

Moderate Character Education In Community Empowerment And The Prevention Of Radical Behavior Among The Congregation Of Asy Syifa Mosque, Presak Narmada

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Abstrack: Moderate character education is an important strategy for preventing the development of radical behavior within society. This study aims to analyze the role of moderate character education in empowering the congregation and preventing radical behavior among the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque in Presak, Narmada District, West Lombok Regency. This study employs a qualitative approach using a phenomenological method to understand the experiences and practices of moderation that have developed within the congregational community. The findings show that moderate character education is implemented through dialogue, deliberation, the provision of participatory spaces, and the strengthening of the values of tolerance and togetherness. Congregants who show indications of radical views are not immediately stigmatized; instead, they are invited to engage in discussion and are involved in community activities. In addition, kyai and congregational mentors play an important role in conveying religious teachings that are peaceful, inclusive, and balanced. These findings indicate that moderate character education can strengthen social cohesion and serve as an effective instrument for preventing the development of radical behavior within the community.

Keywords: character education, religious moderation, community empowerment, radicalism.

A. Introduction

Education is a process that plays an important role in developing human potential comprehensively, including intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual aspects. Through education, individuals not only acquire knowledge but also develop character and personality, enabling them to adapt to social changes that occur in society. According to Koesoema (2010), education is a means of developing human potential, including intellectual and relational abilities, creativity, and the formation of moral values that serve as the foundation for social life.

In the context of a multicultural society such as Indonesia, education has a strategic function in instilling the values of tolerance, moderation, and respect for diversity. Individuals who receive good education tend to have the ability to think critically, remain open to differences, and avoid being easily influenced by extremist ideologies. Therefore, character education is one of the important instruments for building harmonious social life while preventing the development of radical ideologies within society.

Radicalism is one of the social challenges faced by Indonesian society in the era of globalization. The phenomenon of radicalism is not only related to religious aspects but also involves social, political, cultural, and group identity issues. Bassam Tibi (2012) explains that radicalism is more strongly influenced by political and ideological factors than by theological aspects alone. In its development, radical groups often use religious symbols to gain legitimacy for their views and actions. This condition has the potential to create intolerance, exclusivism, and even social conflict that may threaten pluralistic social life.

Various efforts have been made to prevent the development of radicalism, one of which is through character education. Character education serves to instill moral values, tolerance, responsibility, and respect for diversity so that individuals develop resilience against the influence of extremist ideologies. A study conducted by Roby and Muhid (2022) shows that character education makes an important contribution to preventing the development of radicalism in pesantren environments through the strengthening of national values, tolerance, and religious moderation.

Nevertheless, most previous studies have focused on the implementation of character education in formal educational institutions such as schools and pesantren. Studies on moderate character education that develops within mosque-based religious communities remain relatively limited. In fact, mosques function not only as places of worship but also as centers of education, social guidance, and the strengthening of religious values in society. Therefore, it is important to examine how moderate character education is implemented within mosque congregational communities as an effort to empower society and prevent radical behavior.

The congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque in Presak, Narmada District, West Lombok Regency is one religious community that actively develops the values of religious moderation through congregational guidance activities. Through various Islamic study sessions, religious discussions, and social empowerment activities, the congregation is encouraged to develop tolerant and inclusive attitudes and to respect differences. These practices are worth examining because they demonstrate concrete efforts to build community social resilience against the influence of radicalism.

The novelty of this study lies in its analysis of the implementation of moderate character education within a mosque congregational community as a form of community empowerment and prevention of radical behavior. This study not only examines the internalization process of religious moderation values but also explains the strategies used to build participation, tolerance, and social resilience among congregants against the influence of radical ideologies.

Based on the discussion above, this study aims to analyze: (1) how moderate character education plays a role in empowering the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque in Presak Narmada, and (2) how moderate character education contributes to preventing the development of radical behavior within the congregational environment. The findings of this study are expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of studies on character education and religious moderation, as well as a practical contribution to strengthening community social resilience in facing the challenges of radicalism.

B. Theoretical Review

1. F.W. Foerster's Theory of Character Education

Character education is an educational approach that emphasizes the formation of individual personality and morality through the internalization of ethical values in everyday life. One influential figure in the development of the concept of character education is Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster (1869–1966), a German pedagogue who placed moral and spiritual dimensions as the main foundation of the educational process. According to Foerster, education is not only intended to develop intellectual abilities but also to form strong character, enabling individuals to act based on the moral values they believe in (Adisusilo, 2012).

Foerster criticized educational approaches that overly emphasize rational aspects and individual freedom without being balanced by the formation of moral responsibility. In his view, education should produce individuals who have integrity, are able to exercise self-control, and are responsible for their social lives. Character is understood as a moral identity that provides direction for individuals in making decisions and acting amid continuous social change.

From Foerster's perspective, there are four main characteristics that serve as indicators of strong character formation. First, inner order, namely an individual's ability to make moral values

a guide for action. Second, coherence, namely consistency between values, speech, and action, allowing a person to possess credibility in the eyes of others. Third, autonomy, namely the ability to internalize values derived from the surrounding environment into personal awareness. Fourth, fidelity and constancy, namely the ability to uphold the values one believes in and consistently maintain the moral commitments one has chosen.

These four aspects are relevant to this study because moderate character education among the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque aims to shape individuals who are able to develop tolerant attitudes, respect differences, and reject various forms of extremism and radicalism. Thus, Foerster's theory is used as a foundation for analyzing the process of forming moderate character in the life of the congregation.

2. Moderate Character Education

Moderate character education is the process of instilling moral values oriented toward balance, tolerance, justice, and respect for diversity. Character education is not only intended to shape knowledgeable individuals but also to produce citizens who possess moral integrity and social responsibility. According to Salahudin and Alkrienciehie (2013), character is a set of values that forms the basis for how a person thinks, behaves, and acts in social life.

In Indonesia's multicultural context, moderate character education is highly important because it serves as a means of strengthening unity and social cohesion. Moderate character education teaches the values of tolerance, respect for differences, inclusivity, and the ability to resolve conflict peacefully. These values are in line with the principles of religious moderation, which emphasize balance (*tawassuth*), tolerance (*tasamuh*), justice (*i'tidal*), and deliberation (*syura*).

Moderate character education also plays a role in building community social resilience against various extremist ideologies. Through the internalization of moderation values, individuals are expected to develop critical attitudes, openness to dialogue, and resistance to ideologies containing elements of intolerance and violence. Therefore, moderate character education not only has an educational function but also serves as an instrument of community empowerment in maintaining social harmony and peaceful religious life.

3. The Concept of Radicalism

Radicalism is an ideology that seeks rapid and fundamental change in social, political, or religious life, which in certain practices may be carried out through extreme and violent means. In the context of religious life, radicalism is often marked by intolerance toward other groups, claims of absolute truth, exclusivism, and rejection of diversity (Arifin, 2014).

According to Bassam Tibi (2012), radicalism is more strongly influenced by ideological and political factors than by theological aspects alone. Radical groups tend to use religious symbols to legitimize their actions. As a result, radicalism may develop into a threat to democratic life, social harmony, and national integration.

From an Islamic perspective, behavior that leads to excessiveness is known as *ghuluw*, namely an attitude of going beyond limits in understanding and practicing religious teachings. Islam fundamentally teaches balance, tolerance, and respect for humanity. Therefore, various forms of violence, intolerance, and extremism contradict the basic principles of Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin*.

Based on the explanation above, moderate character education can be understood as one preventive strategy for stopping the development of radicalism. Through the strengthening of tolerance, dialogue, respect for diversity, and active involvement in social life, individuals will develop stronger resilience against the influence of radical ideology. Thus, moderate character education becomes an important framework in this study for understanding efforts toward empowerment and the prevention of radical behavior among the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque in Presak Narmada.

4. Theory of Community Empowerment

Community empowerment is a process of increasing the capacity of individuals and groups so that they are able to independently control their social, economic, and political lives. According to Jim Ife (2013), empowerment is an effort to provide communities with opportunities to gain access to resources, improve their capacities, and strengthen their participation in development processes. Empowerment is not only oriented toward improving economic welfare but also toward strengthening social capacity and community independence.

Paulo Freire (1970) explains that empowerment is carried out through a process of critical awareness, or **conscientization**, namely the ability of communities to understand the problems they face and to become actively involved in processes of social change. From this perspective, education becomes an important instrument for building community awareness and participation.

Edi Suharto (2017) explains that empowerment is both a process and a goal. As a process, empowerment is carried out by strengthening the capacity of communities so that they are able to meet their life needs. As a goal, empowerment produces communities that are independent, self-confident, and able to participate in social life.

Meanwhile, Robert Chambers (1995) emphasizes the importance of community participation as the core of empowerment. Communities must be positioned as subjects of development who have the capacity to determine the direction of their own social change.

In the context of this study, moderate character education can be understood as a form of social empowerment because it provides space for participation, builds critical awareness of the dangers of radicalism, strengthens the social capacity of the congregation, and enhances the community's ability to maintain social harmony and peaceful religious life.

C. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative approach using a phenomenological method to understand the experiences and practices of moderate character education in the life of the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque, Presak Narmada. The paradigm used in this study was an interpretive paradigm, which seeks to understand the meaning of social actions from the perspective of the research subjects.

The research was conducted over four months, from January to April 2024. The research informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, based on the consideration that they had knowledge, experience, and active involvement in the activities of the Asy Syifa Mosque congregation.

A total of 10 informants were interviewed, consisting of the congregation leader, secretary, Islamic study speakers, community figures, and active congregants. Data were collected through:

1. Participatory observation of Islamic study sessions and congregational activities.
2. In-depth interviews with key informants.
3. Documentation in the form of activity archives, photographs, and organizational documents.

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking with the main informants to confirm the consistency between the researcher's interpretation and the realities found in the field.

D. Research Findings

1. The Stage of Encounter and Introduction with the Congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque

The encounter with the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque was planned and intentional, with the aim of obtaining data. This process was assisted by several colleagues who were part of the Islamic study congregation, in order to facilitate the collection of data that matched the criteria of the research subjects. This stage was expected to run smoothly because all members of the Islamic study congregation were very open when the researcher explained the objectives of the study on moderate character education in empowerment and the prevention of radical behavior. This openness was influenced by the increasing public concern over the spread of radical ideas within society through hidden or indirect means, which sometimes becomes a source of anxiety among ordinary people who tend to have difficulty distinguishing between truly radical figures and those who are simply religious preachers. Such confusion may later lead to anarchic attitudes and create symptoms of conflict.

The determination of interview times was also relatively easy because all members of the Islamic study congregation were willing to provide information and did not refuse to be interviewed. During the interview process, both the researcher and the research subjects appeared to feel no pressure; everything took place in an open and relaxed manner. This situation made it easier to conduct research within the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque. Every time the

researcher came to the research location, they were welcomed very politely, which seemed to reflect the values of moderate character education.

2. Building Relationships with the Congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque

Building relationships with research subjects is very important for conducting effective and ethical research, as it helps researchers obtain relevant data related to the issues being studied. There are several aspects that must be considered in establishing relationships with research subjects, one of which is clear communication. Clear communication provides direction that does not confuse the research subjects. The researcher also explains all necessary information, including potential risks and benefits, so that the subjects can make appropriate decisions regarding their participation.

In building relationships with the research subjects, the researcher required assistance from field facilitators. During the process of identifying research subjects, these field facilitators were given a general overview of the study. Through this process, they were able to provide preliminary understanding to the research informants regarding who was conducting the research and the purpose of the study. This was important so that the researcher could build closeness with the research subjects, especially considering that the issue being studied could be regarded as a sensitive issue within the community.

The initial step that needed to be taken was to build connectivity and a personal approach between the researcher and the research subjects in order to facilitate the collection of the desired data. Through this process, the researcher did not encounter difficulties in building relationships with the research subjects or the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque. The setting of the meetings also supported a sense of familiarity, as the researcher focused the research during the Islamic study sessions. For other informants or research subjects who were unable to provide information during the study sessions, the researcher asked permission to interview them at their homes.

The introductions and interviews were conducted informally, and from the beginning, the research subjects were open with the researcher. This was because the research subjects stated that, once they had agreed to be interviewed, they had prepared themselves to be open with the researcher.

3. List of Administrators of the Asy Syifa Mosque Congregation

Below are several names of members of the Asy Syifa Mosque congregation, presented in table form along with the capacities assigned to them by the community and the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque.

Table 1: List of Administrators of the Asy Syifa Mosque Congregation

No.	Name	Highest Level of Education	Capacity in the Asy Syifa Mosque Congregation
1	Herman, SP.	Bachelor's Degree	Chairperson
2	Mukaddihan, SP.	Bachelor's Degree	Secretary
3	Dr. Zaenudin, M.Ag.	Doctoral Degree	Speaker
4	Dr. H. M. Syarifudin, M.Pd.	Doctoral Degree	Speaker
5	Muammar Fauzi, M.Pd.	Master's Degree	Speaker
6	Drs. H. Mustamin	Bachelor's Degree	Speaker
7	Drs. H. Ahmad Fauzi	Bachelor's Degree	Speaker
8	Andria Azmi, S.Pd.	Bachelor's Degree	Speaker
9	Hamzan Wadi	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant
10	Suwandi	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant
11	Ihsan Ma'at	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant
12	M. Haekal Asro	Senior High School	Congregant
13	Burhanudin	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant
14	Edwin Adriadi	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant
15	Budi Prayitno	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant
16	Sahudin	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant
17	Sopian Hadi	Senior High School	Congregant
18	Nuralim	Islamic Junior High School	Congregant

19	Sukriadi	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant
20	Ihsan Masyat	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant
21	Hj. Nasrah	Bachelor's Degree	Congregant
22	Inak Musleh	Elementary School	Congregant
23	Ibu Astriani	Islamic Junior High School	Congregant
24	Inak Kamariah	Junior High School	Congregant
25	Hj. Munaseh	Senior High School	Congregant
26	Inak Sarilah	Junior High School	Congregant
27	Inak Rohaeniah	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant
28	Bapak Khaeril Anwar	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant
29	Bpk. Zulahda	Islamic Senior High School	Congregant

4. Identity of the Asy Syifa Mosque Congregation

The following table presents data on the research subjects selected based on the criteria determined through purposive sampling. The research subjects served as data sources, both as primary data sources, namely members of the Asy Syifa Mosque congregation, and as secondary data sources, namely community figures who were concerned with the prevention of radical ideology.

Table 2: Identity of the Asy Syifa Mosque Congregation / Research Subjects

No.	Name	Highest Level of Education	Capacity as Research Subject
1	Dr. Zaenuddin, M.Ag.	Doctoral Degree	Speaker
2	Muammar Fauzi, M.Pd.	Master's Degree	Speaker
3	Rahma Harian, SIP	Bachelor's Degree	Mosque congregant
4	Andria Azmi, S.Pd.I	Bachelor's Degree	Speaker

5	Drs. H. Ahmad Fauzi	Bachelor's Degree	Speaker
6	Mukaddihan	Bachelor's Degree	Secretary/Speaker
7	Drs. H. Mustamin	Bachelor's Degree	Speaker
8	Suwandi	Islamic Senior High School	Mosque congregant
9	Herman, SP.	Bachelor's Degree	Chairperson/Speaker
10	Burhanudin	Islamic Senior High School	Mosque congregant

5. Moderate Character Education

Character education has been developed within Indonesian education, particularly through educational approaches that instill character by presenting humanistic and cultural values found in Indonesia, both in social, national, and state life, as reflected in the principle of diversity expressed through *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. There is also a specific meaning of national education, namely the formation of Indonesian citizens' character through character education by instilling national, humanistic, and cultural values of the Indonesian nation (Sukiyat, 2020, p. 31).

In instilling values within society, the focus is not only on moral values related to national and state life, but also on the values of local wisdom. These values can, in turn, help suppress the emergence of radical views within society and transform it into a philosophical way of thinking that contains a comprehensive foundation of character. As explained by Zaenudin, when radical views exist within society, what needs to be emphasized is inviting the community to discuss the importance of moderate character education so that their conscience can be enlightened based on the principle of respecting others and fulfilling their responsibilities as members of a social system. The community should also be invited to discuss the moral problems they face and encouraged to think about how they can contribute to the social system. They should be given real experiences of participation within their community and encouraged to do positive things in order to change their future, including what must be prepared from the present so that they can make a positive contribution to their surrounding environment.

The appropriateness of the methods chosen by religious speakers, preachers, or *kyai* in delivering material affects how well the process of character education works in empowering

mosque congregants or the wider community to minimize the spread of radicalism within society. This is in line with Foerster's view, which is reflected in four fundamental characteristics that must be possessed: "inner order, coherence, autonomy, fidelity, and constancy." These characteristics later become the theoretical foundation for moderate-based character education.

In essence, the main objective of character education is to create a strong nation with citizens who possess noble character, morality, tolerance, and cooperation. Both academic and non-academic communities must build the principles of character formation based on religion, Pancasila, and culture in order to achieve this objective. These are the values that shape character. In line with Hj. Nasrah's statement, the government is very serious about preventing radicalism, alongside frequent warnings and appeals from security elements to remind, protect, and monitor one another. In various corners of villages, subdistricts, and city or regency government areas, many symbols and posters can be found encouraging public security and order, with phrases such as "prevent radicalism," "fight drugs," and others

6. Radicalism

In the current reform era, ideologies that use religion as their basis have re-emerged strongly, reflected in ideologies, beliefs, and schools of thought such as radicalism, fundamentalism, and sectarianism, all of which have the potential to give rise to terrorism and even separatism. The increasing number of actions that reject diversity, oppose plurality, and reject Pancasila as the foundation of the state represents seeds that may encourage terrorist attitudes, behavior, and actions within society. The rise of radicalism that leads to terrorism actually begins with the seeds of intolerant thought and action that affect a small segment of groups within Indonesian society (Najahan Musyafak and Lulu Choirun Nisa, 2020).

The challenge for a heterogeneous society such as Indonesia is certainly the effort to create peaceful coexistence, minimize conflict and friction between groups, ethnicities, communities, and followers of particular religions. Therefore, every citizen must be educated, guided, and nurtured with the spirit of peaceful living in diversity, coexistence, mutual respect, and appreciation of differences. They must also remain harmonious and cooperate with one another in social affairs in order to create peaceful national and state life within a controlled social climate as part of the strength of Indonesia's national character. This guidance must be carried out in a structured,

systematic, and well-planned manner, one of which is through character-strengthening education. Through character-strengthening education, citizens can be instilled with the values of religious moderation, the attitude of maintaining harmony amid differences, tolerance, and love for others as part of the unity of the Indonesian nation.

a. Radicalism: A Truth or an Accusation

The transitional period that preceded the emergence of Islamic radicalism was essentially a struggle to break free from colonial rule. Initiated and driven by Western-educated figures, this struggle shifted toward patriotic aspirations, the implementation of parliamentary democracy, and the adoption of European laws. After 1920 and the collapse of autonomous kingdoms, Islamic reformism lost its association with certain state structures and political institutions. Patriotism asserted itself as the main movement, and parliamentary democracy became an appealing solution to all the problems faced. After being marginalized from the modern state and economy, Islamic reform transformed into a movement (Youssef M. Choueiri, 2003).

Hardline activists are actually aware of their involvement in a “war of ideas” to convince Muslims throughout the world that their ideology is the only correct interpretation of Islam. They understand Islam in a monolithic way and reject local and spiritual variants of Islam as practiced by Muslims in general. In fact, it is clear that throughout the world Islam will never be identical in its religious practice. As Mark R. Woodward explains, “Islam in Arabia and Islam in Indonesia are not wrong; rather, they are variants of Islam.” However, hardliners refer to these practices as incorrect and deviant forms of Islamic practice because they are considered contaminated and no longer pure.

As explained by Zaenudin, teachers, mosque congregation mentors, and kyai are able to teach and promote critical thinking and evidence-based reasoning. In this way, moderate character education encourages individuals to question, analyze, and evaluate any emerging traces of radical teachings within society or institutions from different perspectives, rather than accepting extremist dogma or ideology without scrutiny. Furthermore, improving critical thinking skills and evidence-based reasoning, supported by concrete data, has a very significant impact

in making individuals less vulnerable to radical ideologies that rely on manipulation and emotional appeal.

H. Mustamin explained that society must emphasize peaceful coexistence and instill tolerance, which later becomes the foundation for the creation of moderate character education filled with tolerance and respect for others. By prioritizing these values, individuals within the mosque congregation are less likely to adopt radical beliefs that encourage violence, exclusion, or extremism. In addition, engagement with diverse perspectives, beliefs, and communities should be encouraged. Exposure to different ideas fosters understanding, empathy, and respect, thereby reducing the possibility of radical behavior driven by ignorance and prejudice.

In Indonesia, the term radical is used to describe hardline Islamic groups that do not accept differences in thought or culture, while their religious understanding tends to be literal and their actions radical. These groups differ from other Islamic groups commonly referred to as moderate (Anah, 2021). As explained by Suwandi, one member of the Asy Syifa Mosque congregation, radical views primarily require an attitude of mutual respect so that ethics in religious life can be realized. For example, in the practice of visiting graves and holding nine-day remembrance prayers for the deceased, such practices should not be problematized. They may be understood as forms of community belief framed within religion, and as long as they do not offend others, they are unlikely to become a threat within society or generate conflict within the religious community.

b. Islam's Call for Moderation (*Wasathiyah*) and Its Warning Against Radicalism

Moderation in Islam is known as *wasathiyah*. According to Salabi, *wasathiyah* comes from Arabic, derived from the root word *wasath*, which means "in the middle" or "between." In principle, *wasathiyah* refers to attitudes and behavior that are neither rigid nor overly flexible, neither partisan nor lacking in principle, and that contain values of goodness. In the context of religious life, religious moderation can be defined as religious views, attitudes, and behavior that uphold the principles of balance and justice, while seeking a middle position between the extreme right, namely radicalism, and the extreme left, namely liberalism. Religious moderation is a

behavioral concept in religious life that avoids fanaticism, remains tolerant and inclusive, and upholds the values of balance and justice (Yusuf Qardhawi, 2004).

Strengthening religious moderation within society does not mean moderating the religion itself, but rather instilling religious attitudes and behavior that follow a middle path or a moderate position. Strengthening religious moderation in society is a breakthrough effort to counter intolerance and radicalism among mosque congregations so that such tendencies may transform into moderate behavior. One approach considered effective in shaping the rational awareness of society, as reflected in moderate thinking and behavior, is to include religious moderation in every lecture or sermon delivered by religious speakers or kyai.

A culture of moderate thinking is a manifestation of religious understanding. This religious understanding is internalized within society so that people act and respond to contemporary phenomena based on the consideration of religious values. Meanwhile, the expression of the community's religious understanding is reflected in a way of life that is multicultural, moderate, and tolerant in national and state life.

7. Theoretical Analysis

1. Inner Order: Internalization of Religious Moderation Values

The research findings show that moderate character education within the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque is carried out through the strengthening of tolerance, respect for differences, and awareness of peaceful coexistence. These values are instilled through Islamic study sessions, religious discussions, and social community activities.

Based on Foerster's theory, this condition indicates the formation of **inner order**, because the congregation makes the values of moderation a guide in acting and interacting with other groups.

2. Coherence: Consistency between the Congregation's Values and Behavior

The findings show that the mentors and congregants do not merely convey the importance of tolerance, but also practice it in everyday life through deliberation, dialogue, and social involvement. This condition reflects the dimension of coherence in Foerster's theory, namely the alignment between the values believed in and the concrete behavior displayed in social life.

3. Autonomy: Critical Awareness of Radical Ideology

The research findings show that the congregation is given space to discuss religious and social issues openly. This dialogical approach encourages congregants to develop critical thinking skills so that they do not easily accept religious information or doctrines in a textual and extreme manner.

This finding indicates the presence of the dimension of autonomy, namely the individual's ability to consciously internalize values and use them as a basis for decision-making.

4. Fidelity and Constancy: Commitment to Maintaining Social Harmony

Moderate character education, carried out continuously, has shaped the congregation's commitment to maintaining harmony, respecting differences, and rejecting various forms of violence committed in the name of religion.

This finding reflects the dimension of fidelity and constancy, namely steadfastness in maintaining the values of religious moderation as a principle of social life.

8. Moderate Character Education as a Form of Social Empowerment

Based on the perspectives of Jim Ife, Paulo Freire, Edi Suharto, and Robert Chambers, moderate character education implemented within the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque represents a form of social empowerment because it provides space for participation, increases critical awareness, and strengthens the social capacity of the congregation.

Moderate character education does not only function as a means of moral guidance but also serves as a mechanism for strengthening community social resilience in facing the threat of radicalism. Through dialogue, deliberation, and community participation, congregants are given the opportunity to develop social skills, build solidarity, and strengthen social cohesion in community life.

E. Conclusion

The conclusions that can be drawn from the study on moderate character education in empowering and preventing radical behavior are as follows:

1. Moderate character education has its own way of empowering the community, namely the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque, so that it can reduce or prevent the emergence of radical views. If there are congregants who are later indicated to have radical views, other congregants do not immediately justify or stigmatize them. Instead, the congregation provides space for them through discussion or deliberation regarding the dangers of intolerance, whether in the form of radical views or radical movements. They are also given opportunities to participate in their community so that they do not feel marginalized, and are encouraged to engage in positive actions to change their future, enabling them to make positive contributions to their surrounding environment.
2. The way moderate character education prevents radical behavior within the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque is by emphasizing the importance of peaceful coexistence and instilling tolerance. The *kyai* or mosque congregation mentors are able to provide accurate and balanced religious teachings by promoting the peaceful and inclusive aspects of religious scripture. They are also able to foster a sense of belonging and community. The *kyai*, as religious speakers, are encouraged to offer guidance and exemplary conduct in order to develop knowledgeable and respected individuals who uphold the principles of religious moderation.

This study found that the flow of radicalization occurs in society due to a lack of knowledge about radical views and about ways to empower communities affected by radical ideology. However, in the congregation of Asy Syifa Mosque, it was found that moderate character education has begun to be taught, although still on a small scale.

F. Recommendations

1. This study focuses on how moderate character education empowers and prevents radical behavior within a mosque congregation. Therefore, further research is needed on issues

related to the importance of moderate character education in countering the flow of radicalization within society.

2. After examining this study, it is hoped that readers will be able to identify new steps in reducing the spread of radicalization within mosque congregations on a small scale, as well as within society and the state on a broader scale. In this way, social and national harmony can be created in accordance with the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*.

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