

# The Role of Parenting Styles in Internalizing Islamic Moderation Values in Children: A Phenomenological Study

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose** – This qualitative study investigates the pivotal role of parents in internalizing Islamic moderation values in child development, as well as the determinants of parental behavior, knowledge, and practices. Additionally, the research identifies implications for further studies and practical applications.

**Design/methods/approach** – The phenomenological methodology is employed to comprehend and describe these phenomena, delving into the essence of parents' experiences.

**Findings** – The results demonstrate that parents are responsible for shaping children's behavior and instilling Islamic moderation values. Factors such as parental experience and education, profound understanding, quality aspects, and parenting methods by exemplary parents serve as determinants of parental behavior, knowledge, and practices in incorporating Islamic moderation values in child development. Overall, the findings suggest that among all modifiable factors influencing a child's development, the quality of care children receive is of utmost importance, warranting further academic investigation.

**Research implications/limitations** – The study emphasizes the role of parents in internalizing Islamic moderation values; however, it does not examine the long-term effects of such internalization on children's overall development and well-being.

**Practical implications** – This research offers valuable insights for practitioners, highlighting that parenting, when carried out effectively, can be a highly fulfilling role, bringing immense joy, pride, and happiness to a parent's life.

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## 1. Introduction

“There are no bad children, only bad parents” - the importance of parents in one's life is clear from this famous quote. Being a parent is a responsible endeavor, and there is no debate. Changes in this modern world have brought some changes in our lives. The excellent side brought by technology is that our lives have become better and better. However, the morality of our children is found to be declining (Tan & Yasin, 2020).

Of all the modifiable factors that affect a child's development, none is more important than the quality of parenting a child receives (Collins et al., 2000). Being a parent can be a highly satisfying role that brings tremendous joy, pride, and happiness to a parent's life. However, fanaticism and extremism in children are not disconnected from psychological factors (Hartati, 2020), so the right parenting style is needed to cultivate moderate character (Astuti et al., 2018).

Research results indicate that parenting is crucial in shaping children's character into moderate individuals (Mulianah, 2019), as the family is the children's first religious and social system (Wiguna, 2020). Furthermore, parents' religious beliefs influence their social attitudes and academic achievement (Goodall & Ghent, 2014).



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“Parents are the first teachers and role models for children” - they are responsible for shaping children’s behavior and instilling positive values (Mary, 2016). Children listen, observe, and imitate their parents. So, they must be good role models that children want to follow. Parents must practice what they teach as mothers or fathers so children can follow it. However, most parents fail to do so and instead provide poor parenting examples. There is no doubt that parenting is one of the world’s most challenging and demanding tasks (Mary, 2016).

The quality of parenting that children receive during childhood and adolescence plays a crucial role in influencing their developmental competencies and, ultimately, their life trajectory. Parental affiliation helps shape the values, norms, knowledge, and attitudes that guide individuals’ beliefs about the types of parenting practices that enable them to achieve their parenting goals and aspirations for their children (Sanders & Turner, 2018); (Tan & Yasin, 2020). Therefore, continuous learning and sacrifice are needed to become a good parent. To raise well-behaved and responsible children, one must be willing to invest a lot of time, patience, and energy. Instilling good values in a child in the future will make them good people and better citizens (Mary, 2016).

This qualitative research study explains parents’ role in internalizing moderate Islam’s values in children’s development and the determinants of parental behavior, knowledge, and parenting practices. This study will also provide identification of implications for research and practice.

## 2. Methods

In this study, a phenomenological methodology is used to understand and describe the phenomenon and to arrive at the essence of parents’ experience with the phenomenon. Creswell states that “basic phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with phenomena to descriptions of universal essence” (Creswell & Poth, 2016). For this study, the phenomenon is “the role of parents in internalizing moderate Islamic values in children’s development and the determinants of parental behavior, parental knowledge, and parenting practices.” The phenomenological framework requires a relatively homogeneous group of participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2019). The selected individuals participating in a phenomenological study should have a significant and meaningful experience with the investigated phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2019). For this study, participants described the role of parents in internalizing moderate Islamic values in children’s development and the determinants of parental behavior, knowledge, and parenting practices. After a workshop, they engaged in parenting practices. This parenting practice activity took place in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and provided a meaningful, significant, and unique experience of the phenomenon for this study. The phenomenological interview model was used to collect data through four in-depth interviews. Data collection took five weeks, including the workshop and the creation of three digital stories. The first interview, conducted after the workshop, focused on the participants’ first parenting practice. After the workshop, each participant performed three parenting practices: one each week for three weeks. The interview was conducted after each parenting practice was completed. The second data collection method was observation. For each participant, during the final parenting practice presentation phase, the researcher observed a one-hour activity room and a sound recorder was used to capture the children’s responses. A focus group interview was used for triangulation. The data analysis procedure includes eight steps adopted from (Yuksel-Arslan et al., 2016): 1) Horizontalizing or listing all relevant expressions. 2) Reducing experience to invariant constituents. 3) Thematic grouping to create core themes. 4) Comparing multiple data sources to validate invariant constituents. 5) Creating individual participant texture descriptions. 6) Creating individual participant structural descriptions. 7) Constructing composite structural descriptions. 8) Synthesizing texture and structure into expressions.

### 3. Results

This study employed a phenomenological methodology to understand and describe the phenomenon and arrive at the essence of parents' experience with the phenomenon. A phenomenological interview model was used to collect data through four in-depth interviews.

#### 3.1. *The Role of Parents in Internalizing the Values of Islamic Moderation in Children's Development*

Parents are responsible for shaping children's behavior and applying Islamic moderation values through modelling or providing the best practice examples. Among these Islamic moderation values is tolerance. Tolerance is giving space and expressing one's beliefs and opinions, even if they differ from what we believe. Thus, tolerance refers to an open, broad-minded, voluntary, and gentle attitude in accepting differences. Tolerance is always accompanied by respect, accepting different people as part of ourselves, and thinking positively. As explained by LR, AS, and MNM:

"As a parent, as a mother of five children, I have a significant role in instilling Islamic moderation values in my children's development. I instilled Islamic moderation values from an early age. We live in a multicultural society, so it is important to provide an understanding of differences, especially religious differences." (LR, 2022c)

"The first one is about the role of parents in internalizing Islamic moderation values, which is modeling, providing direct teachings with examples to children. For example, I teach about interacting with people of different religions. The second one is attention and supervision. Children need to be paid attention to and supervised by parents so that they feel enough love from their parents. If children lack attention and supervision from both parents, they will eventually associate with the non-moderate environment. The third one is punishment. This punishment is not always about violence but is given gently and lovingly." (AS, 2022c)

"Introducing the terms and values of moderation and tolerance that exist in the surrounding environment, thus we can empower and equip children so that the motivation for tolerance comes from within themselves, not just because of parental coercion. More importantly, I also try to exemplify tolerant values to children. In addition, I also try to choose a place for children to learn that portrays an environment that instills tolerant and moderate values." (MNM, 2022c)

Based on the above, we propose the following:

Proposition: Parents must shape children's behavior and apply Islamic moderation values.

#### 3.2. *Factors determining Parental Behavior in internalizing Islamic moderation values in child development*

Competence as parents requires knowledge and various approaches to guide children towards maturity and moderate behavior. Based on their own childhood experiences, parents usually apply the same parenting patterns to their children. Additionally, parental education affects the parenting patterns they apply to their children. As stated by LR, AS, and MNM:

"The factors that determine behavior in instilling moderate values in children are an understanding of moderation and an awareness of multiculturalism. Moreover, parents are role models for their children, so they will imitate whatever we do. As role models, we must be careful in our behavior, so in addition to understanding moderate behavior to children, we must also provide real-life examples." (LR, 2022d)

"The factors determining parental behavior in internalizing Islamic moderation values in child development are the parents' own experiences. These experiences come from their daily activities and interactions with their environment. Secondly, the environmental factor. This factor also determines parental behavior because, from the environment, they usually get information or interact. Therefore, parents can observe the behaviors of the surrounding environment to internalize Islamic moderation values in their children's development." (AS, 2022d)

“First, the level of understanding, parents who have less understanding of moderate Islamic values can be influenced, starting from the laziness of parents to learn and the level of awareness of the importance and dangers of exclusive thinking in religion. Second, the condition of the community environment, family and community habits can influence parental behavior. If the family and community environment is pluralistic and heterogeneous, it will certainly be different if it is homogeneous or of one religion or denomination.” (MNM, 2022d)

Therefore, we propose the following:

Proposition: The factors of parental experience and education determine parental behavior in internalizing Islamic moderation values in child development.

### ***3.3. Factors determining parental knowledge in the internalization of moderate Islamic values in child development***

Parental affiliation helps shape values, norms, knowledge, and attitudes that guide individual beliefs about the types of parenting practices that enable them to achieve their parenting goals and aspirations for their children. Therefore, continuous learning and sacrifice are needed to become good parents. Considering that moderate Islamic values have a broad meaning and one of the values contained in moderate Islam is knowledge, it requires a deep understanding and knowledge of Islamic Sharia, the objective conditions faced, and the way and extent of its application. As explained by LR, AS, and MNM parents:

The factors that determine knowledge in instilling moderate Islamic values in child development are the education and understanding of parents about moderate Islam itself. Parental understanding of Quranic verses that teach about tolerant attitudes, tolerance, balance, and fairness. (LR, 2022b)

The factors determining parental knowledge in internalizing moderate Islamic values in child development are, first, reading materials or references. Second, social media platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, and WhatsApp groups. Third, a gathering or study group. (AS, 2022b)

First, parents' level of education and learning awareness will affect parental knowledge. Indeed, if parents have a high level of education, the awareness to continuously learn is also high, so parents will better understand how to instill moderate values in their children. Second, choosing the right study place and teacher/ustaz. (MNM, 2022b)

Based on the above discussion, we propose the following:

Proposition (a): The deep understanding of parents determines parental knowledge in internalizing moderate Islamic values in child development.

Proposition (b): Continuous learning and sacrifice are required to become knowledgeable and well-informed parents.

### ***3.4. Factors determining parenting practices in internalizing moderate Islamic values in child development***

The quality and parenting methods that children receive during childhood and adolescence play a significant role in influencing their developmental competence and, ultimately, their life trajectory. To raise children who behave moderately, one must be willing to invest a lot of time, patience, and energy.

Parents are the first teachers and role models for children. Children listen, observe, and imitate their parents. So, they must be good role models that children want to follow. As a mother or fathers, parents must practice what they teach so that children can follow them. As expressed by LR, AS; MNM parents:

The factors determining parenting practices in instilling moderate Islamic values in child development are the parenting style itself. Ideally, parents can apply democratic parenting, respect

the differences in their children's characteristics, and discuss family rules agreed upon together. These things are essential in instilling moderate Islamic values in child development. Children are allowed to express their opinions, desires, and hopes. In addition to democratic parenting, parents must apply positive parenting, educate children with love, and focus more on their strengths, not just their weaknesses. By getting appreciation for their strengths, they will feel more valuable and have positive thinking. Positive thinking about themselves and others will lead to moderate, tolerant, and balanced attitudes. (LR, 2022a)

The factors determining parenting practices in internalizing moderate Islamic values in child development are the methods. The first method is singing, and the second is storytelling using play equipment. (AS, 2022a)

Parents' experience, knowledge, and type of job will significantly influence the pattern of parenting practices and how to provide appropriate support in instilling moderate values in their children. (MNM, 2022a)

Therefore, we propose the following:

Proposition (a): The factor of quality and parenting methods with parental role modeling determines parenting practices in internalizing moderate Islamic values in child development.

Proposition (b): Parents must practice what they teach so children can follow them.

#### 4. Discussion

This qualitative research study describes the importance of the parental role in internalizing moderate Islamic values in children's development and the determinants of parental behavior, knowledge, and parenting practices. Our findings indicate that parents are responsible for shaping children's behavior and implementing moderate Islamic values. These results are consistent with those (Mary 2016) and (Astuti et al., 2018), who also revealed the need for appropriate parenting patterns to cultivate moderate character. Parents are the first teachers and role models for their children. They are responsible for instilling positive values within them. We also identified that parental experience and education are determinants of parental behavior in internalizing moderate Islamic values in children's development. Therefore, awareness of continuous learning and sacrifice is required to become knowledgeable and profound parents (Mary, 2016).

Furthermore, our findings indicate that in-depth understanding and the quality and exemplary parenting methods are determinants of parental parenting practices in internalizing moderate Islamic values in children's development. These results are in line with (Sanders & Turner, 2018); (Tan & Yasin, 2020)), who explains that parental affiliation helps shape the values, norms, knowledge, and attitudes that guide individuals' beliefs about parenting practices that enable them to achieve their parenting goals and aspirations for their children.

We also highlight that moderate Islamic values have a broad meaning, and one of the values contained in the concept of moderate Islam is knowledge. It requires a profound understanding of Islamic law, the objective conditions faced, and the way and amount of its application. Parents must practice what they teach so that their children can follow suit. Religious and moral beliefs and affiliation with religious groups affect how parents raise their children (Brody et al., 1996); (Fung et al., 2018).

Our findings provide valuable insights for practitioners. First, as suggested in the literature, being a parent can be a beneficial role that brings tremendous joy, pride, and happiness to the parents' lives. However, fanaticism and extremism in children cannot be separated from psychological factors (Hartati, 2020), so appropriate parenting patterns are needed to cultivate moderate character (Astuti et al., 2018). Second, of all the modifiable factors that influence

children's development, none are more important than the quality of parenting children receive (Collins et al., 2000).

## 5. Conclusion

This qualitative research study describes the importance of the parental role in internalizing moderate Islamic values in children's development and the determinants of parental behavior, knowledge, and parenting practices. Moderate Islamic values have a broad meaning, and one of the values contained in the concept of moderate Islam is knowledge. Parents must practice what they teach so that their children can follow suit. Religious and moral beliefs and affiliation with religious groups affect how parents raise their children. Overall, as suggested by the findings, of all the modifiable factors that influence children's development, none are more important than the quality of parenting that children receive, which remains fertile ground for further academic investigation.

## Declarations

### **Author contribution statement**

The author contributed to this work and wrote research reports at each stage.

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### **Data availability statement**

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

### **Declaration of interest's statement**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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