



## POSITIONING THE MEANING OF WASAṬIYYAH IN RELIGIOUS MODERATION

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### Abstract

This study discusses the concept of wasatiyyah concerning religious moderation campaigned by the Indonesian government. This study is critical because several studies state that the two have similar meanings. Still, each has distinct identities and characteristics that need to be discussed academically as further consideration of the concepts presented. Wasatiyyah is a middle way of thinking and acting in Islam, not merely referring to a standing position between the two, but is associated with the best and foremost balance. This study uses discourse analysis to understand the conceptual definition of both wasatiyyah and moderation. This study concludes that the meaning of Wassatiyah contains several different elements, whereas Wasatiyyah is mainly built on theological constructions based on the Al-Qur'an. Wasatiyyah, on the other hand, is an offer made from an Islamic point of view to engage in efforts to deradicalize religion with several characteristics and traits found in the Qur'an and formulated by Islamic scholars.

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## A. INTRODUCTION

After the September 9, 2001 terror incident, terrorism, radicalism, and extremism became widely discussed worldwide. Because the perpetrators of this terror act were part of the al-Qaeda network, religion -especially Islam- was accused of being the leading cause of the violence. (Farhadi, 2022; Maulana, 2018; Powell, 2018) In response to this, on December 8, 2017, the United Nations declared the need for religious moderation, and this will later be promoted at the local, regional, and international levels (Resolutions Promoting Moderation, Establishing International Day of Living Together in Peace Adopted by General Assembly | UN Press, 2017) Religious moderation is believed to encourage tolerance towards differences in culture, belief, and religion. With offers: Islam can develop a typology of ideological orientation in various regions of the Muslim world, identify the main divisions and conflicts between sectarian lines, examine the factors that trigger religious extremism and violence, and obtain political and military strategies and options to change views on the Islamic world (Rabasa, 2004; Jayadi, 2023). Therefore, many Muslim-majority countries have welcomed this declaration, including Malaysia and Indonesia in the Southeast Asian region. (Rizal, 2021; Susilo & Dalimunthe, 2019)

Related to several recent developments regarding efforts to socialize and moderate religious moderation movements, especially in Islamic countries, we can find some research literature related to the topic of *Wasatiyyah* and Moderation; However, usually, these associations are often limited to justifications and not based on precise formulations; This is mainly because, in practice, the two terminologies allegedly share a harmonized conceptual dimension, as referred to Bakir and Othman's analysis (2019) (Bakir & Othman, 2017) Asikin and Amrullah (2021) (Asikin & Amrullah, 2021) Alim and Munib (2021), (Alim & Munib, 2021) Sya'bani (2021(Sya'bani, 2019)) and Kear (2021). (Kear, 2022) These studies affirm that moderation and *wasatiyyah* are the same and harmonious concepts; in other words, the meaning of moderation is not different from *wasatiyyah* itself. In another study, it was found that the idea of moderation was widely discussed in Indonesia in its various aspects, not only in the context of the rejection of religious radicalism (Faiqah & Pransiska, 2018) but also as part of the Islamic education curriculum (Futaqi, 2018).

Some previous studies have given different meanings to moderation, such as Esposito (2010) defines moderation or moderation as "moderate" personnel; it refers to someone who supports secular liberalism, while conservative or traditionalist is considered a fundamentalist who is theologically and closed-minded as well as extreme. (Esposito, 2010, p. 168) Moderate Muslims, in Esposito's view, have consequences for developing new religious interpretations of the Qur'an and Islamic traditions and implementing issues of democratization, gender equality, human rights, and religious Pluralism. (Esposito, 2010, p. 140) More specifically, Benkin (2017) also describes several Moderate Islam

characteristics: First, agreeing with and supporting diverse and democratic Western societies. Second, firmly oppose radical Islam. (Aafreedi etc., 2017, p. 7) In other words, moderate means not extreme, conservative, and fundamental in understanding religious texts. Moderate Islam means Muslims who agree with issues brought up by the West, especially democracy.

Meanwhile, the Wasatiyyah itself, in academic history, has been extensively described by Islamic scholars and thinkers; For example, Shaikh Hasan Habnakah (1996) emphasizes wasatiyyah on accuracy in investigating the subject matter of Aqidah. The principle of understanding and knowledge is also related to morality, 'ibadah, shari'ah, and existing laws in Islam. (Habnakah al- Madani, 1996, p. 10)) On the other hand, Shaikh Al-Madkhaly (2010) explains that wasatiyyah is a term that defines someone who is not excessive in taking attitudes and behaviour as well as understanding. (' Amir al-Madkhali, 2010, p. 10) Meanwhile, according to Hashim Kamali (2015), wasatiyyah in Islam is a virtue for social harmony in individual personal behaviour and social affairs, including religious practices and international affairs. Wasatiyyah, in this context, also applies to the application of punishment in crimes that aim to maintain environmental balance. (Kamali, 2015b, p. 7–8)

Islam that upholds the value of tolerance applies religious moderation (Wasatiyyah) refers to the Quran and Al-Sunnah as a guide to life so that its people can overcome and find solutions to every challenge that occurs in life. In the Quran itself shows in this life having harmony, harmony, peace, and Welfare not only brings happiness to human beings but to all living beings because Islam is the religion of Rahmatan lil' alamin (Nurdin, 2021; Nuraeni *et al*, 2023). The concept of wasatiyyah as medieval Islam can be a reference to then it can be implemented in society in order to realize a society that can tolerate in all fields, differences, beliefs in religious and other.

In general, based on the ideas above, the meaning of religious moderation and wasatiyyah in Islam contributes to providing correct understanding in individual and social life per the principles regulated in religious provisions. Both do have similarities in the meaning of the word. However, there are differences in the concepts established in the Islamic wasatiyyah; When the principles and perspectives in religious moderation are projected to become solutions, the solutions offered still pose problems in their meanings and conceptions related to religious doctrine. Therefore, it is necessary to reposition the importance of moderation and wasatiyyah. In this study, researchers will examine two main problems: First, Positioning the meaning of wasatiyyah and moderation. Second, examining religious moderation from the point of view of the concept of wasatiyyah from the Ulama.

This paper will review the meaning of religious moderation from the perspective of the Wasatiyyah. In other words, researchers will academically bridge the two conceptual points of view by looking in detail at the differences

that exist between the two. Waṣatiyyah and moderation necessarily have a distinct identity and characteristics that need to be discussed academically as further consideration of the concepts to be presented; as mentioned above, this paper will position the meaning between wasatiyyah and moderation as well as examine the idea of religious moderation in terms of the concept of wasatiyyah.

This article will comprise several sections, starting from the Introduction, which provides an overview and general urgency for the discussion, followed by a Literature Review and Research Methods. The results and discussion include the history and conception of religious moderation, the meaning of wasatiyyah in Islam, and the problem of religious moderation regarding the concept of wasatiyyah. Finally, this article will be closed with a conclusion expected to answer the meaning of religious moderation from a Wasatiyah perspective.

## **B. METHODS**

This study uses a content analysis method focusing on literature and authoritative references describing Wasatiyyah and Religious Moderation. As a method, Content Analysis describes and explains the characteristics of the messages contained in a text. It is also known as a prominent method of organizing and summarizing large amounts of information, thereby providing valuable cultural and historical treasures for a research question; In practice, this method selects, combines, and categorizes the data in the text and explains the results of the analysis. (Krippendorff, 2004; Nelson & Woods, 2011)

In the context of this research, the Content Analysis Method will act as an analytical tool for Wasatiyyah discourses and religious moderation. In practice, the conceptual building of Wasatiyyah and Moderation will be studied in detail based on reliable written sources, both classical and contemporary. First, the discourse on the conception of Religious Moderation will be examined from a historical perspective and current practice. Then it will be continued by bridging it with ideas regarding the idea of Wasatiyah. Finally, the research will dive into the core part of this discussion: repositioning moderation based on Wasatiyyah's perspective to get a new view on religious moderation.

## **C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In this result section, there are four discussion sub-chapters which have been arranged systematically based on the findings data obtained, as follows:

### **1. History and Conception of Religious Moderation**

The term moderation comes from the Latin *moderatio*, which means moderation (no excess and no shortage). The word also implies self-mastery (from the very attitude of excess and deficiency). This word is often used in English as average, core, standard, or non-aligned. Someone with the nature of

moderation is called mod-er-ate (mod'ər-it), which means not extreme, radical, politically partisan, or mediocre. (B.Litt ect, 1996, p. 818)

Esposito (2010) concludes that moderate is adjusted to the political or religious position that makes the judgment. (Esposito, 2005, p. introduction) Esposito's definition is in line with McCrary (2018), in his book 'Secularism, Pluralism, and Publics in America' which describes a new political adjustment to the existence of Pluralism and secular government to Advocate for religious reform in serving American foreign and domestic policy objectives; (McCrary, 2018) So that the definition of religious moderation changes according to time and circumstances but is almost always related to political issues (Lippy & Williams, 2010)

The discourse of moderation in the Islamic world begins with the emergence of Islam and Islamists (Tibi, 2018, p. 63) and its relationship with the West. (Hoveyda, 2001, p. 53–59) Schwedler (2006) (Schwedler, 2006, p. 2) and Clark (2006) (Clark, 2006) both discuss the meaning of moderate and radical. Opinions accompany their analysis on the relationship between the risk development of democracy, which inclusively 'embraces' all different groups. It also explains the idea of Moderate Islamism as a construction of an alternative Islamic discourse that supports political freedom, women's rights, and minorities as a unique and different narrative from that presented in acts of violence and terrorism. In this context, the conception of moderate Islam aligns with the opinion of Muravchik & Szrom (2010), which links moderation with democratic practices. ("In Search of Moderate Muslims," t.t.) Generally, it can be simplified that moderate is acceptance of liberal values, democracy, not extreme, and agree with secularism in politics.

Zarkasyi (2018) (Zarkasyi, 2019, p. 4–14) views that the views of moderate Islam in the literature of Western scholars are mainly focused on Muslims who are anti-caliphate, pro-democracy, pro-freedom of religion, reject jihad and Islamic reform. Even though this criterion clearly describes a Muslim who is not militant with his faith. But the definition is supported by Carthy; In his article, he criticized Al-Qoroḍowi because in 2005, in his interview, he conveyed the dangers of secularism in implementing shari'ah. He said that those who follow secularism are apostates. At the end of his article, McCarthy wrote:

"Today, "moderate Islam" is an illusion. There is hardly a spark, much less a wildfire. Making moderation real will take more than wishing upon a star. It calls for a gut check, a willingness to face down not just al-Qaeda but the Qoroḍowis and their Sharia campaign. It means saying: Not here." (McCarthy, t.t.)

Moderation in Islam is also related to the Western bias about the absence of a Muslim's role in politics. This understanding will justify Islamic countries such as Brunei Darussalam, Saudi Arabia, and other countries implementing a royal system. Because automatically, the standards of countries that do not use democracy will be considered immoderate.

The final discussion about moderate Muslims is obtained through the views of the Ulama from the definition of *wasatiyyah* contained in (QS: [2]: 143), about being a people who are in the middle without reducing or exaggerating something that has been stipulated in Islamic law. From the definition above, it can be understood that the meaning of moderation of moderate Muslims is those who (a) fight terrorism, (b) engage in politics without intimidating, (c) participate in democracy, (d) support the human rights movement, (e) tolerance, (f) respect diversity, (g) respecting the beliefs of other religions, and (h) pro-Islamic reform. After clarifying the definition of a moderate Muslim above, it can then be compared with the content of the religious moderation program declared by the United Nations.

The United Nations has established six forms of promoting religious moderation. The essence of these points is in the form of strengthening resistance to extremist and terrorist groups, especially against constitutionally legitimate state institutions; continuing to inflame the religious moderation movement at every opportunity, especially in educational programs; building state tolerance by carrying out a lot of intercultural dialogue to share views within the state so as not to cause misunderstandings in seeing differences in culture. Because every human being has the right to life and humanity, it is necessary to have religious moderation to uphold human rights.

As a member of the United Nations, Indonesia also welcomed the declaration with the existence of a religious moderation program implemented by the Ministry of Religion (KEMENAG). The Ministry of Religion provides four leading indicators (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019, p. 43) aligned with the UN declaration's objectives. Supporters of this program see that Indonesia has a plurality of ethnicities, cultures, and religions, which is a strong reason for the importance of moderation. (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019, p. 43–46)

With various definitions of moderation from the figures, it raises many opinions, especially in applying the concept. It is necessary to affirm the correct idea from the phenomenon and the development of moderation as well as different concepts and ideas. Because it gave rise to movements of radicalism, terrorism, and extremism within the state, the United Nations is taking steps to promote the importance of moderation in their respective countries. After seeing the definition of religious moderation above, it is necessary to look further at how it differs from the concept formulated about Islamic *wasatiyyah* by the Ulama.

## 2. The Meaning of *Wasaṭiyyah* in Islam

In Arabic dictionaries, the word *wasatiyyah* (وسطية) taken from the phrase *wasat* (وسط) which has several meanings. In the *Lisānul A'rab* dictionary, *wasat* means something in the middle, something odd, between two positions, the best and the most (تفسير كلمة وسط, t.t.). In addition, the meaning of *al-wasat* is contained in (QS al-Hajj 22: 11) (Qur'an Kemenag, t.t.-a) and (QS al-Baqarah 2:

143) (Qur'an Kemenag, t.t.-b) . Linguists in their dictionaries define fair (al-A'dlu), and some add something like balanced (at-Tawazun) by Abdul Mun'im (1999) (Mun'im, 1999, p. 475), primary (al-Afdal) by Ibnu 'Ibad (1999) (Ibnu 'Ibad, 1994, p. 352) and a half (an-Niṣfu) by Ibnu Faris (1992). (Ibnu Fāris, 1992, p. 1091)

Ibnu Katsir (2005) ('Umar Ibn Kathir, 2005, p. 178–180) explains the meaning of wasaṭ is the best in the lineage addressed to the Prophet ﷺ, the best of the Quraysh is confirmed by Ibnu Yāsīn (1999) (Yāsīn, 1999, p. 250) Muslims are the best because they are witnesses to other people, that the Prophet ﷺ conveyed his message. Then an-Nasafi (2008) (Mahmūd an-Nasafi, 2008, p. 83–84) said that to know the three characteristics above is to use two rules that every Muslim needs to understand. First, he must know who is in the middle by understanding each side. Second, the term al-Waṣṭu has the essence of justice and choice in 'aqidah and morals. This characteristic has been reflected in the Prophet ﷺ as uswatun hasanah (Qur'an Kemenag, t.t.-c). And whoever can follow, carry out and maintain his sunnah with istiqomah will be the best ummah (Qur'an Kemenag, t.t.-d). The etymology of the word al-Waṣṭu above is the meaning of the word Allah SWT:

And so We have made you 'believers' an upright community so that you may be witnesses over humanity and the Messenger may be a witness over you. We assigned your former direction of prayer only to distinguish those who would remain faithful to the Messenger from those who would lose faith. It was undoubtedly a problematic test except for that 'rightly' guided by Allah. And Allah would never discount your 'previous acts of' faith. Indeed Allah is Ever Gracious and Most Merciful to humanity. (QS: Al-Baqarah [2]:143)

Mufasssirin also gives different meanings to the sentence ummatan wasaṭa. Jumhur agreed with the definition (al-A'dlu) fair. Imam at-Ṭobarī (2005) (at-Ṭobarī, 2005, p. 9–12) and Rashid Riḍa (1982) (Riḍa, 1982, p. 4–5) explain the meaning of justice in this verse is not to add something that has been regulated or referred to as ghulū and ifraṭ (extreme) and those that reduce are called tafriṭ and taqṣīr (decreasing). An-Nasafi (2008) and Ibn Kathir give the meaning of Afdāl and Khiyār as the best people and the chosen people who do not commit violations by adding and subtracting what Allah and His Messenger have ordained. (Mahmūd an-Nasafi, 2008, p. 83–84; 'Umar Ibn Kathir, 2005, p. 178–180)

According to Muhammad 'Imāroh wasaṭiyyah, Islam is a practical reform program for all humankind based on tolerance, truth, and not attacking, killing, or destroying. (Imaroh, 2016, p. 29) 'Amir al-Madkhali (2010) confirms that this principle aligns with ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah, which is characterized by not being rigid in differences, stagnation, closedness, elitism, or extremism. ('Amir al-Madkhali, 2010, hlm. 7–8)

From the definition of Wasatīyyatul Islam from the Ulama above, they have an agreement regarding being a just, best people and not ghulū (excessive) (Habnakah al- Madānī, 1996, p. 74) , ifraṭ (extreme), tafriṭ (neglect) and taqṣīr (reducing). In this case, Shaikh Habnakah explains in detail the discussion of ghulū (exaggeration) and tafriṭ (abandonment) in religion with four topics. First, in the faith (aqidah). Because Islam stands on haq (truth), truth has limitations in starting and ending it. Whoever crosses the limits of haq (truth) enters vanity (falsehood). (Habnakah al- Madānī, 1996, p. 82) Then al-Qarḍowī (2011) provides a solution with aqidah in the middle, by not being a believer in everything something without Burhan (proof) or those who don't believe because they don't hissī (sensing) (Al-Qarḍowī, 2011, p. 20).

Second, in the shari'ah law, there is also a defined scope to test obedience to Allah and His Messenger so that it is not permissible to add and subtract it. (Habnakah al- Madānī, 1996, hlm. 102). In order not to be like the Jews exaggerating in terms of lawful and unlawful (Qur'an Kemenag, t.t.-e), nor the Christians exaggerate what is permitted (Al-Qarḍowī, 2011, p. 25). Third, in religious behaviour, it is enough to be al-Ittiba' (following) what was taught by the Prophet and not al-Ibtida' (adding to it) because that would be immoral to Allah and His Messenger. (Habnakah al- Madānī, 1996, p. 146)

The fourth is excessive and negligent in obedience because obeying Allah and His Messenger is an obligation. But when added, it becomes ghulū (excess), a sin. Meanwhile, if it is less than something ordered, it becomes tafrit (ignorant). (Habnakah al- Madānī, 1996, hlm. 166) Najbah Ghulam Nabī gives examples and descriptions of obeying shari'a with the following scope: (1) Mahḍoh worship in the discussion of prayer and fasting, (2) wealth in the discussion of infaq, zakat, almsgiving, and wills, (3) social relations in the discussion of birrul walidain, fairness in dress, charity to spouses and the environment. (Ghulām Nabī, 2012, pp. 19–34) In his writings, he gave an example in the Hadith, the jealousy of the shaḥābiyyat with questions about the jīhad carried out by the shaḥābat. The Prophet answered by preparing the needs of husbands on the same level as jīhad, then explained about education in the family to maintain and carry out the pillars of Islam, responsibility to the family (Qur'an Kemenag, t.t.-f), Ihsan to 'aqoīb with love, helping each other and being happy with their happiness. Also, explaining the Hadith about the story of Zainab Ibn Mas'ud's wife, who was ordered to give alms by the Prophet, he said that Ibn Masu'd and his child needed to be shared. The Prophet replied that by giving alms to those closest to you, you would get two good things from ṣodaqoh and iḥsnā to 'aqoīb (al-Bukhari, 1423, p. 855). Iḥsān towards orphans maintains their rights, manners, and education (Qur'an Kemenag, t.t.-g). Hadith about managing the Prophet with orphans with disabilities and providing all their needs is better than jīhad in the way of Allah, like someone who fasts during the day and tahajjud at night.



Therefore, it is necessary to understand the boundaries of religion so that you do not become enthusiastic but do not see the line within the limits. On the other hand, they are reluctant to do something that has been ordered by making it too easy to carry out the shari'ah appropriately and proportionately.

After the mufassirīn and 'Ulama's explanation of the definition of Islamic wasatīyyah, it is necessary to look at the built concept. First, wasatīyyah in practising 'aqidah, which al-Qoroḍowī places between those who do not believe in the existence of God (atheist) or those who worship various gods (polities) such as worshipping animals, the sky, the spirit, even worshipping humans. Or become someone who deifies reason or vice versa (Al-Qaraḍowī, 2011, p. 21-22). Meanwhile, Quraish Shihab places a wasatīyah between fatalism and free will (Shihab, 2020, p. 51). So Islam has positioned it between the above understandings by making Allah the only God, and Allah intends to create humans and provide choices in their destiny that can change.

Second, wasatīyyah in ethics is between not placing humans like angels who are ma'shum (never make mistakes) or putting humans like animals that can be used and submitted to humans. But Islam places humans between the two as beings with a spirit and a body (Muhammad Madanī & Muhammad 'Imārah, 2016, p. 41–42), sense and instinct, with all the virtues and functions differently from other creatures (Al-Qaraḍowī, 2011, p. 23). So in Islam, human life is not only in the world, but there is life after death, as the world is a field for provisions in the hereafter.

Third, wasatīyyah in shari'a with legal restrictions such as halal and haram. But in Islam, halal and haram are not human rights, but only Allah's rights because Allah will not prohibit something unless there is a danger that comes after it, and nothing is permitted unless there is good and benefit to those who do it. (Al-Qaraḍowī, 2011, p. 25) This is the difference between Islamic shari'a and other religions, which relies more on human rights. So with the existence of Islamic shari'ah with all its explanations, everything will refer to the balance of human life in aspects of personal or group life.

Fourth, wasatīyyah between individuals and groups. Aristotle considers the individual to be more important than society. On the contrary, for Plato, the community is more important than individuals, such as communism (Shihab, 2020, p. 62). An example of prioritizing one of the two views above occurred in religion before Islam, such as Christians who made their monks gods and Jews who supported the tyranny of individualism against selfishness and al-'Uzlah (isolation) from society (Al-Qaraḍowī, 2011, p. 27). Today there are two sects, the individual and the collective. Capitalism is based on glorifying individuality, and regards the individual as the central axis, and socialist sects, especially extremist ones like Marxism, are based on degrading the individual, minimizing his rights, increasing his obligations, and regarding society as the principal goal. Therefore, many applications and rules represent this balance, for example, in individual life,

family life, community life, national life, state life, and human international relations in general. It can be concluded that four concepts are discussed in Islamic *wasatiyyatuh*: beliefs, laws governed by Allah and His messengers, social ethics, and finally, regarding the human position. The explanation above illustrates the existence of balances regulated in Islam.

Al-Qorḍowī (2011) explains that if a Muslim understands the value of *wasatiyyah* Islam, it will create balance and harmony in social life because there is no element of violence. (Al-Qaraḍowī, 2011, p. 16–19) Because according to Hasim Kamali (2019), the principle of *wasatiyyah* Islam includes all aspects starting from the element of *tauhīd* (oneness), which binds various dimensions of Islam together. Because not only as a religion but also a legal system with economic and political characteristics by upholding a balance towards things *thawābit* (permanence) and *mutaghayyirāt* (change) while in the process, it is necessary to carry out a *tadarruj* (stages) approach in understanding the revelation of the Qur'an, and the development of *shari'a*. Included in the legal aspects and *'ibādat mu'āmalāt* (social transactions) besides that, it is necessary to look at matters from the benefits and harms to maintain peaceful relations between individuals and society universally to maintain peace as a whole. (Kamali, 2015b, p. 50–56)

From the explanations of the *mufasssirīn*s and Ulama about the meaning of *wasatiyyah* Islam from surah al-Baqarah 2: 143, taken from the word *wasat* with one basic definition of *'adalah* (justice). So that the Ulama explained that it is not enough to look at the essential verses but must be linked to other verses (*ayat*) to reinforce each other's meanings; the Ulama concluded that the purpose of *wasatiyyah* Islam has similarities with the middle and balanced. Still, there are slight differences in several different meanings with the definition of the Ulama to bring up concepts built from the meaning of *wasatiyyah* Islam. If we pay close attention to the idea, it includes a comprehensive order in life, not just rituals and relationships among Muslims.

The points above agree to fight terrorism but do not make the stigma of terrorism only tied to certain races, ethnicities, and religions. Still, all actions related to attitudes toward terrorism need to be opposed. So don't let the Islamophobia movement, with the dominant issue of terrorism and extremism, be directed at Muslims. Because of the attitude of Islamophobia adherents who do not least terrorize Muslims in minority countries, action against them is also needed.

### 3. The Problem of Religious Moderation in Terms of the *Wasaṭiyyah* Concept

According to the West, the problem that arises from the meaning of moderation is that religious people who need moderation are limited to Muslims only. However, it should be admitted that there are also many acts of violence,

radicalism, and terrorism in which Muslims are also victims. (Esposito, 2005, p. 12–13) West. From the arguments presented by Islam and Khatun (2015) and Ahmad (2011), it appears that there are certain tendencies in the construction of various conceptions of moderation; In fact, the use of moderation in Islam refers to Islamic theology, ethics, belief systems, legal positions, and politics. (Islam & Khatun, 2015, p. 70) Because, in practice, two countries with different leaderships are considered moderate like Pakistan when the leadership of Zia ul-Haq, who supports the program implemented by America, is called a moderate country, while Iran under the supervision of Ayatollah Khomeini, the system that was implemented did not support and tends to be critical of it, is called radical. (Ahmad, 2011, p. 31)

If we look back, the issue of moderation first appeared in Christianity with the encouragement of electoral politics, as explained by Brocker and Künkler in their journal (2013).

"This special issue thereby enlarges the scope conditions of moderation theory to non-Christian-majority and non-religious environments and sheds light on whether moderation processes work similarly across different environments, or whether the Christian democrats were and are a 'special case.' The case studies suggest moderation processes are predominantly driven by institutional incentives (the exception seems to be Indonesia) that influence party goals but caution against equating behavioural and ideological moderation. The latter is a long-term process that requires not only electoral politics but a consolidated democratic regime with a functioning judiciary that will prosecute illiberal transgressions." (Künkler & Brocker, 2013)

From the quotation above, it can be understood that the scope of moderation theory has begun to be herded into a non-majority Christian and non-religious environment, which in the case study was carried out by encouraging moderation for institutional interests and this happened in Indonesia so that Brocker and Künkler remind in understanding behaviour moderation and ideology.

The next problem arising from the moderation proposed by the United Nations (UN) in promoting human rights in education is that not all human rights taught are rejected. However, it is necessary to be careful in promoting human rights. Because, in this case, there are groups that support human rights that are contrary to *wasatīyyah* values.

Today, LGBT behaviour is increasingly prevalent, and some countries have even legalized it. The emergence of questions that seem to be based on the struggle for human rights in the moderation agenda will bring up cases that occurred several years ago, as described in the book 'Rational without being liberal.' At that time, there was a declaration movement from student groups expressing their support for same-sex marriage. In 2004, a journal appeared titled "Indahnya Kawin Sesama Jenis." Furthermore, in 2008 there was a journal with a

special edition discussing lesbian sexuality supported by professors at Islamic universities, titled "Allah hanya melihat taqwa, bukan orientasi seksual manusia." Then a seminar appeared in 2009 titled "Married Yes, Gay Yes." Zarkasyi dkk., 2021, p. 118–120)

Whereas in the concept of wasatiyyah, Al-Qoroḍowī explained that the form of balance in Islamic shari'ah is the existence of halal and haram, which is the right of Allah, not human rights (Al-Qaraḍowī, 2011, p. 25). Even in the wasatiyyah, it is explained that in humans, there is a balance between human nature in which in its creation, there is something material and metaphysical (Muhammad Madanī & Muhammad 'Imārah, 2016, p. 41) and human nature in pairs as a balance in life. So, promoting human rights in education raises concerns in the future that this will form children who have freedom but are challenging to regulate even with the rules of the religion they adhere to and believe in.

Yusuf Al-Qoroḍowī, in his book, explains the concept of Islamic wasatiyyah, which is appropriate in religious moderation. (Al-Qaraḍowī, 2011, p. 41–56) (2011), Hasim Kamali (Kamali, 2015b, p. 49–56) (2015), and Quraish Shihab (Shihab, 2020, hlm. 45–92) (2021). He formulates indicators that make a person Islamic wasatiyyah insight. He described this with four main categories, which will be detailed in his points.

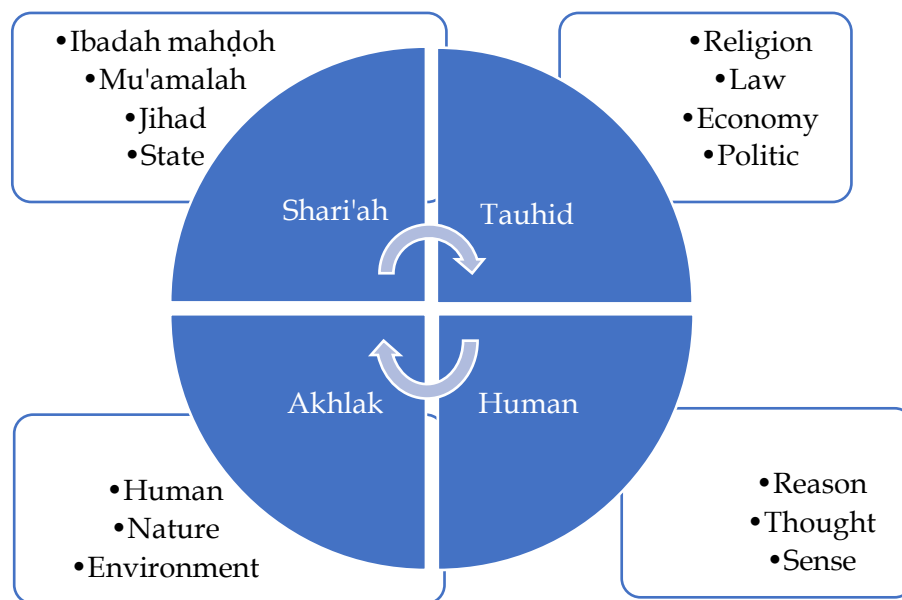


Figure 1 Diagram of Islamic Wasatiyyah and its indicators. Source: Author Processed

Understanding Islam as a whole by having faith, shari'ah, worshipping rituals, having mu'āmalah, and having morality in the dimension of Islamic monotheism related to religious, legal, economic, and political activities (Kamali, 2015a, p. 50)

Proportional in determining taklif (imposition) and tadarruj (gradual) in shari'ah, giving good news in preaching while still having the obligation of jihad, carrying out amar ma'ruf nahi munkar, carrying out scientific reforms on the guidance of the principles of thawābit (permanent) and mutaghayyirāt when taking istinbat (conclusion) of law, and wise in seeing the dangers and benefits for Muslims. The first big mandate to fellow Muslims is to liberate Palestine from the Zionists. While the mandate of the majority of Muslims is to protect people other than Islam wherever they are, this is an understanding of moderation in religious texts and worship.

Furthermore, upholding Islamic morality is not dichotomous in seeing the position of humans that reason, thoughts, and feelings must respect. Because by respecting it, it has maintained human values individually, socially, and as a country. This can be realized when justice is administered to those closest to them, such as paying attention to the family, respecting women, and being wise in choosing leaders. So that when justice is built in the closest sphere, it will impact economic, political, and legal progress in state management based on Islamic Sharia understanding. So that it can internalize Islamic values by building unity in supporting the reform of Muslims so that they can move to make a revival. It started with mutual respect in khilafiyah (differences) by maintaining conflicts between people, working together not to exploit the earth but by prospering and caring for it. So the concept in Islamic wasaṭiyyah will undoubtedly differ from the existing application of religious moderation, so the idea of moderation that will be applied in Islam will be used as long as it is aligned with the concept in Islamic wasaṭiyyah.

## E. CONCLUSION

This paper at least concludes several essential points: First, Wasaṭiyyah and moderation have become quite familiar today, but not many studies have traced the conceptual details that build them as a discourse. Second, moderation in Islam, especially in the context of religious moderation, is not immediately similar or the same as the concept of wasaṭiyyah because wasaṭiyyah has theological roots in Islamic discourse as set forth, especially in the Qur'an surah al-Hajj and al-Baqarah. Third, the idea of religious moderation can still be carried out in Indonesia while still referring to the construction of the concept of wasaṭiyyah in Islam based on the Qur'an, as has been affirmed by Alim Ulama. This is especially so that religious moderation does not shift or replace Islamic values contained in the concept of wasaṭiyyah in Islam, which includes the elements that are the goal of religious moderation.

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