

RELIGIOUS MODERATION EDUCATION MANAGEMENT: AN ANALYSIS OF INCLUSIVITY VALUES WITH A BEHAVIORISTIC APPROACH IN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS

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Abstract:

This study aims to uncover, analyze, and reflect on the application of religious moderation education management based on a behavioristic approach at the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School, Semarang. Using qualitative case study methods and triangulation techniques (in-depth interviews, participatory observations, documentation), this study identifies three main forms of the application of behavioristic habituation approaches through structured daily routines, positive reinforcement in the form of symbolic and material appreciation of moderate behavior, and modeling by authoritative figures (coaches) who consistently show tolerant and inclusive attitudes. The value of inclusivity was found to be internalized through three dimensions: curricular (integration of diversity themes in the yellow book and contemporary discussions), social (non-discriminatory policies in daily interactions), and participatory (students' deliberations in internal decision-making). However, its implementation faces three main challenges: cultural resistance from students and families who view inclusivity as a threat to the purity of faith, limited capacity of teachers to integrate behavioristic principles reflexively without being trapped in repressive disciplines, as well as external ideological pressures and epistemological shifts of the student generation that demand rational justification for habituation. Theoretically, this research makes an important contribution by showing that behavioristic approaches that are often criticized as rigid or technocratic can actually be an effective instrument in instilling religious moderation when contextualized in the Islamic value of rahmatan lil 'alamin and combined with a reflective-dialogical approach. In practical terms, these findings offer an alternative model for salaf Islamic boarding schools to reform their education systems without sacrificing traditional roots, while enriching the religious education literature based on empirical and contextual evidence.

KATA KUNCI

Manajemen Pendidikan;
Moderasi Agama;
Behavioristik Pendekatan;
Inklusivitas.

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap, menganalisis, dan merefleksikan penerapan pengelolaan pendidikan moderasi beragama berbasis pendekatan behavioristik di Pesantren Progresif Fathimah Al-Amin, Semarang. Dengan menggunakan metode studi kasus kualitatif dan teknik triangulasi (wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dokumentasi), penelitian ini mengidentifikasi tiga bentuk utama penerapan pendekatan pembiasaan behavioristik melalui rutinitas sehari-hari yang terstruktur, penguatan positif berupa apresiasi simbolis dan

material terhadap perilaku moderat, dan pemodelan oleh tokoh otoritatif (pelatih) yang secara konsisten menunjukkan sikap toleran dan inklusif. Nilai inklusivitas ditemukan terinternalisasi melalui tiga dimensi: kurikuler (integrasi tema keragaman dalam buku kuning dan diskusi kontemporer), sosial (kebijakan non-diskriminatif dalam interaksi sehari-hari), dan partisipatif (musyawarah mahasiswa dalam pengambilan keputusan internal). Namun, implementasinya menghadapi tiga tantangan utama: resistensi budaya dari siswa dan keluarga yang memandang inklusivitas sebagai ancaman terhadap kemurnian iman, keterbatasan kapasitas guru untuk mengintegrasikan prinsip-prinsip behavioristik secara refleksi tanpa terjebak dalam disiplin ilmu represif, serta tekanan ideologis eksternal dan pergeseran epistemologis generasi mahasiswa yang menuntut pembenaran rasional untuk pembiasaan. Secara teoritis, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi penting dengan menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan behavioristik yang sering dikritik sebagai kaku atau teknokratis sebenarnya dapat menjadi instrumen yang efektif dalam menanamkan moderasi beragama ketika dikontekstualisasikan dalam nilai Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin dan dikombinasikan dengan pendekatan reflektif-dialogis. Secara praktis, temuan ini menawarkan model alternatif bagi pondok pesantren salaf untuk mereformasi sistem pendidikan mereka tanpa mengorbankan akar tradisional, sambil memperkaya literatur pendidikan agama berdasarkan bukti empiris dan kontekstual.

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INTRODUCTION

The social factors that underlie the occurrence of exclusivity and violence in the pesantren environment. Several cases of student deaths due to violence in the Islamic boarding school environment have been reported by various national media. The RA case at the Nurul Ikhlas Islamic Boarding School in Padang Panjang in 2019 was reported by Akurat.co. Furthermore, CNN Indonesia reported on the BD case at the Daar El Qolam Islamic Boarding School in Tangerang in 2022. In the same year, Liputan6 covered the case of RAP death at the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School, Tangerang. Meanwhile, Detiknews reported a fuel case at PPTQ Al-Hanifiyyah, Kediri, in 2024, which cannot be separated from the dynamics of social hierarchy, a culture of authoritarian discipline, and weak internal conflict-resolution mechanisms. In the social structure of pesantren, seniority is often the legitimacy of informal power that justifies repressive actions against juniors (R. Saputra et al., 2024), even in the name of "educating" or "ordering". When the victim commits minor offenses such as taking items without permission, waking up the senior with his feet, or leaving the cottage without permission, the collective response that emerges is not dialogue or mediation, but rather physical punishment that leads to fatality. It reflects an exclusive culture that rejects diversity of behavior and does not accommodate mistakes as part of the learning process (Students, 2025). The closed environment and lack of external supervision reinforce the "us vs. them" attitude, where the perpetrator feels that he is acting for the honor of the group or the internal norms of the pesantren. In addition, social pressure to show loyalty to the group and fear of being perceived as weak make witnesses reluctant to prevent or report (Naufal Faris & Taun, 2024). These factors create a social ecosystem that is

vulnerable to systemic violence, where the values of inclusivity, empathy, and religious moderation are marginalized by harsh and exclusive disciplinary practices.

Although the phenomenon of violence and exclusivity in Islamic boarding schools has become an academic concern in recent years, existing research tends to focus on structural aspects, Islamic boarding school culture, or the psychological impact of the victim, without linking it deeply to behavioral theory approaches within the framework of religious moderation. For example, research by (Nurmayani et al., 2025) highlighting the importance of reforming the supervision system in Islamic boarding schools to prevent violence, while (Malindra et al., 2024) Examining the role of kyais in building a culture of peace through a cultural-religious approach. Other research by (Husnan & Halim, 2024) Exploring the implementation of inclusive character education in modern Islamic boarding schools, but without touching the mechanism of behavior formation through reinforcement or modeling. Meanwhile, qualitative studies (Nurulhuda, 2024) Uncovering the importance of students' emotional literacy in preventing conflicts, and comparative research by (Mardani & Siswanto, 2025) Comparing the pattern of discipline in Salafi and modern Islamic boarding schools still does not touch the dimension of religious moderation as a behavioral outcome. Recent research by (Siregar et al., 2024) starting to touch on religious moderation in Islamic boarding schools, but emphasizing more on the curriculum and religious discourse, not on the behavioral shaping process that occurs at the level of daily interaction. A clear research gap is the absence of studies that holistically integrate behavioristic approaches such as conditioning, reinforcement, punishment, and observational learning in understanding and engineering the formation of inclusive attitudes and religious moderation in Islamic boarding schools. In fact, it is precisely at this level that education management interventions are most effective, especially to change the pattern of response to violations from violence to education, from exclusion to inclusion, and from implicit radicalism to real moderation.

In the midst of the diversity of existing pesantren models, the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School is present by offering a different narrative and deserves to be studied in depth. The selection of this pesantren as the focus of the research is based on a specific urgency that goes beyond just sample representation. First, this pesantren shows paradigmatic consistency in translating "Progressive" values through structured behavioristic mechanisms, such as an educational reward-punishment system and inclusive behavior modeling by coaches. Second, there is a strong emancipatory dimension implied in the identity of "Fathimah Al-Amin", where women's empowerment and characterbuilding integrity (Al-Amin) are formed through habituation and positive reinforcement in daily interactions. Third, this pesantren has a unique contextual adaptability capacity in formulating an inclusive moderate approach without eroding religious authority, as well as being a living laboratory to test the effectiveness of behavioristic approaches in the context of traditional Islamic education. In responding to the unfilled research gap, namely the lack of studies that integrate behavioristic approaches in understanding the implementation of religious moderation and inclusive values in Islamic boarding schools, this study aims to analyze "Religious Moderation Education Management: An Analysis of Inclusivity Values with a Behavioristic Approach in Islamic Boarding Schools". The research was carried out at the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School, Semarang City, with the consideration that this pesantren is a representation of

Islamic boarding schools that develop religious moderation and inclusivity programs through behavior management approaches, such as a reward-punishment system, modeling by coaches, and habituation of cross-background interactions. The formulation of this research problem includes three crucial aspects: (1) What is the form of religious moderation education management applied in this pesantren, especially in the curriculum structure, daily discipline, and character development? (2) How are inclusive values such as tolerance, empathy, and cross-group cooperation implemented through behavioristic strategies, for example through positive reinforcement of inclusive behavior or modeling of moderation behavior by authoritative figures? and (3) What are the main challenges faced in implementing this approach, such as cultural resistance, or limited human resources that understand behavioral theory? By answering these three questions, this research not only fills the academic gap, but also provides a practical model for other Islamic boarding schools in building an inclusive and moderately behavior-based educational ecosystem.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research that aims to analyze "Religious Moderation Education Management: An Analysis of Inclusivity Values with a Behavioristic Approach in Islamic Boarding Schools" requires a qualitative approach because the focus is on understanding the complex processes, meanings, and social dynamics behind education management practices. This approach allows researchers to capture subtle nuances in daily interactions, perceptions of educational actors (coaches, administrators, students), and cultural-religious contexts that shape inclusive or exclusive behaviors (Umar, 2024). The design of the case study was chosen because this study does not aim to generalize statistics, but rather wants to explore the phenomenon holistically and contextually at one specific site, namely the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School. The research at the Fatimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School was conducted from December 10, 2025 – January 25, 2026. The case study allows for an in-depth exploration of how behavioral theories (such as reinforcement, punishment, modeling) are strategically applied in education management to instill religious moderation and inclusivity (Putra Utomo & Arjiman, 2025). With this approach, researchers can reveal the internal logic of pesantren managers, the resistance that arises, and the adaptation of management strategies in facing social and theological challenges (Barid & Wajdi, 2025) . This deep understanding is impossible to achieve through quantitative surveys, as the values of inclusivity and religious moderation are subjective, procedural, and bound by unique local contexts. Therefore, a qualitative approach with case studies is the most appropriate methodological choice to answer the complexity of the formulation of research problems.

Table 1. interview data

Yes	Initials	Role
1	P1	Builder
2	P2	Manager
3	P3	Manager
4	S1	Stuttgart

Yes	Initials	Role
5	S2	Stuttgart
6	S3	Stuttgart
7	S4	Stuttgart
8	S5	Stuttgart
9	S6	Stuttgart
10	S7	Stuttgart

To ensure the depth and accuracy of the data, this study uses the main data collection technique in the form of in-depth interviews with key informants, including coaches, administrators and students from various levels. The selection of participants is based on the principle of information power (Wutich et al., 2024) where the quality of the sample is determined by the wealth of information that participants have regarding the research objectives, not just the quantity. Participants were chosen because they had lived experience as subjects or objects of the behavioristic approach applied by the pesantren, so that they were able to provide in-depth data to answer the problem formulation. The interview is designed semi-structured with thematic guidance that includes religious moderation policies, daily discipline practices, concrete examples of the application of behavioristic approaches, and challenges in instilling inclusive values (Octaviana Afifah & Rofiq, 2025). Interviews are conducted face-to-face in a relaxed and repetitive setting where necessary, to build trust and deepen understanding of the context. In addition to interviews, the researcher also conducted participatory observations during the daily activities of the pesantren, such as recitations, student deliberations, and character development, to see firsthand the application of behavioristic strategies (Saifullah & Sofa, 2025). To validate the findings and increase the credibility of the data, the researcher applied source triangulation (comparing data from coaches, administrators, and students), method triangulation (interviews, observations, and documentation), and theoretical triangulation (comparing field findings with the concepts of behavioral theory and inclusive education management) (Fahrudin & Malik, 2025). This triangulation is important to avoid interpretation bias and ensure that research findings represent a whole social reality, not just a one-sided perspective.

The data that has been collected is analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification (Ratnasari et al., 2024). In the reduction stage, the researcher screened and grouped interview data, field notes, and documents based on research themes such as "positive reinforcement strategies", "inclusive behavior modeling by coaches", or "students' resistance to disciplinary culture changes". The data that has been reduced is then presented in the form of thematic narratives, matrices, or concept relationship charts to facilitate the identification of patterns and relationships between variables. In the last stage, the researcher draws provisional conclusions that continue to be verified through additional data or reconfirmation with informants (member checking) (Indrawan &

Suparti, 2024). This process is iterative and lasts throughout the study, not just at the end. The significance of the findings of this analysis is its ability to reveal the micro-mechanisms in the management of pesantren education that have been hidden how moderation and inclusivity behavior are systematically formed through stimulus-responses, not just through doctrine or policy (Husni et al., 2025). These findings will make a theoretical contribution to the development of behavioral theory in the context of Islamic education, as well as provide a practical model for other salaf Islamic boarding schools in reforming their education systems without losing their traditional roots.

The method contains the type of method or type of approach used, description of qualitative and/or quantitative data, data collection procedures, and data analysis technique procedures. In simple terms, conveys the scientific way of searching and obtaining data and is related to the procedure in conducting research and research techniques written in clear, concise, and concise language, not theoretical, but with its practical use.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

A form of religious moderation education management based on behavioristic education in Islamic boarding schools

This study found that at the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School, Semarang City, three forms of religious moderation education management based on behavioristic approaches were strategically applied to form moderate, tolerant, and anti-violent attitudes and behaviors of students. First, the implementation of *habituation through structured routines*, where moderation values such as respect for differences, cross-background cooperation, and commitment to nationality are consistently integrated into daily etiquette, common worship habits, and social activities involving local communities. Second, the use of *positive reinforcement* through a symbolic and social reward system for students who show inclusive behavior, participate in dialogue between religious communities, or become an example in resolving conflicts peacefully. Third, the application of *modeling by authoritative figures*, where kiai and ustadz consistently display an attitude of intellectual openness, empathy, and rejection of radicalism through speech, organizational decisions, and daily interactions, becoming the main agents in the formation of the character of students based on the principle of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. These three forms of management, although rooted in a behavioristic approach that emphasizes the formation of behavior through response stimuli and habituation, are not mechanistic. Instead, they are contextualized within the framework of humanist and spiritual Islamic values, thus succeeding in creating an ecosystem of Islamic boarding schools that strengthen Islamic identity as well as civic awareness. This shows that behavioristic approaches, when integrated with ethical and reflective values, can be an effective instrument in internalizing religious moderation in traditional Islamic educational environments.



Figure 1 study of the Book of Hikam on the third Sunday

The application of habituation through structured routines is the main foundation in internalizing the value of religious moderation. The informant revealed that the daily rules were designed not only for discipline, but also as a means of character building. P1 stated, "The recitation of the Book of Bidayatul Hidayah which is routinely carried out every Friday ba'da shubuh is a medium for fostering the morals of students, the book of bidayatul hidayah teaches the values of moderation such as gentleness, tolerance, and maintaining harmonious social relationships." P2 added, "Congregational prayers every shubuh prayer, and Isha' prayers for students from various regions, tribal backgrounds, and even different levels of religious understanding, this is our way of practicing humility and appreciation for diversity." P3 explained, "we deliberately arrange the daily picket schedule of students in a heterogeneous manner: students from Java, Madura, Sulawesi, Sumatra in one group, so that cross-background cooperation becomes a habit, not an exception." S1 said, "At first I was embarrassed to interact with students on the island of Sumatra, but because every day I eat, study, and do community service together, now we are like brothers." S2 admitted, "Every Sunday of the third week the lodge holds a recitation of the Book of 'Hikam Ibn 'Athallah' which is open to the surrounding community and must be attended by all students. This activity is a spiritual development space that strengthens the values of religious moderation, because the teachings in the Book of 'Hikam' emphasize mental balance, humility, and avoidance of excessive attitudes in religion." S3 said, "we are required to carry out congregational maghrib prayers every day at the Al-Ikhlâs Mosque as a means of forming moderate behavior, because the mosque environment is also inhabited by local community worshippers and students from various huts around BPI, so that students are used to interacting inclusively and respecting diversity." S4 added "Weekly *ro'an* activities with all students are a vehicle for habituating the values of religious moderation, because in it students are trained to work together, respect each other, and build social concern regardless of their respective backgrounds."

Symbolic and social reward systems are used strategically to reinforce moderation behavior. P1 revealed, "Students who are active in activities will receive rewards in the form of the title of Santri Ambassador and receive slings and award trophies." P2 added, "Monthly Room Cleanliness Check, this trains cooperation between room members with each other regardless of background, ethnicity and culture, because this activity fosters discipline, responsibility, and concern for the environment and mutual comfort as a form of implementation of the value of balance in religious life, the reward from the cleanest room will get cleaning tools in the form of brooms and coaching money." P3 states, "through the reward system at monthly floor cleanliness checks, in this way, they get used to maintaining the tidiness of the space, sharing responsibilities, and building a more harmonious culture of living, the reward of the cleanest floor will get a set of cleaning tools." S1 said, "The caregiver gives certificates to the administrators and students who are involved in the committee of various cottage events." S2 admitted, "Outstanding students get a certificate of appreciation from the caregiver."

Third, modeling by authoritative figures namely the role of kiai, ustadz, and coaches as exemplary figures turns out to not only function as a medium for value transmission, but also as a living curriculum that brings the principle of moderation to life in daily practice. P1 revealed, "When Kiai gave *tausiyah*, he never criticized other groups even though they had different views; What he emphasizes is more on the manners of differences, not the absolute truth of one party." This, according to P2, indirectly shapes the attitude of the students: "The students learn from the way Kiai responds to differences with gentle but firm, critical but not cynical. It's more effective than just moderation class material." S1, a final year student, conveyed a personal reflection: "I once asked about religious extremism, and Kiai did not give a doctrinal answer. Instead, he asked back, 'Do you think violence can be a way to uphold justice?' Then we were invited to discuss, not given a verdict." Experiences like this show that modeling at the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School does not only display positive behavior, but also creates a dialogue space that allows students to critically reflect on the value of an enrichment of conventional behavioristic approaches that tend to be one-way.

Furthermore, the three strategies are not implemented separately, but rather reinforce each other in one complete education ecosystem. Habituation creates order and habits of collective reinforcement to affirm students' efforts in internalizing values; while modeling provides concrete and aspirational moral references. This synergy shows that the behavioristic approach, in its implementation in this pesantren, has undergone a contextual transformation: it no longer stops at stimulus-response manipulation, but is developed into a character building strategy based on the ethical presence of educators, the collective awareness of students, and the continuity of daily practice.

From these findings, it is clear that the success of internalizing religious moderation does not depend on curricular formalities alone, but on the consistency

of institutional ethics. Pesantren not only teach moderation as a subject matter, but make it a practical culture that is lived, strengthened, and renewed every day through structure, appreciation, and example. Thus, this study offers empirical evidence that behavioristic approaches, when placed in a values-centric and reflective educational framework, are able to operate not as a control instrument, but as an architecture for the formation of moderate, critical, and civilized religious subjectivity.

Implementation of inclusive values in the implementation of religious moderation education in Islamic boarding schools

The findings of the study further reveal three forms of implementation of inclusivity values in the implementation of religious moderation education at the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School, which runs synergistically with the previous behavioristic management approach. First, *curricular inclusivity*, where learning materials not only focus on classical religious texts, but also include contemporary issues such as human rights, cultural diversity, and national spirit through the integration of Pancasila values in the yellow book and class discussions. Second, *social inclusivity* is reflected in the policy of accepting students without discrimination on ethnic background, economy, affiliation of mass organizations, and even disabilities, as well as the creation of equal interaction spaces in dormitory life, worship, and intra-pesantren organizational activities. Third, *participatory inclusivity*, which is providing space for students to be involved in decision-making through student deliberation forums, cross-group activity committees, and open dialogue with Islamic boarding school administrators so that the principles of moderation are not only taught, but also practiced democratically. These three forms of implementation show that inclusivity at the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School is not symbolic, but is realized through consistent structures, policies, and daily practices. Thus, religious moderation education not only shapes the behavior of students, but also builds a social ecosystem that respects differences, rejects violence, and strengthens solidarity based on Islamic values that are rahmatan lil 'alamin. This approach is a strategic response to the challenges of radicalism and exclusivism, while affirming the role of pesantren as a lively and dynamic moderation laboratory.

In addition to content, the learning approach is also designed to be inclusive, ensuring that all students, regardless of their previous educational background, can fully participate. P3 explained, "We apply differentiated instruction for students who are weak in Arabic to receive special assistance without being excluded from regular classes." P1 added, "Assessment is not only a written exam, but also a discussion related to issues and problems in the world so that they learn to respect each other's different dialects and ways of thinking." S2 revealed, "In the boarding school there are also several students who come from different streams, so they cannot read diba'. Therefore, they are guided by the chairman of the chamber so that they can read diba' correctly." S4 stated, "There is a friend of ours who cannot read

tahlil because it has never been taught and also comes from a different school. After that, he was taught by his roommate to read tahlil fluently." S6 said, "There are some students who do not have a background in pesantren education so when participating in bandongan activities, which is a method where a kiai reads, translates (usually into Javanese or Indonesian), and explains the contents of the yellow book, while students listen and record the important meaning or meaning of *gandul* they have not been able to follow it properly. Therefore, they are given understanding and training by *ustadz* and seniors in the room so that they can follow the *bandongan* smoothly." S3 emphasized, "Assistance in Reading and Writing the Qur'an for students who are not fluent in reading the Qur'an by the Arabic Club Team."

The social aspect of inclusivity is realized through structural policies that ensure equity, access, and interaction. P2 explained, "The election of the Chamber Chair and Floor Coordinator is chosen based on their leadership regardless of their family background and education." P3 added, "Field coordinators and supervisors are selected by caregivers based on their abilities without differentiating the characteristics of students." S1 said, "My friend from an underprivileged family can get relief from the cottage and get guidance to learn entrepreneurship." S5 commented, "In the *mushalla*, there is no partition between 'city students' and 'village students' we pray in congregation in one *caste shaf*." S6 said, "There is a program for students to teach students, who are fluent in the Qur'an to guide *Tahsin*, there is no hierarchy of knowledge."

Daily life at Islamic boarding schools is deliberately designed to foster solidarity across backgrounds. P1 emphasized, "The rotation of daily picket duties must involve all students, no one should be protected because of the social status of their parents." P2 added, "We prohibit the use of the term favorite *santri* or entrusted students all called by name, not informal titles with exclusive nuances." S2 said, "The weekly *roan* here is carried out in a mixed manner, including *ulya*, *wustho* and *ula*. The goal is for us to get to know each other, learn to appreciate, and respect each other. In addition, the implementation of *roan* is not discriminated against, because the distribution is rolled and determined by the cleanliness coordinator." S3 commented, "The division of rooms is carried out once a year without discriminating against the background of the students, both in terms of social aspects, education, early grade level, and college status. All students are placed evenly and randomly according to the policy of the management, not based on social class or scientific level. The cottage seeks to create an inclusive, egalitarian, and discrimination-free environment. By mixing students from various backgrounds, the boarding school fosters the value of equality, mutual respect, and learning opportunities between students. Students with higher levels can guide lower ones, while new students can learn to adapt from seniors. This principle reflects a moderate perspective that puts every student on an equal footing and removes social barriers in *pesantren* life." S4 said, "There are discussion activities between students every Friday night with free topics, and with neutral moderators."

S5 emphasized, "There is no exclusive dining table in the Pondok, all students sit in the kitchen of their respective floor dining tables."

The participation of students in decision-making is a tangible manifestation of the internal democracy of the Islamic boarding school. P3 explained, "Santri has the authority to propose a revision of last year's rules through a code of conduct workshop. Their proposals will continue to be considered by the management and caregivers so that the rules are not always top-down but also bottom-up" P1 added, "Every activity committee always involves old students and new students in the core structure." S1 said, "I used to be the event coordinator for the third Sunday study. My team consists of NU students, Muhammadiyah. We agreed to focus on the universal value of the event." S4 commented, "There is an aspiration box in each semester, the management considers the responses or inputs from all students."

The implementation of participatory inclusivity, as seen in the involvement of students in the formulation of disciplines, cross-affiliation committees, and aspiration forums, not only provides a formal democratic experience, but also trains relational intelligence and ethical sensitivity. S2 said, "When we debate about the duration of cellphone use, representatives from ula to ulya class students are present even though they are different ages and scientific levels, our voices are equally important." This kind of experience, where authority is not determined by the hierarchy of knowledge or seniority, but by the capacity for argumentation and common interests, becomes a concrete exercise in the principle of consensus deliberation rooted in Islamic values as well as the spirit of Pancasila. P2 emphasized that "every major decision such as adjusting the recitation schedule or implementing inter-pesantren activities is always through the bahtsul masail santri forum, where students are invited not only to receive, but to test, propose, and be responsible for decisions." Thus, participation is not understood as a delegation of authority from above, but as a process of civic education for students to learn that moderation is not just a passive attitude of respecting differences, but active involvement in building procedural and substantial justice.

Interestingly, these three forms of inclusivity, curricular, social, and participatory do not run separately, but form a system that strengthens each other. For example, curricular inclusivity that includes human rights and Pancasila issues in the study of the yellow book creates an intellectual foundation for students to critically understand inclusive policies not only as an administrative order, but as an ethical consequence of Islamic teachings. Social inclusivity through mixed room policies, task rotation, and the prohibition of exclusive nicknames then became a practical manifestation of this understanding in daily life. Meanwhile, participatory inclusivity provides a mechanism for accountability and renewal, so that the values of moderation are not frozen as a doctrine, but continue to be reflected, negotiated, and actualized by education actors, including the students themselves.

These findings show that the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School not only adopts the value of inclusivity, but integrates it into the core values of the institution through policies, daily practices, and social relations structures. In

other words, religious moderation here is not an additional project or a side program, but an operational paradigm that penetrates all dimensions of pesantren life. This answers the concern that behavioristic approaches risk giving birth to mechanical obedience without critical awareness precisely through a combination of habituation consistency, positive affirmation, ethical example, and participation space, students are guided to choose a moderate attitude not because they are afraid of sanctions, but because they have experienced intellectually, emotionally, and socially that moderation is the best way to build a dignified religious life. peaceful, and civilized.

The challenges of applying such behavioristic approaches, such as cultural resistance

Although the behavioristic approach in the implementation of religious moderation education at the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School showed effectiveness in shaping inclusive and moderate student behavior, the study identified three main challenges in its implementation. First, *the cultural resistance* of some students and their families who view values of inclusivity such as interreligious dialogue or respect for ideological differences as potential threats to the purity of Islamic teachings. This view is often reinforced by the influence of exclusive religious networks outside the pesantren, which spread the narrative that religious moderation is a veiled form of secularization. Second, *the limited capacity of teachers* to integrate behavioristic principles reflectively; many ustadz still rely on a repressive approach to classical discipline, so that it has the potential to cause pseudo-compliance without internalizing values, even triggering silent rejection from students. Third, *external ideological pressures*, including criticism from conservative groups who accuse the pesantren of deviating from the salaf tradition, which has an impact on the decline in interest of prospective students from certain communities and disturbances to the internal social stability of the pesantren. These challenges underline that the application of behavioristic approaches, although structured and systematic, cannot stand alone without a dialogical approach, strengthening critical literacy, and internal consolidation of humanist Islamic values. Without it, the risk of reducing moderation to mere behavioral training without spiritual and intellectual depth becomes a real threat to the sustainability of the pesantren educational vision.

One of the significant challenges in the implementation of a behavioristic approach at the Fatimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School is cultural resistance that stems from the differences in the religious backgrounds of the students. Although the lodge emphasizes the inclusivity of rituals, practices such as congregational maghrib prayers at the Al-Ikhlâs Mosque or the recitation of Bidāyat al-Hidāyah and Hikam are not immediately accepted in their entirety by all students. S2 admitted, "There is a friend who initially did not want to participate in the di" because in his area it is considered heretical, he participated only because he was afraid of being considered undisciplined." S4 added, "We teach him to recite tahlil

slowly, but his eyes are always lowered, rarely responding during the recitation of Hikam." Although technical assistance such as book reading training by the chamber chairman or the Arabic Club has succeeded in overcoming literacy barriers, the dimension of faith remains an invisible wall. P1 expressed concern: "We often see students who are physically present, but are completely silent during discussions as if they are fulfilling administrative obligations." Even in the third Sunday recitation which is open to the public, some students choose to sit in the back shaf and immediately leave the location after the greeting, without mingling. P3 explains the mitigation strategy: "We don't force students to believe, but we make sure they are in the same room. Physical presence is the entrance to dialogue even if it takes time." However, the tension between structural obedience and epistemological sincerity remains to the fore: habituation through daily routines is able to form outward behavior, but it has not yet fully penetrated inner conviction, especially when moderation is understood as a form of modification of faith by some students who were raised in an exclusive tradition.

Cultural resistance also arises from the dynamics of ethnic diversity and local norms that are not always compatible with the principle of structural egalitarianism of Islamic boarding schools. Although officially "there is no partition between 'city students' and 'village students'" (S5), daily practice shows that social hierarchies operate through unwritten mechanisms. S1 revealed his personal experience: "I am from Jambi, at first I was confused when I was told to picket with Javanese students they spoke quickly, I was embarrassed to say the wrong thing, so I was silent more often." In the weekly ro'an, P2 said, "There was a small conflict during the picket, the students from Sumatra considered 'cleaning the floor' to be a joint task, while the Javanese students divided the specific roles of one broom, one mop. It's not a matter of laziness, but a difference in the concept of collective responsibility." Even reward systems designed to reinforce inclusive behavior sometimes deepen fragmentation. P3 explained: "Students from outside Java are often reluctant to come forward during the presentation of the Santri Ambassador sash because they feel that 'this is an exhibition event', not a form of appreciation." S3 added, "Some say, 'It's better to just give the coaching money, so you can send it to the family' they see the value of utility, not symbolic." Thus, habituation through heterogeneity such as random room sharing or cross-regional rotation of tasks does succeed in creating physical contact, but it does not necessarily result in moral connections, especially when the universal values of the pesantren collide with the cultural habitus that has been firmly rooted in students since childhood.

The third challenge arises from the epistemological shift of the contemporary generation of students who have begun to question the foundation of authority in the behavioristic approach itself. Generation Z students who have been exposed to digital, participatory, and critical logic before entering Islamic boarding schools tend not to take repetitive habituation for granted without rational justification. S6 expressed his anxiety: "When the bandongan, Kiai read, we just took notes. But I often ask myself, "What relevance is it to the issue of intolerance today?" Although

mentoring by seniors and ustadz is available, many students feel that this method emphasizes procedural compliance more than contextual understanding. P3 admitted: "We tried to include discussions of actual issues in the assessment, but some students still considered the recitation of Hikam as a 'mandatory ritual', not a space for reflection." Even the reward system, which is supposed to strengthen the internalization of values, actually experiences a distortion of the meaning of students who are more enthusiastic when the prize is in the form of coaching money (P2: "They are immediately enthusiastic when they know that the cleanest room can get Rp50 thousand") than when they receive the title of Santri Ambassador or certificate. P1 explains this paradox: "We want students to appreciate symbolic value, but they demand transparency of benefits." More deeply, the democratic space provided such as discipline workshops or aspiration boxes is actually a medium of criticism of behavioristic logic itself. S4 said: "There is a proposal that punishment should not be in the form of push-ups, but discussions so that congregational prayer schedules are more flexible for students who study online." P3 added, "They do not reject moderation, but reject the way it is delivered which is considered rigid." Thus, the main challenge is not in the content of the value of moderation, but in the methodological legitimacy of the new generation of students demanding moderation that is not only habituated, but also discussed, questioned, and critically reproduced a demand that goes beyond the scope of a purely behavioristic approach.

DISCUSSION

The most important findings of this study show that the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School in Semarang City has succeeded in integrating religious moderation education through three interrelated pillars: (1) behavioristic approach based management including habituation through structured routines, positive reinforcement, and modeling by authoritative figures that consistently shape the attitudes and behaviors of moderate, tolerant, and anti-violent students; (2) the implementation of inclusivity values in the three curricular dimensions (integration of issuesTable 2 Interview data, diversity, and Pancasila in learning), social (non-discriminatory acceptance and interaction policies), and participatory (student involvement in decision-making) which makes moderation not only as teaching material, but as a practice of daily life; and (3) structural and cultural challenges in internalizing these values, including ideological resistance from exclusive groups, limited capacity of educators to avoid mechanical compliance, and external pressures that question the religious authority of Islamic boarding schools. These findings reflect that success depends heavily on its contextualization within the framework of humanist Islamic values (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*), as well as the need to strengthen the reflective and dialogical dimension so that religious moderation does not stop at the formation of behavior, but reaches the transformation of critical, spiritual, and civic consciousness that is intact affirming the role of *pesantren* as a living, dynamic, and sustainable social laboratory in nurturing diversity and peace.

A behavioristic theory analysis of research findings at the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School shows that the behavior formation approach through habituation, positive reinforcement, and modeling is not only relevant in the context of modern Islamic education, but also effective in systematically internalizing the value of religious moderation. The three strategies of habituating values through daily routines, strengthening positive behavior through symbolic-social rewards, and imitating authoritative figures that consistently display an inclusive attitude have succeeded in creating an ecosystem that supports the formation of tolerant, non-violent, and nationalistic students (Husnan & Halim, 2024). The integration of inclusivity values in the curricular, social, and participatory realms strengthens the behavioristic dimension by providing a consistent and meaningful stimulus, so that the students' response is not mechanical, but rather grows within the framework of ethical and spiritual understanding (Sirojuddin et al., 2025). However, the application of behaviorism also faces significant challenges, such as cultural resistance to inclusive values, the limited competence of teachers in combining disciplinary approaches with critical reflection, and external ideological pressures that question the religious authority of pesantren (Husni et al., 2025). Cultural resistance stemming from exclusive theological beliefs creates a risk of reversion or return to old behavior after students leave the pesantren environment. When the habit of inclusivity is only encouraged through a conditioning mechanism without adequate theological understanding, this behavior is vulnerable to fall when students return to their home communities that have different norms. From a sustainability perspective, this means that a behavioristic approach alone is not strong enough to counter the "competitive stimulus" of the outside environment that is more emotionally and culturally dominant for students. If the pesantren does not succeed in building an inner conviction that goes beyond just fear of sanctions or wanting to get rewards, then religious moderation will only be a situational identity that applies as long as the student is under institutional supervision, not as a permanent character. Similarly, Generation Z's epistemological demands for rational justification challenge the methodological legitimacy of the behavioristic approach itself. If this approach is not integrated with critical dialogue spaces that meet their cognitive needs, then the risk of disengagement or emotional disconnection to the moderation program will increase. This suggests that behaviorism, while effective in shaping outward behavior, must be married with a cognitive and constructivist approach so that religious moderation is not merely procedural compliance, but a substantive commitment rooted in critical awareness and the depth of the value of rahmatan lil 'alamin.

The novelty of this research lies in the holistic integration between behavioristic approaches, substantive inclusivity values, and analysis of contextual challenges in the application of religious moderation in the pesantren environment, a combination that has not been found in its entirety in the previous five studies. In contrast to (Ruswinarsih & Kosasih, 2022) which only emphasizes the habituation

of moderation values through discipline without testing positive reinforcement mechanisms or modeling, this study expands by identifying three behavioristic strategies structured habituation, positive reinforcement, and modeling by authoritative figures that synergistically form a moderate learning ecosystem. Also different from (Arifin et al., 2025), which focuses on the curricular dimension of religious moderation but does not touch on daily managerial aspects or the role of authoritative figures, this study shows how the value of inclusivity is not only taught (curricular), but is revived through social policies (admission of students without discrimination) and participatory (student deliberation) so that moderation becomes a living practice, not just a subject matter. While (Muhtarom, 2025) and (Rahman et al., 2022) Each of them discusses resistance to moderation from the student side or external pressure separately, this study actually links the three cultural resistance, limited teaching capacity, and ideological pressure as interrelated systemic challenges, and offers a strategic response in the form of strengthening critical literacy and consolidating Islamic humanist values. Lastly, in contrast to (Setiawan, 2025) Treating the behavioristic approach mechanically, this study confirms that the approach is successful precisely because it is contextualized within the framework of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, thus avoiding the reduction of moderation to mere behavioral training. Thus, this study offers an original behavioristic-reflective-transformative model in the study of religious moderation education management in Islamic boarding schools.

The findings of this study make a significant contribution to the development of religious moderation education management, especially in the context of *pesantren* as traditional Islamic educational institutions that are transformed into agents of peace and inclusivity. First, the research shows that behavioristic approaches that have been often criticized as mechanistic can be dynamically contextualized within the framework of Islamic values *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, through three measurable strategies: structural habituation, positive reinforcement, and authoritative example. These findings expand the discourse of education management by offering a concrete, measurable, and adaptive operational model to the social realities of *pesantren* (Wardati et al., 2025) . Second, the integration of inclusivity values in curricular, social, and participatory dimensions proves that religious moderation is not just programmatic rhetoric, but can be realized in holistic systems, policies, and daily practices so as to provide a blueprint for other educational institutions in designing a sustainable moderation ecosystem (Ridho et al., 2025). Third, the identification of challenges such as cultural resistance, limited teaching capacity, and external ideological pressures is not only diagnostic, but also prescriptive, prompting the need for a multi-strategy approach that combines behavioral, dialogical, and critical dimensions in education management (Usman & Ondeng, 2024). Thus, this research not only enriches the literature on religious moderation, but also provides an empirical and conceptual foundation for evidence-based education policy, as well as strengthening the role of *pesantren* as a relevant moderation laboratory in the midst of national and global dynamics.

Based on the above findings, it is suggested that the Behavioristic Approach at the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School does not stand alone, but is integrated with the Reflective Critical Approach. Habituation is effective in forming procedural obedience, but to penetrate inner conviction and answer the epistemological challenges of Gen Z, a space for dialogue is needed that validates students' critical reasoning. Thus, religious moderation is not only memorized or habituated, but also understood, lived, and reproduced consciously by students as a necessity, not just an administrative obligation. The strategic steps that need to be taken immediately are to strengthen the integration of behavioristic approaches with reflective-dialogical and critical-transformative approaches, so that the formation of moderate behavior does not stop at external compliance, but achieves a deep internalization of values. First, it is necessary to conduct continuous training for kiai, ustadz, and coaches in participatory religious moderation pedagogy, which not only relies on habituation and positive reinforcement, but also encourages critical discussions about the meaning of tolerance, nationality, and rahmatan lil 'alamin in the contemporary context (Premiere, 2024). Second, it is important to build an internal dialogue forum between students, parents, and community leaders to reduce cultural resistance through an educational rather than confrontational approach by presenting a theological narrative that affirms that inclusivity and moderation are part of authentic Islamic teachings, not secularization (I. B. Saputra et al., 2025). Third, it is necessary to develop ideological and digital literacy modules that equip students to recognize, analyze, and respond critically to radical narratives, so that they are not vulnerable to counterproductive external influences (Muis et al., 2023). In addition, the moderation program's impact evaluation system should be enriched with affective and cognitive indicators rather than just behaviors such as the ability to reflect values, cross-group empathy, and readiness to lead peace initiatives. With this holistic approach, the Fathimah Al-Amin Islamic Boarding School is able to maintain the excellence of its behavioristic practices while deepening the spiritual-intellectual foundations of religious moderation, making it a resilient, relevant, and visionary model of pesantren education in the midst of contemporary socio-religious dynamics. This is in accordance with the vision carried out by the Fathimah Al-Amin Progressive Islamic Boarding School, which is a spirituality-based Progressive Islamic Boarding School to realize the Islamic young generation who have Wasathiyah character and have life skills.

CONCLUSION

The study found that behavioristic approaches, often criticized as reductionist, can be effective in promoting religious moderation in pesantren when integrated within the spiritual and ethical framework of Islam. At Fathimah Al-Amin Islamic Boarding School, techniques like habituation, reinforcement, and modeling are employed within a religious narrative emphasizing justice, inclusivity, and social responsibility. These methods align with democratic participation and the integration of Pancasila, contributing to both moral and civic consciousness in students. The findings challenge the assumption that behaviorism is irrelevant in

character education and demonstrate its potential for fostering a progressive educational ecosystem. The study highlights that, when combined with ethical values and active participation, behaviorism can be an effective tool for addressing radicalism without compromising Islamic identity. However, the study's limitations include its focus on a single pesantren, and further research is needed to assess the transferability of this model across diverse pesantren types and regions. Longitudinal studies and triangulation with alumni, parents, and the community are also recommended for a comprehensive understanding of the model's impact.

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