Realizing Islamic Education Based on Religious Moderation with the Wasathiyah Islamic Paradigm from the Perspective of the Qur'an

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – Today, Muslims face considerable challenges in the era of the industrial revolution. On the one hand, there is the threat of liberalization that erodes spiritual values and Islamic teachings fundamentally. On the other hand, there is radicalization that uses violence in the name of religion, such as threats, terror, disbelief, and murder. They are serious problems that require efforts to understand the linkage between intolerant behavior and religious teachings.

Design/methods/approach – This study is library research conducted through the steps of recording, clarifying, reducing, and presenting data using documentation methods from primary and secondary sources. The data analyzed by the content analysis method includes the meaning of wasathiyah Islam, religious moderation, the concept of wasathiyah Islam in the Qur'an, Surat Al-Baqarah verse 143, and moderation-based Islamic education.

Findings – This research found that religious moderation can be applied to Islamic Education subjects through various approaches. Subjects such as Aqidah, Akhlaq, Fiqh, Tarikh, and Al-Qur'an Hadith integrate the wasathiyah values by emphasizing tolerance, dialogue, justice, and benefit from an Islamic perspective. Learning approaches, like problem-solving, inquiry, and discussion, have encouraged students to think multiperspective, discover new knowledge, and respect the ideas of others, both inside and outside of school.

Research implications/limitations – This research provides important implications for the development of Islamic education based on religious moderation, especially through a curriculum that can integrate the values of tolerance, justice, and balance in learning. However, it is still limited to a literature approach, so further research is required with an empirical approach to measure the effectiveness of applying these values in various educational contexts.

Originality/value – This research offers a unique perspective by using the concept of wasathiyah Islam to support Islamic education based on religious moderation. The novelty value lies in the elaboration of the implementation of moderation in various subjects, such as Aqidah, Akhlaq, Fiqh, Tarikh, and Al-Qur'an Hadith, which can be a model for the development of inclusive and tolerant education.

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Introduction

In the era of disruption, the reality of diversity and multiculturalism has become a necessity that is taken for granted (Sa'dan, 2015). The diversity is not only physical but also ideological. In the physical aspect, there are differences in ethnicity, skin color, race, and physical form. As for the ideological aspect, there are differences in mindset ideology, credo, worldview, faith, and culture. Consequently, every human being should have an awareness of universal brotherhood by applying *ukhuwah basyariyah* where brotherhood is based on universal human values, making the values of tolerance (*tasamuh*), justice (*'adalah*), egalitarian (*musaawah*) manifested in the life of a plural society.

Today, in the era of the industrial revolution, Muslims are in a status quo. On the one hand, they are dealing with liberalization efforts that have an impact on the loss of religious practice and spirituality, even to the extreme by starting to uproot the fundamental teachings of Islam. On the other hand, they are dealing with radicalization efforts that use violent means in the name of religious teachings to commit criminal acts such as threatening, terrorizing, disbelieving, injuring, and even killing. They become a form of grave problem that leads to a concern to find a common thread between intolerant behavior and religious teachings. The second phenomenon further gives a very negative stigma against some Muslims who seem intolerant, use violence, and are "fanatics" and destructive by imposing ideologies that are very contrary to the teachings of Islam (Husna, 2021).

The emergence of these two phenomena has implications for the birth of two types of thoughts and movements in Islam. The first movement is called *Al-Khawarij al-Judud* (the new Khawarij school), a harsh and rigid movement that looks at Islamic teachings textually and constantly. As a result, there is a stigma against Islam that is considered closed, intolerant, non-humanist, and radical. This movement has several characteristics. *First*, understanding and fighting for Islamic sharia as the only state law. *Second*, it is oriented towards the religious practices of the past (salafy). *Third*, it has an anti-Western tendency, especially modernization and secularization. *Fourth*, it is antithetical to liberalism (Syam, 2018). *Fifth*, this movement tends to be at odds with society and the government. *Sixth*, Islamic values are adopted from the Middle East without accommodating socio-political developments (Rubaidi, 2010). The impact has been the emergence of fundamentalism, radicalism, and terrorism. The second movement is known as *al-Mu'tazilah al-judud* (the new Mu'tazilah school) which has a tendency to use full rational thinking in understanding religious teaching. This movement understands that the Qur'an and Sunnah are irrelevant to the times so there needs to be changes in all aspects. This movement accepts Western cultural thought and teachings (Arif, 2020). As a result, the notions of liberalism, secularism, relativism, and pluralism have emerged which have implications for changing the style of Muslim thought.

The infiltration of radical movements is actually accomplished through several mediums. First, indoctrination through regeneration efforts within the organization by conducting recruitment, training, and regeneration. Second, radical doctrine through religious activities in places of worship. Third, through printed media such as books,

bulletins, magazines, and booklets with the teaching of jihad using violent means. Fourth, through online media through websites, videos, and digital flyers (Munip, 2012). Meanwhile, the liberalism movement, with several principles like rationalism, individualism, freedom, and tolerance, has had an impact on the emergence of relativism and secularism. Relativism is a thought that believes that truth is relative, where it can potentially lead to good and evil thinking. Secularism is an ideology that believes that public affairs should be free from religious interference. The impact is the separation of religious elements in human life (Fida, 2016). These infiltration efforts are not only carried out directly but also through several mediums, including Islamic educational institutions, which are highly potential objects of infiltration.

The emergence of this phenomenon has encouraged scholars to create a conception related to Islam that is *rahmatan lil 'alamin* by reviewing the Qur'an as the basis for Muslims. One of the concepts built is *Islam Washatiyah*, which is a concept that aims to embody a religious life that is progressive, tolerant, inclusive, peaceful, democratic, and monocratic life (Fitri, 2015). In the Indonesian context, the term *wasathiyah* is known as religious moderation, which refers to an attitude of reducing violence and avoiding extreme actions in religion (Haidar et al., 2023). Several efforts are pursued to manifest religious moderation, one of which is to reconstruct Islamic education on the basis of religious moderation. Islamic education indeed has a contribution as a medium for instilling moderate religious understanding. The research titled *Wasathiyah Islamic Paradigm from Al-Qur'an Perspective in Realizing Islamic Education Based on Religious Moderation* has several objectives. *First*, to describe the meaning of *Islam Washatiyah* and religious moderation. *Second*, to describe the concept of *Islam Washatiyah* from the perspective of the Qur'an. *Third*, to describe the meaning of *cum maghza* in Surah Al-Baqarah 143. *Fourth*, describing Islamic education based on religious moderation.

Methods

A study titled The Paradigm of Wasathiyah Islam from the Perspective of the Qur'an in Realizing Islamic Education Based on Religious Moderation is library research. The steps used in this research were conducted by writing, clarifying, reducing, and presenting data from various documents (Noeng Muhajir, 1989). The data collection process was carried out using the documentation method, namely by collecting information from both primary and secondary sources. It was followed by data processing to find data according to the problem formulation. The obtained data was further classified into three substantial things. First, describing the meaning of Islam Washatiyah and religious moderation. Second, describing the concept of Islam Washatiyah from the perspective of the Qur'an. Third, describing the meaning of cum maghza in Surah Al-Baqarah 143. Fourth, describing Islamic education based on religious moderation. As for the data analysis method, it used content analysis by analyzing the content of writing to obtain sharper, deeper, and more comprehensive data related to research (Burhan Bungin, 2001). A detailed explanation of the research method can be seen in Figure 1.
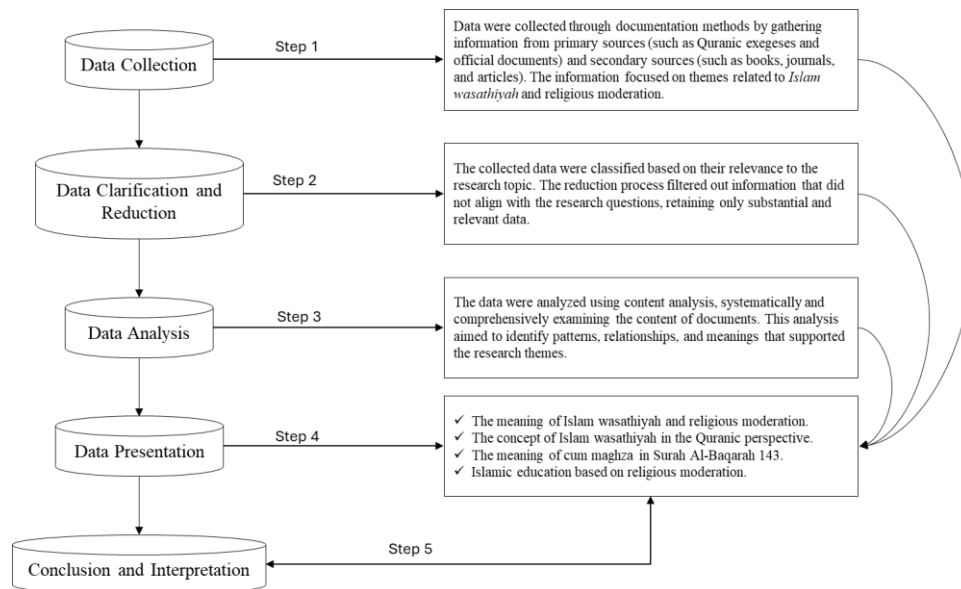
Figure 1. Research Procedures and Stages

Result and Discussion

The term wasathiyah is a word taken from the term wasath, which means middle. This term is often used to indicate attitudes and activities taking the middle position between excessive (*guluw*) and less (*qasr*) (Dimyati, 2017). Another meaning of *wasath* can be *sawaun*, which means the middle between two boundaries or is interpreted as two ends with comparable sizes. The word *wasath* is also interpreted as *al-judu* (generous), which is manifested in the middle between the nature of *as-sarafu* (excessive) and the nature of *al-bukhlu* (miserly) (Siregar, 2022). Also, the term *wasath* has synonyms with the meaning of *tawazun, tawassut, i'tidal*, and *iqtisad*, which is very close to the term moderation of having the consequence of taking the best choice of two things that are extreme and excessive (Kamali, 2015). Moreover, the term wasath is interpreted as an attitude and action of leaving *tafrith* and *ifrath*. *Ifrath* is an excessive understanding and action in interpreting and practicing religious teachings. While *tafrith* is religious behavior by underestimating and taking it easy in religion (Diyani, 2019).

1. Islam *Washatiyah* and Religious Moderation

In Indonesian lexical terms, *wasath* means moderate which implies two essences. *First*, avoiding extremist actions and attitudes. *Second*, taking the middle way and considering other perspectives (Dimyati, 2017). Moderation itself is a commendable characteristic that leads a person to avoid extreme behavior. Moderation is also an effort to think, act, and interact based on a *tawazun* (balanced) attitude in analyzing and responding to two behaviors by taking an attitude that is appropriate to the conditions and does not conflict with religious teachings and norms prevailing in society (Aziz, 2019). The term *wasath* means balance (*tawazun*) between two conflicting things, such as aspects of *maddiyah* (material) and *ruhiyah* (spiritual), *jam'iyah* (group) and *fardiyah* (individual), *mitsaliyah* (idealism) and *waqi'iyah* (contextual), and *taghayyur* (change) and *tsabat* (consistent) (Niam, 2019). In the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs Number 93 of

2022, the term religious moderation is a perspective, attitude, and practice of religion in life together by manifesting the essence of religious teachings that protect human dignity and build public benefits based on the principles of fairness, balance, and obeying the constitution as a national agreement (Kementerian Agama, 2022)

Wasathiyah is also interpreted as a source of goodness (*dalil khairiyyah*), meaningfulness (*ma'nawiyat*), privilege in matters relating to material things (*al maddiyat*), and excellence. In addition, this term is used to refer to a place that is safe and comfortable, away from danger, as well as a core of unity, fusion, and strength (Aziz, 2019). *Wasathiyah* is not only actualizing a moderate *ummah* but a believing, dynamic, superior *ummah* and becoming *khaira ummah* in carrying out *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* and becoming a lighthouse of civilization (Alka, 2019). In the context of Islam, wasathiyah is an effort to practice Islamic teachings thoroughly by increasing competence in various fields such as education, economics, and politics as a medium to improve faith. As for the inter-religious context, wasathiyah has a tendency to maintain inter-religious stability by taking the middle way to the problems faced and implementing egalitarian principles towards followers of other religions (Rohmah, 2022).

In the Indonesian context, the discourse of *Islam Washatiyah* emerged around 2015 along with the discourses of *Islam Berkemajuan* and *Islam Nusantara*. Initiated by Mohammad Hashim Kamali, in his work titled The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyyah, the concept of *wasathiyah* as the basis for the middle path of Islamic moderation needs to be implemented to avoid a clash of civilizations. In other words, *Islam Washatiyah* is actually done to ward off the infiltration of extremist ideas. Concerns related to this discourse began to develop with the emergence of Taujihat Surabaya in the IX MUI National Conference. In this decision, Muslims need to be vigilant and avoid the *tatarruf yasari* movement (extreme left movement) and *tatarruf yamini* (extreme right movement) to create Islam, which is *rahmatan lil'alamin* and *khaira ummah* (Najib, 2020).

Islam Washatiyah is also contained in the decision of the Treatise of Enlightment (Risalah Pencerahan) and the Treatise on Progressive Islam (Risalah Islam Berkemajuan). The Treatise of Enlightenment describes that enlightening religion is to develop religious attitudes, views, and practices that are moderate (wasathiyah), full of peace, respect the dignity of humanity, respect pluralism, advance humanity, and uphold noble civilization (PP Muhammadiyah, 2019). As for the Treatise on Progressive Islam, there are *al khasa'isul al khamsu* (five characteristics), one of which is *tamniyah wasathiyah* (developing *wasathiyah*), which includes several aspects. First, a broad insight, being flexible in attitude, and having a stand. Second, respect for different views and opinions. Third, rejecting *takfiri* behavior among Muslims. Fourth, encouraging and advancing society. Fifth, understanding priorities and realities. Sixth, avoid fanatical attitudes towards religious understanding and groups. Seven, facilitating the implementation of religious teachings (PP Muhammadiyah, 2023). The truth is that efforts to create wasathiyah Islam are also carried out by Nadhatul Ulama' with the insight of *Islam Nusantara*, which is based on wal-jama'ah by prioritizing *rahmatan lil-alamin* Islam. At all levels, both Jamiyah and Jamaah must be the pioneers in

embodying a moderate, friendly, tolerant, and culturally knowledgeable society, as well as being open to new ideas that are synergistic with the character of Islam Nusantara. Some principles related to religious moderation are listed in the table below.

Table 1. Principles of Religious Moderation (Aziz, 2019)

No	Principles	Description
1	*Tawassuth*	The term *tawassuth* is an understanding and practice of religious teachings by avoiding *ifrath* (excessive in practicing religion) and tafrith (reducing religious teachings). Consequently, there are three elements in the application of *tawassuth*. First, not being extreme in practicing religion and spreading religious teachings. Second, avoid takfiri behavior. Third, always upholding the principle of tolerance and brotherhood between religious communities.
2	*Tawazun*	The term *tawazun* means a balanced understanding and practice of religious teachings, from both worldly and *ukhrawiyah* aspects, as well as having the principle to distinguish aspects of *ikhtilaf* (difference) and *inhiraf* (deviation).
3	*I'tidal*	The term *i'tidal* means straight and upright, as well as being fair in carrying out rights and obligations. In the context of religious moderation, *i'tidal* encourages humanity to embody *al-maslahah 'ammah* or social justice.
4	*Tasamuh*	The term *tasamuh* is an attitude of respecting the beliefs, opinions, stances, and views of others by providing freedom of human rights in the context of society, or not obstructing.
5	*Musawah*	The term *musawah* is equivalent to equality. In other words, it is an attitude and action of respect and equality towards human dignity regardless of ethnicity, nation, race, and gender.
6	*Syuro*	The term *syuro* is a deliberation through negotiating or exchanging opinions on a matter. Deliberation is actually carried out to create a democratic society with an exchange of opinions, ideas, and so on.

In addition to the above principles, there are several other key principles. First, *ishlah* (reform), namely by accommodating the dynamics of changing times and prioritizing reformative aspects to achieve public benefit *(mashlahah 'ammah)*. However, the principle of *ishlah* does not negate the conservative aspect by adhering to the principle of *al-muhafazhah 'ala al-qadimi al-shalih wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadidi al-ashlah* (conservation of old traditions that are still relevant, and applying the relevant spirit of *tajdid*). Second, *Aulawiyah* (determining the priority scale), namely by identifying interests that are more priority than personal or group interests. This is done to avoid any gap and domination of certain groups. Third, *tathawwur wa Ibtikâr* (dynamic and innovative), by openly following the changing times without changing the essence of teaching and creating new things for the benefit of the *ummah*. Fourth, *tahadhdhur* (civilized), by placing aspects of noble morals, integrity, character, and identity to embody *khaira ummah* (Nur, 2015).

2. Islam *Washatiyah* from the Qur'anic Perspective

In the Qur'an, the word wasath or its equivalent wazan is found in Q.S. Al-Baqarah verses 143 and 238, Q.S. Al-Qalam verse 28, Q.S. Al-'Adiyat verse 5, and Al-Maidah 89. By and large, the term wasathiyah shows the meanings of middle, fair, and best. More details are in the table below.

Table 2. Qur'anic verses related to the meaning of *wasathi*

No	Verse	Meaning
1	وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَٰكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِّتَكُونُوا۟ شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا And so We have made you ˹believers˺an upright¹ community so that you may be witnesses over humanity and that the Messenger may be a witness over you (Q.S. Al-Baqarah verse 143)	An attitude of just and chosen
2	حَٰفِظُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلصَّلَوَٰتِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ٱلْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا۟ لِلَّهِ قَٰنِتِينَ Observe the ˹five obligatory˺ prayers—especially the middle prayer¹—and stand in true devotion to Allah. (Q.S. Al-Baqarah verse 238)	The best and the middle
3	قَالَ أَوْسَطُهُمْ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ لَوْلَا تُسَبِّحُونَ The most sensible of them said, "Did I not say to you, that you should praise your Lord's glory? (Q.S. Al-Qalam verse 28)	the fairest, the best, the most ideal, and the most knowledgeable
4	فَوَسَطْنَ بِهِ جَمْعًا And the warhorses rushed into and penetrated the midst of (the heart of) enemy lines! (Q.S. Al-'Adiyat verse 5)	Midst of or middle
5	لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِٱللَّغْوِ فِىٓ أَيْمَٰنِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن يُؤَاخِذُكُم بِمَا عَقَّدتُّمُ ٱلْأَيْمَٰنَ فَكَفَّٰرَتُهُۥٓ إِطْعَامُ عَشَرَةِ مَسَٰكِينَ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعِمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ Allah does not punish you for your unintentional oaths, but He will hold you accountable for deliberate oaths. So, the expiation (the penalty for breaking an oath) is to feed ten poor people from the food you used to feed your family and to clothe them. (Q.S. al-Ma'idah verse 89)	In the middle

Ummatan washathan in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143 has the meaning of the fairest people. As in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 283 has three meanings related to *wustho* prayers, related to using prayers that lie in the middle, the centermost, and because of the most *affdhal* position. Whereas in Q.S. Al-Qalam verse 28, the meaning of *ausath* is the centermost, the fairest, and the best. In Q.S. Al-'Adiyat verse 5 shows a meaning of a place in the middle (Arif, 2020). The middle position in the perspective of religious moderation is not only the mid-position between two things but has several principles that show moderate behavior consisting of the principles of *tawashut, tawazun, i'tidal, tasamuh, musawah,* and *syuro*.

Based on the information from the above table, the term wasath is the attitude and actions of Muslims who put the values of justice, goodness, excellence, and knowledge as a catalyst in every life. The term wasathiyah Islam in Indonesia is interpreted as moderate Islam, which contains two consequences. First, it seeks to avoid extreme attitudes and actions. Second, it has a tendency to take the middle way by looking at the opinions of other parties. In terms of terminology, moderate is a term used to describe groups that reject violence in ideological matters and in their line of struggle. It is manifested by keeping away from ways of seeing and thinking that lead to violence, upholding balance, breadth, and depth of thinking, and avoiding jumud, rigid, and textual patterns of thought. Moderate Islam itself has several characteristics. First, it is rational. In this context, the term rational is interpreted as a paradigm in understanding religious texts by using reason and being dialective. Second, it is scientific by accommodating science in aspects of religious life. Third, it promotes tolerance, where humans have an attitude of respect for the opinions, beliefs, and thoughts of others (Sartika, 2020). The principles are described in several verses of the Qur'an in the table below.

Table 3. Qur'anic verses related to the principle of religious moderation

No	Principle	Al-Qur'an Verses
1	Tawassuth	وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَٰكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِّتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا In this way We have made you a middlemost community, so that you may act as witnesses against mankind and the Messenger as a witness against you. (Q.S. Al-Baqarah 143)
2	Tawazun	لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ ٱلنَّاسُ بِٱلْقِسْطِ Indeed, We sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and with them We sent down the Scripture and the balance ˹of justice˺ so that people may administer justice. (Q.S. Al-Hadid 25)
3	I'tidal	يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَآنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ *O YOU who have attained to faith! Be ever steadfast in your devotion to God, bearing witness to the truth in all equity; and never let hatred of any-one lead you into the sin of deviating from justice. Be just: this is closest to being God-conscious. And remain conscious of God: verily, God is aware of all that you do (Q.S. Al-Maidah verse 08)*

4	Tasamuh	لَآ إِكْرَاهَ فِى ٱلدِّينِ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ ٱلرُّشْدُ مِنَ ٱلْغَىِّ فَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱلطَّٰغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱسْتَمْسَكَ بِٱلْعُرْوَةِ ٱلْوُثْقَىٰ لَا ٱنفِصَامَ لَهَاۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ
		Let there be no compulsion in religion, for the truth stands out clearly from falsehood.[1] So whoever renounces false gods and believes in Allah has certainly grasped the firmest, unfailing hand-hold. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Q.S. Al-Baqarah 256)
5	Musawah	يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَٰكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَٰكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوٓاۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِير
		O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may ˹get to˺ know one another. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Q.S. Al Hujurat Verse 13)
6	Syuro	فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْۖ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّواْ مِنْ حَوْلِكَۖ فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِۖ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ
		It is out of Allah's mercy that you ˹O Prophet˺ have been lenient with them. Had you been cruel or hard-hearted, they would have certainly abandoned you. So pardon them, ask Allah's forgiveness for them, and consult with them in ˹conducting˺ matters. Once you make a decision, put your trust in Allah. Surely Allah loves those who trust in Him. (Q.S. Ali Imran 159)

Religious moderation in interfaith relations has several aspects that Muslims need to have. First, having respect and appreciation for adherents of other religions. The form of respect and appreciation for other religions in Islam is implemented in the absence of coercion for someone to convert to Islam and give other religious adherents the right to carry out worship rituals. Second, implementing the teachings of *hablum minan nas* as part of *ukhuwah basyariyah* (brotherhood among humans). In the context of religion, Muslims should always do good to non-Muslims and always be fair. Third, Muslims must see Islam as a Blessing for the universe by spreading love, a sense of security, away from danger, and full of brotherhood. Fourth, developing an inclusive attitude toward religion, namely an open understanding of religious teachings by accepting and recognizing the value of truth that comes from outside while not contradicting religious teachings. Fifth, looking for points of commonality with other religions by taking universal values, such as justice, equal rights, tolerance, and so on (Aziz, 2019).

3. The Maʿna-Cum-Maghza Approach to the Term of Wasath in Surat Al-Baqarah Verse 143

The term *maʿna-cum-maghza* is an interpretive approach that simplifies and develops the progressive quasi-objectivist school initiated by Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, Fazlur Rahman, Muhammad At-Talibi, and Abdulllah Saeed. It aims to explore the historical meaning of a verse by developing historical significance towards dynamic signification. In other words, this approach is a process of extracting and reconstructing the meaning and main historical message, namely the meaning *(maʿna)* and the main message/significance *(maghza)* that may be intended by the author of the text or understood by the historical audience, and then developing the significance of the text for the current context. The substantial aspects to be discovered by the interpreter include three things. First, historical meaning *(al-maʿna al-tarikhi)*. Second, the historical phenomenal significance *(al-maghza al-tarikhi)*. Third, the contemporary dynamic phenomenal significance *(al-maghza al-mutaḥarrik al-muʿaṣir)* of the interpreted Qur'anic text (Syamsuddin, 2022).

There are several steps related to the *ma'na cum maghza* approach as a methodology. *First*, interpreters need to conduct studies and analyses related to the lexical meaning of the Qur'anic text, both in terms of vocabulary and structure. *Second*, to sharpen the interpretation, it is necessary to compare and analyze the interpreted word in the Qur'an by connecting it with other verses (intertextuality) and other terms outside the Qur'an (intratextuality). *Third*, the interpreters consider the historical context in which the Qur'anic verses were revealed. *Fourth*, the interpreters try to find maqṣad or maghza al-ayah (the purpose/main message of the verse being interpreted) by considering aspects of linguistic expression and historical context after paying careful attention to the linguistic expression and/or historical context of the Qur'anic verse (Syamsuddin, 2022).

The discourse related to *Islam Washatiyah* with *wasath wazan* or the like has at least been mentioned in Q.S. Al-Baqarah verses 143 and 238, Q.S. Al-Qalam verse 28, and Q.S. Al-'Adiyat verse 5, whcih all show the conditions, time and place in the middle. In its development, the meaning of *wasath* has experienced the dynamics of meaning with various terms mentioned in the previous discussion. The application related to *wasathiyah Islam* in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143 through the *maʿna-cum-maghza* approach is as follows.

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَٰكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِّتَكُونُوا۟ شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

In this way We have made you a middlemost community, so that you may act as witnesses against mankind and the Messenger as a witness against you. (Q.S. Al-Baqarah 143)

4. Intratextual and Intertextual Text Language Analysis

The term *ummatan wasathan* is the arrangement of *na'at man'ut* which comes from the words *ummah* and *wasath*. The word *ummah* in the Qur'an is mentioned 64 times, which consists of the singular form (51 times) and the plural (13 times). In the Lisanul 'Arabic dictionary, the word *ummah* means mother. In addition, the word *ummah* is also interpreted as human beings, society, adherents, and the people of the Prophet

Muhammad PBUH (Izzul & Haq, 2022). In the Qur'an, the word *ummah* has several dimensions according to the context of the event and the object of study. In the Qur'an, it has several meanings, such as community groups, groups, religions, time, and faith (Pallawagau, 2023).

Meanwhile, the term *wasath* linguistically has various meanings, such as fair (just), the best choice, balanced, moderate, straight, consistent, beauty, high position, and honorable. The word *wasath* is used to show attitudes and activities that take a middle position from excessive (*guluw*) and lacking (*qasr*) (Dimyati, 2017). Moreover, *wasath* has the meaning of *sawaun*, the middle between two boundaries, or is interpreted as two ends that have comparable size. Also, the word wasath is defined as *al-judu* (generous or benevolent), which is manifested in the intermediate nature between the nature of *as-sarafu* (excessive) and the nature of *al-bukhlu* (miserly) (Siregar, 2022). The term *wasath* also has a synonym with the meaning of *tawazun, tawassut, i'tidal,* and *iqtisad*, which is very close to the term moderation, having the consequence of taking the best choice from two extreme and excessive things (Kamali, 2015). Furthermore, the term *wasath* is defined as an attitude and action to abandon the attitudes of *tafrith* and *ifrath. Ifrath* is an exaggerated understanding and action in interpreting and practicing religious teachings. Meanwhile, *tafrith* is a religious behavior that underestimates and takes being religious lightly (Diyani, 2019). As for the books of *tafsir*, the meaning of *wasath* in Al-Baqarag verse 143 is available in the table below.

Table 4. *Al-wasath* in *tafsir*

Term	The Meaning of the Term
Wasath	عدلا وخيارا قال اهل المعاني : لما صار ما بين الغلو و التقصير خيرا منهما صار الوسط والاوسط عبارة عن كل ما هو خير
	In the tafsir of *Wasith Fi Tafsiril Qur'anil 'Adzim*, Abu Hasan Ali described that the word *wasath* in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143 means justice and goodness. He also explained that *wasath* is a middle condition between an exaggerated attitude and a negligent attitude. Moreover, the word *wasath* means every good deed (Naisamburi, 1993).
	.و اما الوسط فانه في كلام العرب الخيار الوسط بمعني الجزء الذي هو بين الطرفي وسط لتوسطهم في الدين فلا هم اهل غلو فيه غلو النصاري الذي غلو بالترهب وقيلهم في عيسي ما ولا هم. اهل تقصير فيه تقصير اليهود الذين بدلت كتاب الله وقتلوا انبياءهم و كذبوا علي قالوا فيه ربهم و كفروا به
	In tafsir of at-Thabari, the word *wasath* is interpreted as kindness. It is the middle point between the poles of extremes and religious behavior in the middle by avoiding excessive behavior, such as the exaggeration of Christians towards the pastor and the prophet Isa. Additionally, it avoids negligent behavior, such as the Jews who changed the book of Allah, killed the prophets, lied, and denied Allah (Thabari, 923).

انما حولناكم الي قبلة ابراهيم عليه السلام و اخترناهالكم   لنجعلكم خيار الامم ل تكونوا يوم القيامة

شهداء علي الامم لان الجميع محترفون لكم بالفضل و الوسط هاهنا الخيار و الجود

اشرفهم نسبا

اكمل الشراء ع   اقوم المناهج و اوضح المناهج

> In the tafsir of Ibn Kathir, he revealed that Indeed We changed your qibla to the qibla of Ibrahim and We chose the qibla for you so that We can make you the chosen people, so that on the Day of Resurrection you will be witnesses of other people, because all the people recognize your virtue. In this sentence, the meaning of *wasath* is choice and beauty. *Wasath* also means the noblest, the most perfect law, and the most powerful *manhaj*. Ibn Katsir also explained that *wasath* has the meaning of the noblest *nasab* and the best of the sharia (Ibnu Katsir, 1373).

Intertextually, *wazan wasath* in the Qur'an has several meanings. In Surah Al-Baqarah verse 238, the meaning of *wusto* is the middle between two prayer times, which means the command to keep the *asr* prayer. In Surah Al-Qalam verse 28, the term *ausathuhum* means the most just, the wisest, and the most intelligent among them. The term *ausathuhum* in this context is a person who is the best and the straightest in his thinking, in the midst of his age group, compared to the people around him at that time. Meanwhile, in Surah Al'Adiyah verse 5, it is explained that *fawasathna* means a position amid a crowd of enemies.

5. Historical Context Analysis *(Al-Maʿna Al-Tarikhi)*

The historical background of Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143 is the history of the change of the Qibla from Baitul Maqdis to the Kaaba of the Grand Mosque. It has caused a debate related to the condition of people who have died before the policy of moving the direction of the Qibla. On the other hand, questions arise related to the practice of prayer carried out before the redirection of the Qibla. These statements were answered by Allah, through the revelation of Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143, which states that Allah makes the Muslims a middle ummah, which in various interpretations is interpreted as the best ummah, the just ummah, the moderate ummah, and so on, or by not neglecting the righteous deeds that have been done (As-Suyuti, 1986).

As for from a sociological perspective, the redirection of the Qibla gave birth to pros and cons in the midst of a pluralistic society in Medina. Some groups questioned their practices before the removal of the Qibla. On the other hand, there was a group of Jews who labeled the Prophet Muhammad PBUH as a person who had no stance. In addition, there were people who took advantage of this phenomenon to divide people, where the Prophet initially tried to attract the sympathy of the People of Book (Ahlul Kitab) with the Qibla of Baitul Maqdis but began to despair by moving the direction of the Qibla to the Kaaba (Mutmainnah, 2024). The fundamental change related to the redirection of the Qibla actually signals Muslims to be inclusive, open, and acceptive of the decisions of Allah SWT.

6. Reconstruction of the Significance of *Maghza Al-Ayah At-Tarikhi wal Mutaharik*

Based on the analysis of the historical context related to Surah Al-Baqarah verse 143, there are at least some *maghza tarikhi* that can be taken as a lesson. First, *wasathi* Muslims have the consequence of upholding the religious teachings brought by the prophet Muhammad PBUH, not affected by the extreme right or left poles. Second, the fundamental change in the direction of the Qibla needs to be addressed wisely by Muslims as part of the dynamics of legal development. Third, as stated by the interpreters, the implementation of religious teachings carried out by Muslims at that time should not be excessive nor underestimated. In other words, Muslims must be inclusive in looking at the pros and cons of the direction shifting of the Qibla with clear and holy thoughts. Fourth, the word *wasath*, as defined by interpreters with a good meaning, should have implications on the attitude carried out by a Muslim. Fifth, in the historical context, in the midst of Jews and Christians, Muslims are not allowed to be at the two poles of radical and liberal religious behaviors.

Viewed from *maghza mutaharik* in the context of Indonesia, the *wasathan ummatan* is a moderate people, those who are not inclined to extreme right and left behavior. In other words, to embody a good Muslim is to uphold religious teachings and not be extreme in religion, let alone use violent methods in religion. The people of *Wasathan* are people who have an inclusive and open view in dealing with problems, both in the form of internal problems in religion and external problems between religious people. With the perfection of religious teachings, the *wasathan ummah*, as the best people, must be manifested in the realm of life that is full of grace, respecting differences, and respecting human dignity. The *wasathan umatan*, with the meaning of justice, is always implemented by applying the values of justice, equality, tolerance, and deliberation.

Human beings, according to Islam, are noble creatures of Allah consisting of soul and body and are rational beings, as well as having lust and cognitive organs, heart, intellect and physical abilities, intellectuals, spiritual views, practice, and consciousness (Azra, 1999) To develop this aspect, Islamic education has a great contribution to realizing a complete human being. From Fadzur Rahman's perspective, Islamic education must be able to produce integrative human beings (scientists) who accumulate critical, creative, dynamic, innovative, progressive, fair, and honest traits that can provide alternative solutions to problems faced by society. (Sutrisno, 2006). Moreover, Islamic education not only develops intellectual and spiritual aspects but also has multidimensional goals which include *al-ahdzaf jismiyyah* (physical), *al-ahdzaf ruhaniyyah diniyyah* (spiritual), *al-ahdzaf 'aqliyyah* (cognitive), and *al-ahdzaf ijtima'iyyah* (social) (Heri Gunawan, 2004). It shows that Islamic education actually has the goal of creating complete individuals vertically and horizontally, as well as rationalizing to the faithful people. Ummah who have competence with kaffah in supporting their lives as servants and caliphs by having an attitude with a moderate perspective.

Nowadays, Islamic education is still dwelling on debating normative issues, nostalgic for past progress, trapped in the sacredness of thought (taqdisul afkar), and falling into mysticism, which tends to be stagnant, less responsive, less dynamic, and even

antipathic to the changing times. Islamic education is also used as a medium to infiltrate Islamic doctrines that are textual, prescriptive, and doctrinal, making them seem exclusive and less open. As a result, movements that use violent means in the name of religion have emerged. Creating inclusive and moderate Islamic education requires efforts to carry out and embody Islamic education based on religious moderation. Efforts to generate religious moderation in schools need to transform the curriculum, learning process, educators, and students based on religious moderation.

There are at least several steps related to mainstreaming Islamic education based on religious moderation. First, building a religious life in educational institutions that are tolerant, inclusive, and moderate. Second, holding socialization and instilling Islamic moderation values through various intra and extracurricular activities. Third, building communication and interconnection between educational institutions as cooperation partners in the field of religious life development in educational institutions. The wasathiyah Islamic program must be able to touch the curriculum as well as possible. The approach that can be used is at least four levels of approach. *First,* a contributory approach is an effort to distribute positive impacts for mutual progress. *Second*, the additive approach is integrating *wasathiyah* values into education by first conducting in-depth and thorough studies. *Third*, a transformative approach, where the launched *wasathiyah* Islamic program must have an impact on changing into a positive direction. *Fourth*, the social action approach, namely the *wasathiyah* Islamic activities that will be implemented must be well coordinated to every aspect of interest. There are at least several aspects of development in the subject element to accomplish Islamic education based on religious moderation.

Table 5. Strengthening religious moderation in subjects

No	Subject	The Elements of Moderation
1	Aqidah	Reinterpretation of verses and hadiths that seem to contain the meaning of violence. Actualization of the concepts of *al-wala'* and *baro*,' re-strengthening the aspect of faith (the aspect of faith is not only theocentric but theoanthropocentric), and strengthening the aspect of faith
2	Akhlaq	Re-emphasizing material related to manners towards fellow humans, re-elaboration of the term *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, strengthening the aspect of tolerance, and reaffirming the aspect of *ukhuwah* in Islam
3	Fiqh	Strengthening *al-qiyam al-asasiyyah*, which is a universal principle that underlies Islamic law, such as justice, equality, benefit, freedom, *akhlaq karimah*, and *ukhuwah*, as well as describing *fiqh ikhtilaf* in subject matter and the benefits from an Islamic perspective
4	Tarikh	Constructing the learning of tarikh from descriptive to analytical, showing the aspects of historical Islam vis a vis with normative Islam, and displaying *mitsaq* and dialogue between religious communities and the spirit of tolerance between religious communities.
5	Al-Qur'an Hadith	The strengthening of *wasatiyah Islam* through *istiqra'u maknawi* verses and hadiths related to the cultivation of religious moderation normatively and historically by considering the reinterpretation of verses and hadiths considered to contain elements of violence

As an effort to realize Islamic education based on religious moderation, approaches such as problem-solving, inquiry, and discussion need to be implemented. With problem-solving, students are expected to develop a multi-perspective understanding regarding religious beliefs, religious rituals, religious experiences, and religious communities. Inquiry stimulates students to discover new knowledge and broaden their horizons. Meanwhile, discussions provide students with values that enable them to appreciate the opinions and ideas of others. Educators and students must be able to embody the values of wasathiyah both inside and outside of school.

Conclusion

The phenomena of multiculturalism, plurality, and diversity have become an inevitability. These differences are not only ideological, encompassing varying mindsets, ideologies, credos, worldviews, belief systems, and cultures, but also physical differences such as ethnicity, skin color, and physical appearances. Given these differences, the aspect of *wasathiyah* becomes a solution-oriented alternative to realize a middle-path Muslim community. This is a community that excels and appreciates differences, respects followers of other religions, and avoids extremism in faith. In the context of meaning and the essence of *Islam Wasathiyah*, it refers to Islam that applies values of goodness, justice, deliberation, and kindness. To realize Islamic education based on *wasathiyah*, it is necessary to reformulate the curriculum, the learning process, the material, and the knowledge of both educators and students in relation to the goals of practicing Islam.

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YI: Conceptualization, Methodology, ZN: Writing- Original draft preparation. SS and S: untukSupervision.: All authors: Writing- Reviewing and Editing.

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