

## MODERATION, PANDEMICS AND THE ERA OF DISRUPTION: STRENGTHENING RELIGIOUS LITERACY IN URBAN MILLENNIALS AFTER THE OUTBREAK OF COVID-19

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**Abstract:** This study explores strategies to increase moderate religious literacy among urban millennials post-Covid-19 in the era of disruption. It focuses on the development of religious literacy skills and examines their contribution to the promotion of religious moderation. Using a phenomenological qualitative approach, data was collected through participant observation and independent interviews to ensure in-depth analysis. Data were processed through reduction, display, inference and verification, with validity tested through credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. The findings highlight that strengthening religious literacy involves equipping millennials with the ability to understand and engage with religious issues through skills such as reflection, inquiry, empathy, critical analysis, synthesis and communication. This promotes an understanding of Islam as a religion of peace, tolerance and inclusiveness. Key contributions to religious moderation include: fostering critical thinking and adaptability in interpreting religious content; enhancing the ability to identify diverse beliefs and practices; and fostering a preventive attitude towards hate speech disguised as religious rhetoric.

**Keywords:** Era of Disruption, Literacy, Millennial Generation Moderation, Religious.

## Introduction

At the same time, the concept of how to internalise religious moderates after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in this era of disruption is an issue that still needs to be studied and the best formula sought. In this era, it is very urgent to strengthen the religious literacy of the moderately charged millennial generation. This is done to be able to compensate for the conservatism based on social media, because the seeds of violence and intolerance in the name of religion have the characteristics of immortality,<sup>1</sup> in history has been proven the upheaval during the caliphate of Ali ibn Abi Talib by the Khawarij to the emergence of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), including in Indonesia.<sup>2</sup>

The results of PPIM UIN Jakarta's 2017 national survey have shown that the internet has a very significant impact on the growing intolerance that exists in the millennial generation. Students who do not have access to the internet are much more able to be moderate compared to students who have access to the internet. The data shows that students who have access to the internet are greater, viz: 84.94 per cent, while those who do not have access to the internet are 15.06 per cent. The source of students' religious learning is also more often obtained from the internet, with data showing that 54.37 per cent of students learn religious knowledge from websites, social media and blogs.

Indonesia as a Muslim-majority country, where about 85% of the population are followers of Islam, has social, religious, cultural and political problems that are closely related to the problem of community moderation that began to fade and intolerance in the community. A recent form of intolerance problem happened in Medan when a young man committed a suicide bombing.<sup>3</sup> According to the results of a survey conducted by PPIM UIN Jakarta based on

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<sup>1</sup> Masdar Hilmy, "Quo-Vadis Islam Moderat Indonesia? Menimbang Kembali Modernisme Nahdlatul Ulama Dan Muhammadiyah," *Miqot: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 36, no. 2 (2012): 262–81, <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v36i2.127>.

<sup>2</sup> Kasinyo Harto and Tastin Tastin, "Pengembangan Pembelajaran PAI Berwawasan Islam Wasatiah: Upaya Membangun Sikap Moderasi Beragama Peserta Didik," *At-Ta'lim: Media Informasi Pendidikan Islam* 18, no. 1 (2019): 89, <https://doi.org/10.29300/attalim.v18i1.1280>.

<sup>3</sup> Mu Aziz et al., "Comparison between Conventional Method and Modern Technology in Al- Qur'an Memorization," *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering (IJRTE)* 18, no. 1 (2019): 289–94.

data from 2,237 Muslim educators from kindergarten to high school, almost half (43.5%) believe that intolerance (not tolerance) towards followers of religions other than Islam.<sup>4</sup> Based on the facts on the ground, 27.59% of the educators want the realisation of an Islamic state.<sup>5</sup> In addition, and even more surprisingly, according to PPIM UIN Jakarta, there is a risk of exposure to the teachings of intolerance and radicalism at the level of children's education, and this is no exception for universities.

After the National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT) conveyed its findings in 2018 that there were indications of the emergence of radicalism in universities, claims of universities as places to spread radical teachings surfaced. The community was also shocked by the arrest of three graduates of the University of Riau (UNRI) by Densus 88, who were suspected of assembling bombs to blow up certain locations. These two events show that radicalism has entered the university, and this needs to be addressed by all parties.

Following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and this era of disruption, changes to the online learning system are obviously required, adding to the growing number of problems facing this country, but the dangers and threats of radicalism, terrorism and intolerance must continue to be guarded against. In addition, based on the results of a survey conducted by the Alvira Research Centre in August 2019, it was shown that the possibility of young people being exposed to the teachings of radicalism and intolerance has been strengthened. This is due to the religious teachings they receive from social media. Moreover, in the context of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the process of learning online or through online systems is necessary. Therefore, the potential of young people who have such a great religious spirit must certainly be balanced with literacy and moderate religious teachings.

The focus of this study is the strengthening of moderates in urban millennials after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the object of the study targets students of Islamic State Universities by offering improved religious literacy skills. The urgency or importance of this study is based on the urgent need for learning formulations

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<sup>4</sup> Ahmad Khoiri, "Moderasi Islam Dan Akulturasi Budaya; Revitalisasi Kemajuan Peradaban Islam Nusantara," *Islamadina: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 20, no. 2 (2019): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.30595/islamadina.v0i0.4372>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

that not only focus on the transfer of knowledge, but must also be able to strengthen moderates in millennials after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The site of this study is the Kediri State Islamic Institute in the Kediri urban area. The results of this study are expected to reduce the increase in acts of intolerance in the name of religion, which has been the focus of various parties both locally and internationally.

In order to carry out the study properly, the researchers use qualitative research approaches while the type of research is phenomenological. Data is collected through observation, interviews and documentation. In order for the data obtained to be credible, researchers use triangulation techniques to unify data from different sources, namely text and context. The data analysis model used is to reduce data, present data and verify data as the analysis model of Miles and Huberman.

The phenomenon of intolerance that has mushroomed makes the religious sentiment that exists in Indonesia sharper. As a result, Indonesia as a nation is being segregated based on their respective religions and beliefs. The result is the weak sense of family and harmony of the Indonesian nation. It is even ironic that some Muslims are becoming actors in the conflict. This fact should not be ignored because it is related to the future of nationality and also the integrity of the Indonesian state.

The research setting for this study was the city of Kediri, and more specifically the Kediri State Islamic Institute. The reason for choosing the city of Kediri as the research site is that the city of Kediri identifies itself as one of the santri cities. This argument is reinforced by the fact that the city of Kediri is a warehouse for kiai with more than 220 Islamic boarding schools. The area of the city of Kediri has religious and ethnic diversity, which has a tendency to eliminate the emergence of primordial frictions. In addition, the city of Kediri with its level of plurality shows a miniature in social, cultural, economic and religious life. This fact makes the city of Kediri a very diverse place to present data. The approach used in this study is a phenomenological qualitative approach.<sup>6</sup> The data was collected using the method of participant observation and independent interview, so that this research was deep, intensive and detailed about

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<sup>6</sup> Samsu, *Metode Penelitian: Teori Dan Aplikasi Penelitian Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, Mixed Methods, Serta Research & Development* (Jambi: Pusaka Jambi, 2017).

the phenomena that occurred.<sup>7</sup> The data is collected in a qualitative descriptive form. The data is presented in the form of verbal words or phrases, not in the form of numbers. Data is analysed by reducing, presenting, drawing conclusions and checking data.<sup>8</sup> Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability were used to test the validity of the data.<sup>9</sup>

### **The Concept of Islamic Moderation**

In this study, the term moderation (*wasathiyah*) is a word of moderation derived from the Arabic name *wasath*.<sup>10</sup> The word *wasath* has a middle meaning, the word *wasath* is used to indicate an attitude that is in the middle between *ghulumm* (excessive) and *qasr* (less). The notion of moderation not only occupies a position in the middle between radical and liberal, but more than that, as a way of thinking that has an impact on the application of ethical action.<sup>11</sup>

In Indonesian, the word *wasath* is translated as the word moderate. A moderate action is an action that is based on rational thinking. Quoting John M. Echol, the word rational has a meaning.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, moderate action is an action that is based on sound reason, full of reasonable considerations, and done with the care that leads to what is done can bring happiness to oneself and others. Looking at different understandings of the theoretical concepts of moderation, the author takes the concept of Muslim academic thought by looking at the novelty (newness) and coherence of the theme of moderation according to the research conducted.

The concept of moderation according to Khaled Abou El Fadl, this keyword lies in the existence of awareness for a Muslim about doctrinal beliefs and the reality of where and when a person lives.

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<sup>7</sup> Nur Hikmatul Auliya et al., *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif & Kuantitatif* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Ilmu Group, 2020).

<sup>8</sup> Matthew B and A Michael Huberman Miles, *An Expanded Sourcebook: Qualitative Data Analysis* (London: Sage Publication, 1994).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Maimun dan Mohammad Kosim, *Moderasi Islam Di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2019).

<sup>11</sup> Zaenal Arifin, "Nilai Moderasi Islam Dalam Proses Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Sekolah Menengah Pertama Islam Al-Azhar Kota Kediri," in *Proceedings Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars (AnCoMS)* (Kopertais Wilayah IV Surabaya, 2019), 23–24, <https://doi.org/10.36835/ancoms.v3i1.270>.

<sup>12</sup> John M. Echols dan Hassan Shadily, *Kamus Inggris Indonesia: An English-Indonesian Dictionary* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka, 2009) Cet. 29, 384.

One appreciates the abuses that were produced in the past, but one is also aware that one is living in the present. Khaled El Fadl also explicitly interprets moderation as opposed to puritanism. Moderate Muslims do not position Islam as a frozen monument, but as an active and dynamic perspective of faith. Moderate Muslims believe in Islam as a true faith, believe and practice the pillars of Islam, and accept Islamic traditions while modifying certain aspects.<sup>13</sup>

According to Mukhlis Lubis and Afrizal Nur, the religious practice of a moderate Muslim is characterised as follows:<sup>14</sup> *Tawassuth*, which is to take the middle path by understanding and practicing religion in no exaggeration (*ifrath*) and also not reducing it (*tafrith*); *Tawazun*, which is to understand and practice religion in balance in every aspect of worldly and *ukhrawi* life, has a firm principle so that it can sort between *inhiraf* / deviation and *ikhtilaf* / difference; *I'tidal* is firm and straight by putting something in its place and fulfilling rights and duties proportionately; *Tasamuh* is tolerance for a difference in the realm of *ikhtilaf*, does not mean justifying or acknowledging unequal beliefs. *Tasamuh* can be interpreted as a tolerant attitude towards differences in religious matters, especially in the area of *kebilafiyah*, and also in cultural and social matters. As an example of the application of the teachings of *Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar*, Afandi explained that the demonstration of this teaching is highly upholds the value of tolerance. Because to do it, you have to do it in a good way. *Musawah* is egalitarian, does not discriminate against differences, origins, traditions and beliefs; *Shura*, which is deliberation, is done to complete a settlement by upholding the principle of good; *Ishlah*, which is reform to accommodate progress based on *maslahah 'ammah* / the common good, as the principle of "*al muhafadzah 'ala al qadimi al shalih wa al akhdzu bi al jadidi al ashlah*" preserves traditions that are still relevant and adopts new things that are more relevant; *Aulawiyah* is *Aulawiyah* which is something whose priority takes precedence, something more important to be implemented first than something of lesser importance; *Tathawur wa Ibtikar* is dynamic and innovative means open to the progress of the times and creates something new for the progress of the people; *Tahadbadhur* which is civilised in

<sup>13</sup> Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Selamatkan Islam dari Muslim Puritan* (Jakarta: Serambi, 2006), 117-122.

<sup>14</sup> Afrizal Nur dan Mukhlis Lubis, "Konsep Wasathiyah Dalam Al-Quran; (Studi Komparatif Antara Tafsir Al-Tahrîr Wa At-Tanwîr Dan Aisar At-Tafâsîr)," *Jurnal An-Nur* 4, no. 2 (2015): 205–25.

human life as a form of *khairu ummah* character begins and has identity and integrity.<sup>15</sup>

According to Hilmy, moderation in the context of Indonesian Islam has several characteristics, namely: spreading Islam with a non-violent ideology; adopting modern ways of life, including democracy, human rights, and science and technology; using a rational way of thinking; understanding Islam with a contextual approach; using *ijtihad* as a form of intellectual work that produces legal opinions when they are not explicitly found in the Qur'an or hadith. In a broader sense, these characteristics become traits, namely harmony, cooperation between religious groups and tolerance.<sup>16</sup>

From the above explanation of the word, *wasathiyah* has a terminology that is contextual and dynamic. As stated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, *wasathiyah* is an integrated and comprehensive approach.<sup>17</sup> This concept directs Muslims to become Muslims who can practice Islam in a balanced and comprehensive way in every aspect of life, with the hope that the quality of human life will be improved in terms of knowledge, politics, economy, finance, education, defence, nationality, unity and so on. In relation to the operationalisation of *Wasathiyah*, Islam can be divided into three levels of meaning, namely: theological level, ideological level, socio-political level.<sup>18</sup> *Wasathiyah* Islam at the theological level refers to the interpretation of the sacred texts in the Qur'an and Hadith. Wasathiyah Islamic doctrine is seen as a religious doctrine that is comprehensively interpreted and needs to be understood and applied.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Mohamad Fahri and Ahmad Zainuri, "Moderasi Beragama Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Intizar* 25, no. 2 (2019): 95–100, <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.19109/intizar.v25i2.5640>.

<sup>16</sup> Masdar Hilmy, "Whither Indonesia's Islamic Moderatism? A Reexamination on the Moderate Vision of Muhammadiyah and NU," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 7, no. 1 (2013): 20–21, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2013.7.1.24-48>.

<sup>17</sup> Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi Beragama Kemenag RI* (Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, 2019).

<sup>18</sup> Arhanuddin Salim, "Eksistensi Moderasi Islam Dalam Kurikulum Pembelajaran PAI Di SMA," *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2018): 181–94, <https://doi.org/10.24042/atjpi.v9i2.3622>.

<sup>19</sup> Sumarto dan Emmi Kholilah Harahap, "Mengembangkan Moderasi Pendidikan Islam Melalui Peran Pengelolaan Pondok Pesantren," *Ri'ayah: Jurnal Sosial Dqan Keagamaan* 4, no. 1 (2019): 21–30.

## **Covid-19 Pandemic and The Era of Disruption**

In health terms, a pandemic is a disease outbreak that affects many people and occurs in different countries. While the term Covid-19 is also known as coronavirus took place in 2019. According to the World Health Organization. Because Covid-19 is endemic in all corners of the world, it is referred to as a pandemic. In addition to being declared a global pandemic, it has also been declared an international emergency, meaning that all clinics and hospitals must prepare to treat patients affected by the disease.<sup>20</sup>

The spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia is no exception. As a result, the impact on every aspect of life is no exception, including the education sector. To prevent the spread of Covid-19, all educational institutions, including universities, will be closed from March 2020. As the Ministry of Education has issued SE No. 3 Th. 2020 on "Prevention of Covid-19 in the Education Unit", for that learning is carried out by using online networks. This condition makes the technology-based learning system of higher intensity. By looking at the development of the spread of the virus, of course, the use of digital systems in learning activities experienced a revolution that was so fast, whereas previously the learning system with digital was only an option now turned into the main system in learning.

Discussing the era of disruption is closely related to the Industrial Revolution 4.0, which is a change that occurs in the field of industry caused by the rapid development of technology, including virtual reality, robotics, the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, and so on. So it can be interpreted that disruption is a human lifestyle that undergoes changes in problem solving and also replaces the old system with a system that has no precedent. The Covid-19 outbreak has proven to be the theory of disruption as it is happening in education, namely the digitalisation of learning by beating the learning system online. The learning system is certainly not carefully planned, as it is known that the system is a little/minimal transfer of knowledge and is more likely to give a burden to students or students with various tasks. Apart from the inefficiency of the learning system, of course, this is a study material for the government to regulate and

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<sup>20</sup> Andik Matulesy Diah Setia Utami, Budi Anna Keliat, Thika Marlina, *Pedoman Dukungan Kesehatan Jiwa Dan Psikososial Pada Pandemi Covid-19* (Jakarta: Direktorat Pencegahan Dan Pengendalian Masalah Kesehatan Jiwa Dan Napza, Direktorat Jenderal Pencegahan Dan Pengendalian Penyakit, Kementerian Kesehatan RI, 2020).

use digital technology in the world of education to provide maximum benefits.<sup>21</sup>

### **Religious Literacy**

According to Mkandawire in Yenuri, the meaning of literacy can be defined in a narrow and a broad sense. Literacy is the ability to read and write. While according to the broad meaning, literacy is competence, skills and knowledge in certain fields. According to this understanding, it refers to a specific field in this case in the field of religious literacy. Religious literacy is a very important aspect of promoting a broad understanding of religion. A person's level of religious literacy can be measured by the extent to which religious literacy is accessed, used, resourced and updated. Religious literacy can be seen conceptually from the ability of religious people to use and apply religion as the basis of their lives, especially in relation to the concept of religious narratives, doctrines, characters, metaphors, symbols and religious practices in their lives.<sup>22</sup>

*The American Academy of Religion* defines religious literacy more broadly as the ability to analyse and distinguish fundamental intersections of religion and social, political and cultural life from a variety of viewpoints. *The All-Party Parliamentary Group* defines religious literacy as having 4 important parts. First, it is a basic level of knowledge about particular religious beliefs, traditions and practices. Second, an awareness of the beliefs, interpretations of texts and traditions that can be applied by individuals in their daily lives. Third, critical awareness to recognise, analyse and criticise religious stereotypes. And fourth, the ability to introduce plurality and respect for others or other religious groups in order to establish good and effective communication about religion.<sup>23</sup>

Improving literacy is a lifelong learning process, and literacy activities are an ability to understand different forms of literacy, not just reading or writing. The ability to be literate is realised in the form of printed interactions in paper and digital, from which one can

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<sup>21</sup> Yulita Pujilestari, "Dampak Positif Pembelajaran Online dalam Sistem Pendidikan Indonesia Pasca Pandemi Covid-19," *Adalah: Buletin Hukum Dan Keadilan* 4, no. 1 (2020): 49–56, <https://doi.org/10.15408/adalah.v4i1.15394>.

<sup>22</sup> Ali Ahmad Yenuri, "Penguatan Literasi Keagamaan Islam Moderat Bagi Peserta Didik," *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Islamic Education* 04, no. 1 (2020): 140–53, <http://dx.doi.org/10.33754/jalie.v4i01.239>.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

directly: understand and communicate a meaning; make connections in the text in person; critically analyse and be able to solve certain problems; create a variety of texts; can feel pleasure in reading or watching activities; participate in the socio-cultural community environment.

In the context of Islamic religious education in higher education, a lecturer has a very important role to play in motivating, encouraging and stimulating students to have a culture of literacy in everyday life as a form of lifelong learning. Lecturers build literacy movements of students who intend to increase their knowledge through different literacies, examples of reading and writing scientific works, literacy through digital, literacy through visual, and so on. Lectures using different models of literacy can broaden the understanding of learning concepts. Education should be interpreted and focused on self-directed learning with emphasis on learning how to learn, learning in a variety of contexts, learning in a non-linear way, both formally and informally. Learning with a variety of concepts lends itself well to learning through multimodal, non-linear and hypertextual texts produced by digital electronics. Students also use the concept of literacy to be able to learn by themselves to gain knowledge from different aspects of life. Guidelines used to strengthen moderate Islamic religious literacy can use strategies to develop students' literacy skills with the following components: reflection, inquiry, empathy, interpretation, analysis and evaluation, argumentation, synthesis and communication.<sup>24</sup>

### **Millennial Generation**

In the literature, the term millennial generation is a noun that refers to a group born between 1980 and 2000. Based on the definition of Amidjaya and Absher, Millennials are a group born between 1982 and 2002.<sup>25</sup> In 2020, the millennial generation is entering its peak or golden period in personal life as well as in people's lives. Things that need to be considered when looking at or understanding the millennial generation in relation to the diversity of Islam are as follows: firstly, the religious views shared by the

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Reza Mardiana, "Daya Tarik Dakwah Digital Sebagai Media" 10, no. 2 (2020): 148–58, <https://doi.org/10.35905/komunida.v7i2.http>.

millennial generation and secondly, the ideology held and also political participation.

The influence of radicalism and intolerance today through the rapid spread of information via the internet and social media has a worrying impact on millennials. The information that is received today without filtering or moderation becomes very dangerous and alarming, and it is evident that radicalism and anti-Pancasila movements have begun to emerge and appear among millennial students.

Discussions about this can be summarised. Firstly, the millennial generation can be an agent of change in Islamic da'wah that is friendly and tolerant, appreciates differences and brings grace to all nature, if the process of religious literacy is properly implemented by the millennial generation.<sup>26</sup> Secondly, the Islamic generation must adhere to the principle of fairness and moderation in various matters, promote harmony in life, tolerance, non-discrimination, humane acts, and offer unity based on the Qur'an.

### **Religious Literacy of the Urban Millennial Generation after the Spread of Covid-19**

Religious literacy skills of reflection, inquiry, empathy, analysis and evaluation, reasoning, synthesis and communication can lead the millennial generation of Islamic religious education students at IAIN Kediri to a broader and more complex view of Islamic religious learning. In addition, strengthening religious literacy invites students to embrace technological change in this era of disruption and the post-covid-19 condition in a critical, philosophical and selective manner.

### **Reflection Components of Religious Literacy Activities for the Millennial Generation**

Activities carried out by the millennial generation for Islamic Religious Education students at IAIN Kediri to improve their reflective skills to strengthen religious literacy by reflecting on religious issues by writing about their experiences about things they have experienced related to their religion. Through this reflection, students will understand that a friendly, peaceful, kind, tolerant,

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<sup>26</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *Pendidikan Islam: Tradisi dan Modernisasi di Tengah Tantangan Milenium III* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2012), 8.

flexible and inclusive face is the face of Islam within the framework of moderation. We can find the answer to the concerns of rampant conflict through Islam.

Aspects of literacy that students learn to develop religious literacy skills by using reflection through inference in reading, namely reading through a thought process in the form of drawing conclusions based on statements in the discourse and finding out based on evidence. Conclusions are drawn automatically to achieve deeper understanding. In this way, student activities to reflect on current religious issues will strengthen students' religious literacy to broaden their perspectives and open their minds to the urgency of adopting an Islamic attitude of moderation. As Zakiyuddin Baidhaway said, in the process of learning, students will think openly, namely how to respect the right to life, the right to education, the right to expression, the right to embrace religion and not simply blame others. As a result of encountering other worlds, religions and different cultures, students will think more maturely and have perspectives and ways of understanding reality in different ways.<sup>27</sup>

### **The Inquiry Component of Religious Literacy Activities for the Millennial Generation**

The activities carried out by the millennial generation of Islamic Religious Education students at IAIN Kediri in honing inquiry skills to strengthen religious literacy are students conducting investigations or inquiries by collecting evidence about religion from various sources and organising evidence from these sources. The problem-based learning method is used to enable students to analyse religious issues, especially contemporary issues, in depth. The different views found do not necessarily make the students agree with the whole, the tendency of the students still relatively refers to the original view which is considered to be established. However, the purpose of using this method is to make students aware that every difference of opinion in religion has a strong basis. Students are invited to explore the foundations of other people's thinking, so that the internalisation of moderation in the form of understanding other people's points of view gradually becomes familiar to students.

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<sup>27</sup> Zakiyuddin Baidhaway, *Pendidikan Agama Berwawasan Multikultural* (Jakarta: Earlangga, 2005), 96.

Aspects of literacy that students learn to develop through this investigation are: developing research skills, evaluating the usefulness or reliability of sources, finding information (in books and on the internet), synthesising information from different sources, and grouping ideas into paragraphs introduced by topic sentences. As the Ministry of National Education, the implementation of learning emphasises learning through scientific inquiry to develop the ability to think, work and communicate scientifically as an aspect of life skills.<sup>28</sup> According to Ertikanto, inquiry skills are the ability to formulate problems, formulate hypotheses, plan investigations, carry out investigations, and make conclusions for explanations.<sup>29</sup> Inquiry skills are the ability to obtain information through observation or experimentation in order to solve a problem using critical and logical thinking skills, involving the stages of asking questions, formulating hypotheses, designing experiments, collecting data, interpreting data and drawing conclusions. Thus, the development of inquiry skills is an alternative learning model that can activate students to support their life skills.

### **The Empathy Component of Religious Literacy Activities for the Millennial Generation**

The Millennial Generation's activity for Islamic Religious Education students at IAIN Kediri to improve empathy skills to strengthen religious literacy is to put themselves in the shoes of others. Students are given the opportunity to practise seeing other people's points of view and imagining what other people are thinking. Role-playing, active reading and discussion of books or information in circulation about current phenomena. Pupils are able to listen well to their friends' conversations or opinions in the learning process, which is also an activity that pupils undertake to improve their literacy skills with empathy.

Aspects of literacy that students learn to develop literacy with empathy are role-playing and using active reading strategies, and listening well and appropriately are also part of the skills to develop

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<sup>28</sup> Menteri Pendidikan Nasional, *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional Nomor 22 Tahun 2006 Tentang Standar Isi* (Jakarta: Menteri Pendidikan Nasional, 2006).

<sup>29</sup> Ismu Ertikanto, Chandra Viyanti, Wahyudi, "Kefektifan Pengetahuan Inkuiri Guru Sekolah Dasar Kota Bandar Lampung Dalam Pembelajaran Sains," in *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Sains* (Surakarta: Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Sains, 2015), 106–16.

empathy. According to Golleman, there are three characteristics of empathic skills that must be possessed as part of emotional intelligence, including: a. Listening well to other people's conversations; that is, an individual must be able to pay attention and be a good listener to all the problems that other people express to them. b. Accepting the other person's point of view. Accepting the other person's point of view; i.e. the individual is able to see problems from the other person's point of view, leading to tolerance and the ability to accept all differences. c. Being sensitive to other people's feelings; i.e. the individual is able to read other people's feelings from verbal and non-verbal cues, such as tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures and other people's body language.<sup>30</sup>

### **Interpretation Components of Religious Literacy Activities of the Millennial Generation**

The activities carried out by the Millennial Generation for Islamic Religious Education students at IAIN Kediri to improve interpreting skills to strengthen religious literacy are that students suggest and appreciate different meanings for words, stories, symbols and actions in religion and make conclusions and deductions. Interpretation can be part of an interpretation, the representation of information in the form of oral, written, pictorial or various other forms of language. Complex meanings can arise when the interpreter consciously or unconsciously relates an object by placing it within a wider framework of experience and knowledge. Strengthening students' religious literacy through interpretation has an important value in strengthening religious moderation, as religious expressions are sometimes played out radically by adherents. Religion is understood literally or textually. As a result, religion is expressed according to the text as it is, without holistic interpretation or interpretation. In the extreme, radical understanding of religion, when brought into the political space, it will certainly ignore inclusive, egalitarian and democratic values.

The aspect of literacy that students learn to develop through this interpretation is to explore ways of engaging with the text in a variety of ways (visualising, relating to one's own experience, annotating, etc.) and to use inferential and deductive skills. As the

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<sup>30</sup> Nasril dan Ulfatmi, "Melacak Konsep Dasar Kecerdasan Emosional," *Al-Irnyad: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling Islam* 1, no. 1 (2018): 16–25.

Ministry of the Interior makes the strengthening of religious moderation as one of the priority programmes, the way of viewing, attitude and practice of religion in common life by expressing the essence of religious teachings that protect human dignity and build benefits based on the principle of fairness, balance and adherence to the Constitution as a national agreement.<sup>31</sup> In this case, religious moderation becomes important, believers must interpret the sacred text. Each text is guaranteed to have a context that is not necessarily understood on the basis of the literal text. The excavation of sacred texts with holistic interpretations will give birth to universal meaning according to context.<sup>32</sup>

### **Analysis and Evaluation Component of Millennial Religious Literacy Activities**

Activities carried out by millennials in students of Islamic Religious Education IAIN Kediri to hone analytical and evaluative skills to strengthen religious literacy are students who know and know all the books that have been recommended by lecturers. In order to know and be familiar with all the books recommended by the lecturers, students are encouraged to engage their thoughts and emotions in the process of reading through productive activities both orally and in writing. The ability to know different types of books is one of the skills that should be based on the students' ability to think at a high level. Therefore, knowing the book that is taught is not only done so that students want to read, but a process that involves all mental activities and thinking skills of students in understanding, mythic and producing a written discourse based on the reader's point of view.

Aspects of literacy developed from students' activities of analysis and evaluation of the books to which the lecture refers are recognising bias and objectivity, distinguishing facts from hypotheses, theories or opinions, assessing the reliability and validity of information, justifying points of choice and explaining views. According to Silberman, the value of facilitation can be seen in the process of students selecting possible solutions to problems. The

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<sup>31</sup> Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi Beragama Kemenag RI*.

<sup>32</sup> Muhammad Aziz Hakim, *Moderasi Islam: Deradikalisasi, Deideologisasi Dan Kontribusi Untuk NKRI* (Tulungagung: IAIN Tulungagung Press, 2017).

range of views allows students to consider problems more carefully before deciding on an attitude to a problem.<sup>33</sup>

### **Reasoning Component of Millennials' Religious Literacy Activities**

Activities carried out by millennials in students of Islamic Religious Education IAIN Kediri in honing reasoning skills to strengthen religious literacy is a repetitive process that students do to revise their ideas, repeat the stages of writing so that they can devote ideas and ideas in the form of writing that follows the ideas or ideas developed. In this way, reasoning skills can be honed, which include understanding, reasoning logically, understanding negative examples, deductive reasoning, systematic reasoning, consistent reasoning, drawing conclusions, determining methods, making excuses, determining strategies, supporting ideas with strong reasons and evidence, making logical arguments, recognising paradoxes and understanding their place in religious arguments, concluding and deciding.

The literacy aspect that students learn to develop through this reasoning is to use a link that connects different ideas in the text, to use reading strategies to support deduction, and to use appropriate text. According to Abidin, writing literacy is a reasoning skill as a means to understand certain texts or scientific concepts and to sharpen the ability to critique certain information or concepts that are learned.<sup>34</sup> As we enter the era of globalisation and the advancement of information technology and the era of disruption, reason plays an important role in life, be it personal life or group life, including religious life under the auspices of a Pancasila state. For this reason, it is very important for students to sharpen their reasoning skills so that they do not easily fall or get stuck in radical ideas. Moderation includes justice, so that a person does not get caught up in the view and way of life of the extremes. When looking at religious moderation, students need to understand religious moderation through reasoning without getting caught up in extremism.

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<sup>33</sup> Budiyono, "Model Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama Berbasis Kearifan Lokal Di IAIN Pontianak," *Jurnal Pendidikan: Riset Dan Konseptual* 4, no. 3 (2020): 405–13.

<sup>34</sup> Najibul Khoir, "Literasi Pendidikan Agama Islam Siswa SMA Khadijah Surabaya Pada Era Revolusi Industri 4.0" (Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2019).

### **Synthesis Component of Millennial Religious Literacy Activities**

The activities carried out by millennials as students of Islamic Religious Education IAIN Kediri in honing synthesis skills to strengthen religious literacy is students identify the values and ideas shared by people from different religious communities, connecting distinctive ideas to make an understanding, a coherent picture of the world's religions or religions other than those embraced by students, then draw conclusions. The thinking skills needed to make a positive contribution to modern life. One is what he calls the synthesising mind: the ability to produce a synthesis - a meaningful integration - of different kinds of information.

The aspect of religious literacy that students develop through this synthesis is the integration of information about religion from different sources into coherent forms and connections used to link ideas. Bloom's Hierarchy of Cognitive Abilities is based on learning outcome behaviours related to internal capacities and operational verbs, one of which is synthesis, which is to unify or combine elements of information into related units of information that have a clearer meaning.<sup>35</sup> Students who are trained to find, sort and use sources of information to do their work Information literate students will be critical if they find false information. Information literate students will find it difficult to be pitted against sheep because of particular interests.

### **Communication Component of Religious Literacy Activities For Millennials**

Activities carried out by millennials as students of Islamic Religious Education IAIN Kediri in honing communication skills to strengthen religious literacy are students expressing ideas, information, thoughts, feelings, conclusions, about religious understanding, using technical terms that can be recognised, listening to others or other students. Good communication skills are needed by a student in the process of learning activities. Communication is the process of conveying ideas from one person to another.

Aspects of religious literacy developed by students through this communication are the use of vocabulary or diction related to key concepts related to Islamic moderation, listening for a specific

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<sup>35</sup> Kemendikbud, *Buku Kurikulum Pendidikan Tinggi* (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi, 2014).

purpose and being able to remember or summarise important points, organising information clearly and accurately, depending on the purpose, either orally, in writing, or in visual or diagrammatic form. Discussions, questions and answers and group work are ways of developing communication skills. Through discussion, question and answer and group work, students' thinking, critical, creative and argumentative skills can be honed. In addition, according to Zakiah Darajdat, the training of communication by promoting cooperation between students through group work can promote and maintain a sense of unity and cohesion in a group, train student leadership, develop a sense of friendship loyalty and a please-help attitude, provide opportunities for students to actualise themselves in planning something for the common good, direct the student's personal growth and development in life society.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, the working method of this group is part of the strategy of teaching religious moderation to students so that they are flexible and not exclusive in their religion.

### **Contribution of Diversity Literacy to Improving Religious Moderation among Urban Millennials after the Outbreak of Covid-19**

Strengthening students' religious literacy through the skills of reflection, inquiry, empathy, analysis and evaluation, reasoning, synthesis and communication can develop rational thinking skills, self-awareness and an awareness of the importance of millennial students IAIN Kediri understand themselves as God beings and are aware of the potential of the self (physical and psychological). According to Costa and Kallick, religious literacy represents learning that has a value of relevance with high accuracy to the reality of life today.<sup>37</sup> Learning outcomes have a strong link with the reality that students face. A set of academic processes that provide the same vision of learning for all students. With this process, the habit of

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<sup>36</sup> Samsul AR, "Peran Guru Agama Dalam Menanamkan Moderasi Beragama," *Jurnal Al-Irfan* 3, no. 1 (2020): 37–51.

<sup>37</sup> Angga Teguh Prastyo dan Ulfatul Aini, "Strategi Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Bagi Generasi Millennial Di Era Revolusi Industri 4 . 0 ( Studi Multisitus Di SMA Surya Buana Kota Malang Dan SMA Islam Nusantara Kota Malang )," in *Proceeding of International Conference on Islamic Education: Challenges in Technology and Literacy* (Malang: Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, 2019), 434–44.

thinking that makes sense can be well embedded. This is important in order to develop effective habits of mind in all learning.

The contribution of religious literacy strategies in improving religious moderation for the millennial generation of IAIN Kediri through the skills of reflection, inquiry, empathy, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, synthesis and communication, namely as follows: First, to form a mental attitude and critical in understanding various religious contents. So that this mentality forms IAIN students not to be taklid (anti-totalistic) from literacy such as online media and other media. Any religious information is examined critically and rationally, and there is room for students to think on the basis of a religious worldview. Secondly, to be able to identify differences in beliefs and to practice the teachings of Islam in society. This is crucial for raising the level of thinking of students, strategies like this have important content that meets various educational goals that empower students. This is because the characteristics of the learning that is carried out emphasise interactive, student-teacher partnership and democratic dialogue as a core process in learning. Thus, students feel that they can have a high level of learning in the study of religion. Third, to have a preventive spirit of hate speech wrapped in religious content.<sup>38</sup> This supports Majid and Andayani's view that life skills play an important role in optimising students' ability to study, adapt and update Islamic religious education in campus and community settings.<sup>39</sup>

## Conclusion

However, following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and this era of disruption, the dangers and threats of radicalism, terrorism and intolerance need to be constantly monitored. For this reason, strengthening the religious literacy of the millennial generation of IAIN Kediri is very important to equip students with knowledge and skills to understand and discuss religion and the issues around them confidently, accurately and critically. In order to strengthen

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<sup>38</sup> Yedi Purwanto et al., "Internalizing Moderation Value Through Islamic Religious In Public Higher Education," *Edukasi: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan* 17, no. 2 (2019): 110–24.

<sup>39</sup> Lilik Nur Kholida, "Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Penguatan Karakter Religius Dalam Menghadapi Era Revolusi Industri," in *Prosiding: Seminar Agama Islam 2019* (Malang: Lembaga Pengembangan Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Universitas Negeri Malang, 2019), 6–138.

moderate Islamic religious literacy, there are several strategies that can be used to develop religious literacy skills for the millennial generation of IAIN Kediri students, namely reflection, inquiry, empathy, analysis and evaluation, reasoning, synthesis and communication. Through this strategy, students will understand that a friendly, peaceful, kind, tolerant, flexible and inclusive face is the face of Islam within the framework of moderation.

While the contribution of religious literacy strategies in increasing religious moderation. First, the formation of mental adjustment and critical in understanding various religious content. Second, being able to identify various differences in beliefs, and the practice of Islamic teachings in society. Third, to have a spirit of prevention of hate speech wrapped in religious content. Thus, religious literacy enables students to be willing and able to live with religious and cultural diversity and with conflicting beliefs and practices. It can promote social cohesion by providing a safe space where different views can be shared, listened to and engaged with without pressure to conform to the overall perspective. In this way, it is not easy for students to justify themselves without first considering different readings from different perspectives.

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