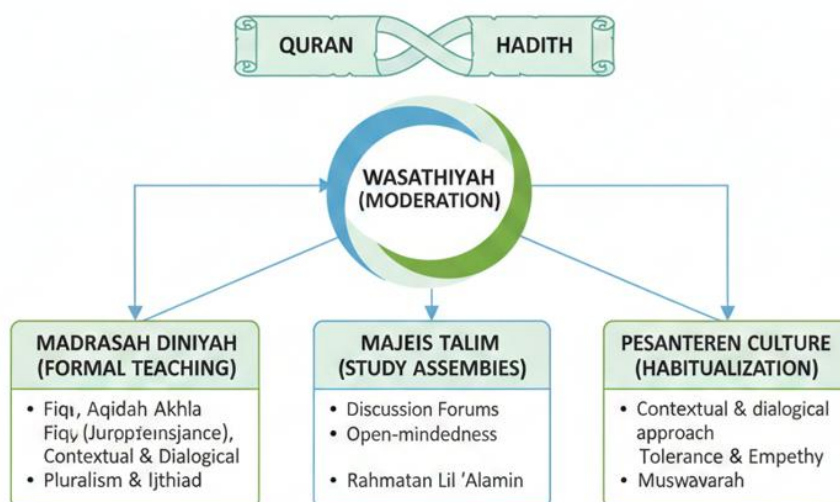
Pathway	Description	Key Values & Practices
Madrasah Diniyah (Formal Teaching)	Integration of <i>Wasathiyah</i> principles into core subjects like <i>Fiqh</i> (Jurisprudence), <i>Aqidah</i> (Creed), and <i>Akhlak</i> (Ethics).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contextual & dialogical approach. • Introduction to various <i>madhahib</i> (schools of thought). • Understanding pluralism and <i>ijtihad</i>.
Majelis Ta'lim (Study Assemblies)	Forums for discussion and deep learning about Islamic teachings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering open-mindedness. • Understanding Islam as <i>rahmatan lil 'alamin</i> (a mercy to all worlds).
Pesantren Culture (Habitualization)	Daily life and activities within the <i>pesantren</i> environment (<i>asrama</i> /boarding).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practicing tolerance, empathy, and <i>musyawarah</i> (deliberation). • Internalizing moderate character through daily habits.

Note. The report visualizes the three main pathways for implementing the *Wasathiyah* (Islamic Moderation) curriculum and its core principles as practiced at the *pesantren*

Findings from in-depth observations and interviews suggest that the *Wasathiyah* curriculum encourages students to adopt moderate attitudes, remain open to differences, and understand Islam within the context of *rahmatan lil' alamin* (a mercy to all worlds). This aligns with Faridah et al. (2025) research, which states that the *wasathiyah* approach in the *pesantren* context effectively shapes a tolerant and inclusive religious character.

Chart 2

Conceptual Framework of Wasathiyah Implementation



Note. The diagram shows that the *pesantren's* education system is built on the foundation of the Quran and Hadith, which promote the core value of *Wasathiyah* (Moderation).

This value is implemented through three main activities: formal classes, discussion groups, and daily life in the *pesantren*. The final goal is to produce graduates who are moderate, tolerant, and inclusive.

In the context of teaching fiqh, moderation is also implemented through the introduction of various schools of thought (*mazhabs*) and *ijtihad* (independent reasoning), which fosters an awareness of pluralism among the students. Habituation activities in the dormitories are also focused on the values of tolerance, deliberation (*musyawarah*), and empathy as part of a *Wasathiyah*-based Islamic character education strategy.

The Qur'an and Hadith are the primary sources in Islam, serving as a guide for individuals in need and providing teachings and exemplars for those who wish to share them with others. However, Muslims hold diverse interpretations, leading them to act based on their respective understandings. Through the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*, the Islamic religion strongly encourages its adherents to embody the principles of *tawassul* (moderation), *taqwa* (piety), justice, respect for differences, and the application of balance in practice (Shobri, 2025). Religion should not be a source of significant discord, particularly one that causes division between followers and communities.

In the study of *fiqh*, the principles of moderation can be applied by teaching the adaptability of Islamic law to suit the era and location. This strategy encourages students to recognize that *fiqh* is not rigid but can adapt to social changes without compromising the fundamental principles of the religion (Subchi et al., 2022). A typical concrete example in daily life is the variation of opinions within fiqh, such as those concerning ablution (*wudhu'*). According to the *Shafi'i* school, touching a non-*mahram* (unrelated) person of the opposite sex invalidates *wudhu'*, whereas the Hanafi school holds that it does not; *wudhu'* is only nullified if the touch is accompanied by desire. Such differences often spark debates within the community, even though both opinions are derived from the scholarly *ijtihad* of ulama based on sharia evidence. This highlights the importance of adopting a moderate approach to religious practice in implementing multicultural education in Indonesia.

Within the context of *aqidah* (creed), the values of *tawasuth* (moderation) can be incorporated by emphasizing a balanced and accepting understanding of beliefs. This strategy aims to prevent extreme, rigid attitudes that could lead to tensions between religious groups. As stated by Khasanah et al. (2023), religious moderation in education is based on moderate principles that govern every aspect of human life, including *aqidah*, worship, and social interactions (*muamalah*).

Implications of Developing a Wasathiyah-Based Islamic Religious Education Curriculum at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4 Jember

The findings from the development of the *Wasathiyah*-based curriculum indicate significant improvements in three key areas: the students' (*santri*) moderate attitudes, active participation in social life, and the overall enhancement of graduate quality. Students educated under this curriculum demonstrate critical thinking skills, an inclusive attitude towards differences, and a non-extremist understanding of religion.

These results align with Faidkholidi & Fajri's (2025) research, which states that religious moderation education effectively bolsters social cohesion and resilience against radical ideologies. Furthermore, this curriculum has strengthened public trust in the *pesantren*, positioning it as an adaptive and solution-oriented educational institution capable of responding to evolving social dynamics.

This approach equips students to become agents of social change who can engage in constructive dialogue with diverse groups, fostering a strong sense of religious nationalism (Prasetyo et al., 2025).

Table 2

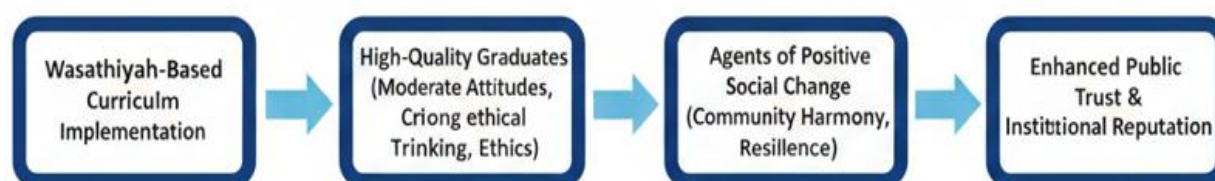
Key Outcomes and Implications

Aspect Developed	Key Outcomes Achieved	Positive Implications
Student Mindset & Character	Moderate attitudes, critical thinking, inclusivity, and non-extremist religious understanding.	Students become agents of social change, capable of engaging in dialogue with diverse groups.
Social Participation	Increased social participation and strong religious nationalism.	Enhances social cohesion and resilience against radical ideologies.
Graduate Quality	Higher quality graduates with strong ethics and knowledge.	Increases public trust and makes the boarding school more competitive.
Institutional Reputation	The boarding school is viewed as adaptive and solution-oriented.	Strengthens the role of the boarding school as a relevant and trusted institution.

Note. The table above shows that the *Wasathiyah* (moderation) curriculum approach not only improves the quality of individual students but also has broad positive implications for the institution's reputation and societal harmony.

Chart 3

From Curriculum to Positive Outcomes



Note. The implementation of the *Wasathiyah* (moderation-based) curriculum at the Islamic boarding school directly develops graduates with moderate attitudes, critical thinking skills, and strong ethics. These high-quality graduates subsequently act as agents of positive social change, fostering greater community harmony and resilience. This outcome, in turn, significantly enhances public trust and strengthens the institution's reputation as a leading and adaptive educational body.

The positive implications of implementing the *Wasathiyah*-based curriculum for Generation Z at *Pondok Pesantren Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4* are twofold. Firstly, it enables the *pesantren* to enhance its educational quality and become more competitive. Secondly, it increases community confidence by demonstrating the institution's capacity to produce graduates who are both highly competent and possess strong moral character.

The religious values taught at the *pesantren*—such as *Tawhid* (monotheism), worship (*Ibadah*), and social transactions (*Muamalah*)—form a foundation for a harmonious and ethical society. The institution emphasizes the importance of mutual respect, tolerance, and cooperation, principles that reflect the national spirit of "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*" (Unity in Diversity).

Discussion

The development of a *Wasathiyah*-based Islamic Religious Education curriculum at the Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4 Islamic Boarding School (*Pesantren*) in Jember demonstrates that integrating the values of moderation, balance, and tolerance into the *pesantren*'s curriculum successfully creates an educational environment responsive to the needs of Generation Z (Ramdani, 2022). The development process was carried out through needs analysis, goal formulation, material preparation, and evaluation based on principles of justice and inclusiveness (Sindi Pramita et al., 2025). Its implementation encompasses three main pathways: teaching in the *madrasah diniyah* (religious school), activities in the *majelis ta'lim* (religious study group), and the habitual practice of *Wasathiyah* values in daily life at the *pesantren* (Salsabila & Hosna, 2025). As a result, students have shown increased moderate attitudes, critical thinking skills, and an awareness of respecting differences (Fajri, 2022). Furthermore, this curriculum also strengthens the *pesantren*'s role as an educational institution that is adaptive to digital and social challenges.

The success of this curriculum is supported by several key factors, including the commitment of caregivers and teachers (*ustadz*) to implementing a participatory approach that involves all stakeholders (Hasibuan, 2022). Additionally, inspiration from the humanistic curriculum model of *Cikal*, championed by Najela Shihab, contributed significantly to tailoring the curriculum to the characteristics of Generation Z, who are digital natives seeking flexibility (Wajdi et al., 2024). Core *Wasathiyah* values—*tawasuth* (moderation), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *i'tidal* (balance)—were integrated contextually through tangible examples in *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and *aqidah* (creed), making them easier for students to understand and apply (Huda, 2024; Sya'bani, 2021). A supportive *pesantren* environment and a culture of deliberation (*musyawarah*) further strengthened the internalization of these values.

The implications of implementing this *Wasathiyah* curriculum are evident in the improved quality of graduates, who not only possess deep religious knowledge but also strong social skills and an inclusive mindset (Firmansyah, 2022). Students have

become more open to accepting differences in schools of thought (*mazhab*) and perspectives, enabling them to act as agents of change in their communities (Sugianto & Diva, 2023). At an institutional level, the *pesantren* has successfully built greater public trust, as it is now perceived as capable of producing graduates relevant to contemporary challenges (Qodir & Sighit, 2023; Sugianto & Diva, 2023). However, challenges remain, particularly in maintaining consistent implementation and addressing resistance from groups holding more rigid interpretations of religion.

These findings align with the research by Rajaminsah et al., (2024), which states that a moderation approach in religious education effectively prevents radicalism and enhances social cohesion. In contrast to A. Hanif et al.'s (2025) study, which emphasizes a deradicalization approach, promotes a proactive and preventive strategy through the early integration of *Wasathiyah* values. While Basnet (2024) focuses on open discussion as a deradicalization method, this research suggests that character building through a structured curriculum has a more lasting impact. Moreover, the *Wasathiyah*-based curriculum proves more adaptive to the context of Generation Z, who are navigating a digital era.

Based on these findings, key recommendations can be made. There is a need for further development of the *Wasathiyah* curriculum model, integrating digital technology to maximize engagement with Generation Z (Barrot, 2022). Regular teacher training is also essential to enhance their understanding and skills in applying moderation-based pedagogical approaches (Sims et al., 2025). At the policy level, the Ministry of Religious Affairs could encourage the adoption of similar curricula in other *pesantrens* by providing comprehensive guidelines and adequate funding. Furthermore, subsequent research is needed to assess the long-term effects of this curriculum on students' social behavior and ideological resilience.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, the development of a *Wasathiyah*-based Islamic Religious Education curriculum at *Pondok Pesantren Nurul Chotib Al-Qodiri 4 Jember* was successfully realized through a systematic and participatory process. This process involved a needs analysis, formulating contextual objectives, developing teaching materials that integrate moderation values, and selecting dialogic and contextual learning strategies. The curriculum was implemented through three primary channels: Instruction in the madrasah diniyah that integrated *Wasathiyah* principles into subjects such as *Fiqh*, *Aqidah*, and *Akhlak*; Activities within the *majelis ta'lim* (religious study assemblies); and the habitual practice of values like tolerance, deliberation (*musyawarah*), and empathy in the daily life of the dormitory.

A key finding of this study is that the curriculum effectively shapes the character of Generation Z students (*santri*), fostering a more balanced and moderate mindset, openness to differences, and the ability to think critically about religious understanding. Simultaneously, it equips them to navigate the dynamics of the digital age without becoming disconnected from their *pesantren*'s traditional roots. This research makes significant conceptual and practical contributions to the development of Islamic education curricula. Conceptually, it enriches academic discourse by demonstrating how the abstract concept of *Wasathiyah* can be operationalized into a concrete and measurable curricular framework. This is achieved through a unique collaboration between traditional *pesantren* values and modern approaches, such as

the humanistic *Cikal* model. This qualitative case study methodically provides a comprehensive blueprint for exploring curriculum development processes in religious-based educational institutions, utilizing triangulation techniques to ensure data validity. The findings also reinforce existing educational theories, which posit that moderation and contextual approaches can enhance educational outcomes, not only in the cognitive domain but also in learners' affective and social development, particularly among Generation Z.

Despite these valuable insights, the study has several limitations that provide a foundation for future research. First, its scope is limited to a single Islamic boarding school; consequently, the findings may not be generalizable to other *pesantren* with different characteristics. Similar studies across various types of *pesantren* (e.g., *salafiyah*, *khalafiyah*) are needed to gain a more holistic understanding. Second, the research focused primarily on curriculum development and implementation. In contrast, evaluating the *long-term impact of the Wasathiyah curriculum* on students' behavior and worldview after they leave the *pesantren* remains limited. Therefore, longitudinal studies are highly recommended to measure the sustainability and effectiveness of this curriculum in fostering a moderate character among students within broader society. A third limitation is the insufficient exploration of the perceptions and roles of students' parents/guardians and the broader community regarding the implementation of this *Wasathiyah*-based curriculum, which is a critical factor for the sustainability of any educational program.

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