Article

Religious moderation concept in Israel, United Kingdom, and Indonesia: a systematic literature review

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ABSTRACT:

Religious moderation is a program of the world government after the 9/11 terror in America. The social disparity between religious people, especially Muslims, has increased sharply, known as Islamophobia. This study aims to determine the standards of religious moderation in three countries, namely Israel, the United Kingdom (UK) and Indonesia. Research with a systematic literature review (SLR) of several related articles produced nine kinds of literature that will be discussed. The results of this study show that the term religious moderation with various indicators has differences in each country. This is because the religious moderation program is very close to political and power issues in a country. Likewise, the dominant religious organization in a country becomes the face and direction of religious moderation.

Keywords: *Religious education, Systematic literature review, Islamic education*

INTRODUCTION

Since the tragedy of the 9/11 attacks, western Muslims have felt isolated and confined and cornered in association with nonmuslim communities.[4] Although more than 20 years have passed, Islamophobia remains inherent in America, Britain and other western countries.[5] Two groups were studied after the incident, namely moderate Islamic groups and radical Islamist

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[4] Adrian Cherney and Kristina Murphy, "What Does It Mean to Be a Moderate Muslim in the War on Terror? Muslim Interpretations and Reactions," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 9, no. 2 (May 3, 2016): 159–181.

[5] Liz Mineo, "Muslim Americans Reflect on the Impact of 9/11," *Harvard Gazette*, September 9, 2021, accessed January 7, 2022, https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/09/muslim-americans-reflect-on-the-impact-of-9-11/.

groups.[6] First is considered a true Islam that continues to be echoed by Muslim-majority countries such as Indonesia.[7] Furthermore, the second group became enemies that all countries had to fight. The declaration of war on terror from the radical side by the United States government has changed issues around the world, including in Indonesia.[8]

The impact of the desecration of Islam's image related to terrorism, countries; particularly the majority of the Muslim population, denouncing acts of terror committed by jihadist groups. More than that, after the *Islamic State* (IS) appearance in the Middle East, condemnation and criticism from various quarters are sharper.[9] This is not without reason. The image of Islam that brings peace-loving and tolerance, and teaches noble teachings is simply tainted by groups in the name of Islam.[10] What Muslims are going through in the west as well as in the east is very important to study.

Indonesia as a country that contains a lot of diversity consisting of a diversity of tribes, nations, languages, customs and religions, today is often exposed to the issue of radicalism. These movements on behalf of certain groups are growing day by day and blatantly voicing their ideology. Acts of terror, kidnapping, assault, and even bombing are increasingly rampant. Of the various kinds of diversity owned by the Indonesian state, religious diversity is the strongest in shaping radicalism in Indonesia. The emergence of extremist groups that are increasingly expanding their wings is factored in various things, such as the sensitivity of religious life, the influx of extreme groups from abroad, and even political and governmental problems that have also colored. So, in the midst of this frenzy of radicalism problems, a term called religious moderation.

This phenomenon has developed until now in any part of the world. So, that moderation becomes a term that receives special attention, even becoming one work program of the Indonesian government to be socialized to all citizens.[11] In fact, religious moderation is one material that must be provided by educational institutions ranging from basic education to higher education. Moderation indicators are an important discussion because if one group or individual deviates and violates these indicators, it can be ascertained to fall into the category of radical or liberal. This research was conducted to compare the understanding of the concept of religious moderation in Israel, the UK and Indonesia, overcome the conceptual ambiguity of religious moderation and its indicators and improve understanding of religious moderation in the three countries.

Literatur Review

Moderation is often used in the sense of average, core, standard, or non-aligned. In general, moderate means putting forward a balance in terms of beliefs, morals, and dispositions,

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[6] Nina Ter Laan, "Musical Negotiations of a 'Moderate' versus a 'Radical' Islam in Morocco: Dissonance and the Sonic among Vocal Performers of Islam-Inspired Music," *Religion* 51, no. 2 (April 3, 2021): 214–236.

[7] Serafettin Pektas, "A Comparative Analysis of Three Sunni Muslim Organizations on 'Moderate' and 'Radical' Islam in Egypt, Morocco and Indonesia," *Religion* 51, no. 2 (April 3, 2021): 190–213.

[8] Umer Shahzad et al., "USAID, Official Development Assistance and Counter Terrorism Efforts: Pre and Post 9/11 Analysis for South Asia," *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences* 69 (March 2020): 100716.

[9] Daniel Byman, *Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, and the Global Jihadist Movement: What Everyone Needs to Know*, What everyone needs to know (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[10] Pektas, "A Comparative Analysis of Three Sunni Muslim Organizations on 'Moderate' and 'Radical' Islam in Egypt, Morocco and Indonesia."

[11] Kementerian Agama RI, "Moderasi Beragama," last modified 2017, accessed November 30, 2021, https://www.kemenag.go.id/moderasi-beragama.

both when treating others as individuals, and when dealing with state institutions. Whereas in Arabic, moderation is known as *wasath* or *wasathiyah,* which has equivalent meanings to the words *tawassuth* (middle), *i'tidal* (fair), and *tawazun* (balanced). People who apply the principle of *wasathiyah* can be called *wasiith*. In Arabic too, the word *wasathiyah* is interpreted as the best choice. Whatever word is used, they all imply one common meaning, which is fair, which in this context means choosing a middle ground position among various extreme choices.

Religious moderation (RM) is a paradigm promoted by many Islamic scholars that is characteristic of the Islamic religion as well as reflecting Muslims who must achieve balance in behavior.[12] The term offers meanings that include compassion, tolerance, justice, coexistence among groups of different races, ethnicities, religions and other backgrounds.[13] Based on previous research, the term RM refers to the middle position of religion by balancing actions and opposing blind bigotry, discrimination, non-justice, radicalism, intolerance and misconceptions about religion.[14] According to Schwedler, moderation is a movement from the exclusive and closed and rigid towards adaptive and tolerant of alternative views and a middle ground between the two poles.[15] Moderation is a program that continues to be echoed by countries around the world as an implication of the tragedy terror of the 9/11 bombings in America. So the term moderation comes from the word *moderate* which means medium, sufficient and soft. While in Arabic the term moderation is known as wasatiyyah.[16] Yaakub continued, wasatiyah is easily interpreted as counter radicalism.[17]

Refer to the verse in QS. Al-Baqarah: 143, it is understood that Islam has given a set of rules of revelation that are *washatan* (moderate) or middle, that is, neither exaggerating nor underestimating. The context of this verse is of course, related to the story of the Prophet Isa *alaihisalaam*, in which the Jews overreacted by assuming the Prophet Isa was the son of adultery, while the Nashrani overreacted by declaring the Prophet Isa to be the son of God. Thus, Islam is moderate, that Prophet Isa is the son of the holy virgin Maryam and as His prophet and apostle.

In addition to these verses, there are many more verses and hadiths that command us to be religious without exaggeration. For example, the words of the Prophet Muhammad *Shalallahu Alaihi Wassalam* "O man, stay away from you too exaggerated (overstepping boundaries) attitudes in religion! Because really (the thing) that destroys the people before you is because of the over-the-top attitude in religion. This hadith clearly commands us not to overdo it in variety, in other terms we should be religious according to the which Allah Ta'ala has ordained in His book and in the sunnah of His glorious Prophet.

[12] Mutawali Mutawali, "Moderate Islam in Lombok: The Dialectic between Islam and Local Culture," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 10, no. 2 (December 1, 2016): 309.

[13] Fachri Ali, "Incorporating Values of Moderate Islam for the 21st Century Learners in an English as a Foreign Language Class," *Edukasia Islamika* (June 28, 2018): 18.

[14] Mutawali, "Moderate Islam In Lombok"; Muhamadul Bakir Bin Hj. Yaakub and Khatijah Binti Othman, "A Conceptual Analysis of Wasatiyyah (Islamic Moderation-IM) from Islamic Knowledge Management (IKM) Perspective," *Revelation and Science* 7, no. 1 (July 3, 2017), https://journals.iium.edu.my/revival/index.php/revival/article/view/189.

[15] Jillian Schwedler, *Faith in Moderation: Islamist Parties in Jordan and Yemen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), accessed January 10, 2022, http://ebooks.cambridge.org/ref/id/CBO9780511550829.

[16] Muhamadul Bakir Yaakub and Khatijah Othman, "A Textual Analysis for the Term Wasatiyyah (Islamic Moderation) in Selected Quranic Verses and Prophetic Tradition," *Journal of Education and Social Sciences* 5 (October 2016).

[17] Ibid.

The religious moderation movement is designed for Muslims to adapt to and interact with many diverse cultures and social and complex communities.[18] This is in line with Kear, who stated that, by understanding the values of religious moderation, tensions and differences are no longer the boundary of separation and gaps in social life.[19] So the emergence of the religious moderation movement can be understood as a sosial movement and is loaded with the interference of power. Religious moderation is considered to be a counter attack against two opposing poles, namely radicals and liberals.[20] Religious moderation has indicators, namely committeemen towards the state, tolerance, nondiscrimination and accommodating to local culture.[21] It is this indicator that will determine a person or a group including moderates or radicals.

Being moderate does not mean being weak in religion. Being moderate does not mean that it tends to be open and leads to freedom. It is wrong to assume that a person who is moderate in religion means that he has no militancy, is not serious, or does not really practice his religion because of the importance of moderate diversity for religious people, as well as disseminating this movement. Don't let Indonesia, UK and Israel become an earth full of hostility, hatred, and dissension. Harmony, both in religious and inter-religious communities, is the basic capital of this nation to be conducive and advanced.

METHOD

Systematic literature review (SLR) in this study was carried out to format new research, identify gaps in previous research and produce a summary of existing research results.[22] This study uses a systematic review approach that aims to identify, analyze and discuss indicators of religious tolerance in three countries, Indonesia, America and the United Kingdom. Therefore, the words religious moderation, *Islamic moderation, wasatiyyah, Indonesia, Israel, British, and UK* are the keywords used to search for relevant literature in the following database, namely; *ScienceDirect and ProQuest*. Likewise, the combination of *AND, OR*, and *NOT* in a search strategy in the database. Further, the stages of searching and reviewing literature are described in the following sections.

Inclusion Criteria

Researchers use inclusion filters before performing searches in the data base. First, to ensure the relevance of the literature, only publications are articles and contain religious moderation as well as in three countries. Second, the publication year between 2013 and 2022 to get the latest picture. Third, only English-language publications will be used for this research.

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Martin Kear, "Wasatiyyah and Hamas's Modulating Positions on the Two-State Solution and Israel: Finding the Middle Path," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* (May 11, 2021): 1–19.

[20] Nicholas Chan, "In Moderation of 'Strangers': Terrorism, Ontological (In)Security and Counter-Narratives in Malaysia," *Critical Studies on Security* 8, no. 1 (January 2, 2020): 28–45.

[21] Indonesia and Indonesia, eds., *Moderasi Beragama*, Cetakan pertama. (Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat, Kementerian Agama RI, 2019).

[22] Radzuwan Ab Rashid et al., "Conceptualizing the Characteristics of Moderate Muslims: A Systematic Review," *Social Identities* 26, no. 6 (November 1, 2020): 829–841; Fengfeng Ke, "Designing and Integrating Purposeful Learning in Game Play: A Systematic Review," *Educational Technology Research and Development* 64, no. 2 (April 2016): 219–244; Elisabeth J. H. Spelt et al., "Teaching and Learning in Interdisciplinary Higher Education: A Systematic Review," *Educational Psychology Review* 21, no. 4 (December 2009): 365–378.

Search strategy

In order to obtain adequate literature and to develop a suitable search strategy, the words *Islamic Moderation, Religious Moderation, Wasatiyyah* were identified as the most effective keywords in this study. Search strings are used in the form of combinations such as; *Islamic* moderation OR *Religious moderation OR wasatiyyah* AND Indonesia AND UK AND Israel. These keywords are searched in the title, abstract and keywords in article as the most appropriate form of strategy in SLR.[23]

Identification of relevant literature and exclusion

The literature search is carried out comprehensively in the *ScienceDirect* and *ProQuest* databases which cover the subject areas of *social sciences, art and humanities*. Exclusion from this search *is review articles, encyclopedias, book chapters, and book reviews*, all of which are ignored, so the data contains only meta-analyses and research articles. Before the final analysis, the downloaded literature is checked, and the same or duplicate literature is deleted.[24]

Code and analysis

Coding literature is done by reading existing titles and abstracts, then categorising by researchers using previously created code. The analysis of the objectives, methods and results of each article is carefully considered, as well as the novelty of each literature. Content analysis is used to see messages in different situations; situations here can be in different contexts, social and political. Content analysis is used to see the message to different audiences, and the audience here refers to different readers, listeners or media dividers. Content analysis is used to view messages from different communicators. Content analysis can not only be used to see a picture of a message. Content analysis can also be used to draw conclusions on the causes of a message. In the content analysis that is the focus here is not a description of the message, but on answering the question of why the message content appears in a certain form.

RESULTS

The plot and character of the study netted from the search of 549 literature with previously mentioned keywords. To find out the meaning of moderation and indicators of each country, put in some existing exclusions so that the sum of all becomes 9 works of literature. From the results of the sieve, five works of literature were from Indonesia, two from the UK and two more from Israel. From the study, the indicators of each country are different. Even the indicators of countries and organizations within the country are different. There is an influence of power and politics in formulating this religious moderation because the meaning of moderation and indicators is different from that mentioned in the Quran and Hadith.[25]

Indicators of moderation in Indonesia are committed to the state by recognizing Pancasila as a state ideology, being tolerant, acting nondiscrimination and being able to accept the local culture.[26] Whereas in the UK, moderation indicators are moderate or mediating and
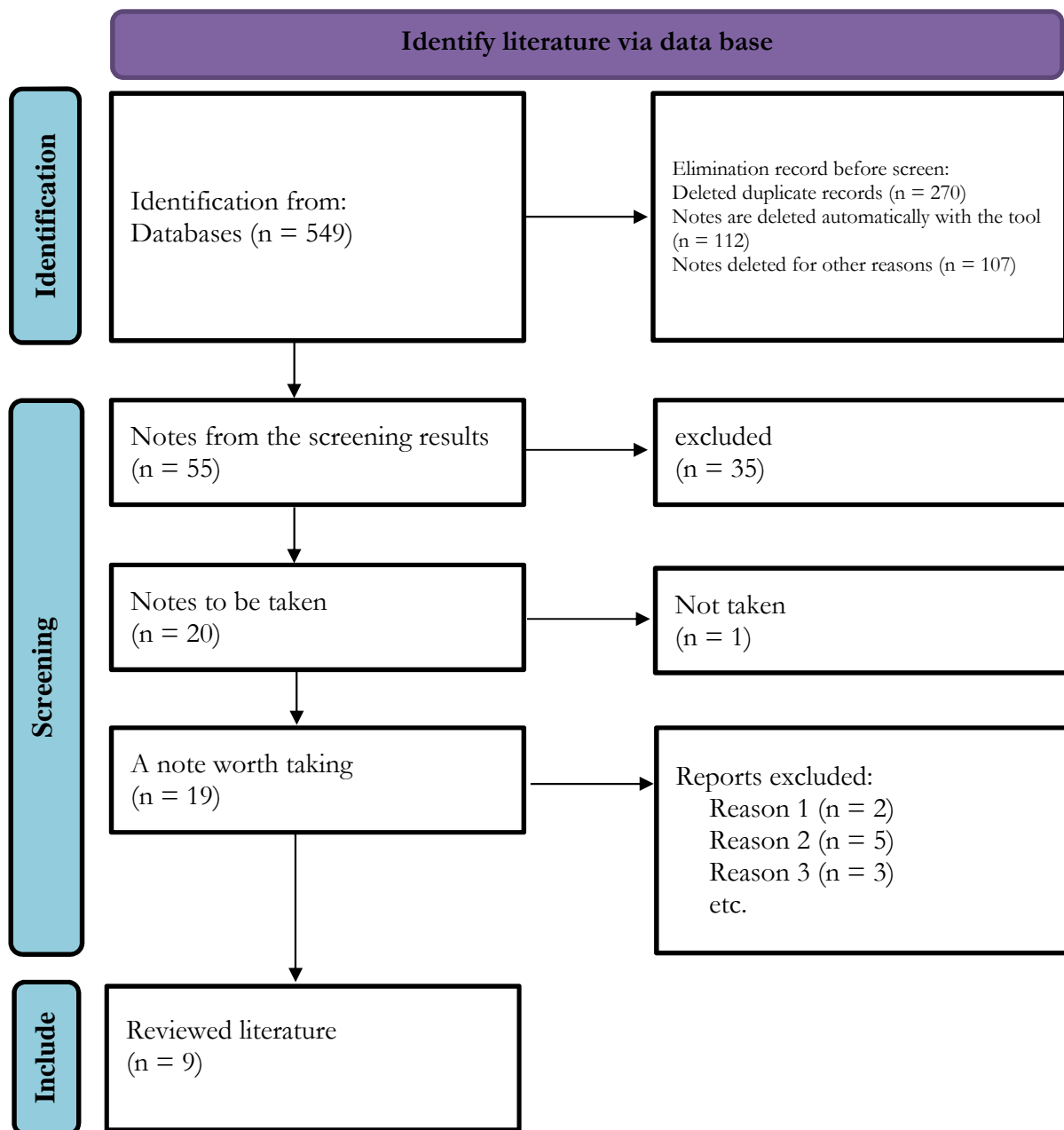
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[23] Spelt et al., "Teaching and Learning in Interdisciplinary Higher Education."

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ab Rashid et al., "Conceptualizing the Characteristics of Moderate Muslims."

[26] Alexander R Arifianto, "Islamic Campus Preaching Organizations in Indonesia: Promoters of Moderation or Radicalism?," *Asian Security* 15, no. 3 (September 2, 2019): 323–342; Asad Asad, D.I Ansusa Putra, and Arfan Arfan, "Being Al-Wasatiyah Agents: The Role of Azharite Organization in the Moderation of Indonesian Religious Constellation," *Islamic Thought and Civilization (JITC)* 11, no. 2 (2021): 125–145; Pektas, "A Comparative Analysis of Three Sunni Muslim Organizations on 'Moderate' and 'Radical' Islam in Egypt, Morocco and Indonesia"; Leonie Schmidt, "Aesthetics of Authority: 'Islam Nusantara' and Islamic 'Radicalism' in Indonesian Film and Social Media," *Religion* 51, no. 2 (April 3,

tolerance.[27] And Israel calls the indicators of religious moderation open, tolerant, not rigid and following the government.[28] Of the three countries, the similarity lies in the meaning of the word tolerance.

Identify literature via data base		
Identification	Identification from: Databases (n = 549)	Elimination record before screen: Deleted duplicate records (n = 270) Notes are deleted automatically with the tool (n = 112) Notes deleted for other reasons (n = 107)
Screening	Notes from the screening results (n = 55)	excluded (n = 35)
	Notes to be taken (n = 20)	Not taken (n = 1)
	A note worth taking (n = 19)	Reports excluded: Reason 1 (n = 2) Reason 2 (n = 5) Reason 3 (n = 3) etc.
Include	Reviewed literature (n = 9)	

2021): 237–258; Margaretha A. Van Es, Nina ter Laan, and Erik Meinema, "Beyond 'Radical' versus 'Moderate'? New Perspectives on the Politics of Moderation in Muslim Majority and Muslim Minority Settings," *Religion* 51, no. 2 (April 3, 2021): 161–168.

[27] Paul Smalley, "A Critical Policy Analysis of Local Religious Education in England," *British Journal of Religious Education* 42, no. 3 (July 2, 2020): 263–274; Adrian Streete, "Moderation and Religious Criticism in William Cartwright's The Ordinary (1635)," *The Seventeenth Century* 31, no. 1 (January 2, 2016): 17–36.

[28] Kear, "*Wasatiyyah* and Hamas's Modulating Positions on the Two-State Solution and Israel"; Craig Larkin and Mansour Nasasra, "The 'Inclusion-Moderation' Illusion: Re-Framing the Islamic Movement inside Israel," *Democratization* 28, no. 4 (May 19, 2021): 742–761.

The number of studies on religious moderation in a period of 8 years is 9 articles. The distribution of articles per country is depicted according to figure 1. From this data, it turns out that there is still little discussion about the definition of religious moderation from various angles. There are only normative and implements in real life. The rest has not found an in-depth study of RM indicators and adequate definitions.
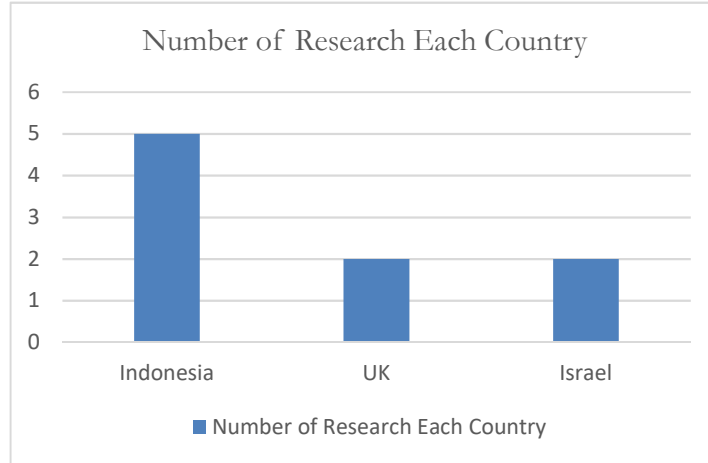

Figure 1 Number of Research

This study Answers the objectives of moderation, is considered a tool to get rid of groups and people who are not in line with what is expected by world governments, and also as a discourse that can represent democratic rights about religious tolerance and plurality. Furthermore, the government has a mission to ground moderation according to what it wants.

Research methods that are widely used in tracing the concept of religious moderation are descriptive and comparative. So that more variative research methods will increase the significance of the research results. SLR method and mix method are interesting to be used as a foundation and foothold in future research. As shown in table 1, many studies are still descriptive analyses.

Table 1 Design Research

No	Design	Year
1	Comparative	2021
2	Critical analysis	2020
3	Descriptive	2021
4	Comparative	2021
5	Comparative	2018
6	Descriptive	2016
7	Descriptive	2021
8	Descriptive	2021
9	Descriptive	2021

Furthermore, individual or group that does not meet the indicators of religious moderation or rejects any of the indicators alone, can already be declared radical or liberal and not moderate. But if indicators of commitment to the state and political power are met, it could still be considered a moderate one. Indicators from each country based on the results of previous studies are identified as shown in the table 2:

Table 2 RM's Indicators

Code	RM's Indicators
1	Tolerance, balance, fairness
2	Tolerance and soft moderation indicators
3	The ways in which Muslims approach the Qur'an and hadith
4	Open mind, tolerant, non-violent, having the same perspective as the government
5	Recognizing Pancasila as the state ideology and supporting the government
6	Finding a middle ground and looking for common ground in response to disputing groups
7	Without liberalism and radicalism
8	In line with the government and following the prevailing political currents
9	Open, not rigid, tolerant

DISCUSSION

The description of the concept of three-state religious moderation that has been previously revealed shows the disagreement of the three countries on religious moderation. Israel represents Shia, the UK represents the Islamic minority, and Indonesia represents Sunni with an Islamic majority. Although the issues echoed about the elements, scope and scope are the same, the arguments offered by each country are very different. From 2013 to 2021, there has been an increasing number a great articles. Especially the significance of the articles that occurred in 2020 and 2021. Figure 1 featured only nine articles in 2022.

The theme of religious moderation is popular among Indonesian researchers. So, the journal goals are donated by the Islamic Campus, both public and private. Possible terms this is only popular in Indonesia, while in other countries, they still use the term intolerance or religious radicalism. The increase in the number of articles in 2020 was triggered by the introduction of religious moderation in the 2020-2024. Theme religious moderation is reflected in the following agenda: 1) Study of sacred texts in religions; 2) State, religion and society; and 3) Diversity in ethnic, cultural, social, and religious traditions. Then, various national and international seminars were held with the theme similar.

The most dominant impact occurs in the world of education. Indonesia, through the Ministry of Religion (MORA) encourages all levels of education to echo religious moderation. The Ministry of Religion conducts various kinds of strategies to socialize the concept of religious moderation through seminars and cooperation with community organizations. There are five indicators offered, namely national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence and accommodating to local traditions or wisdom.[29]

Muslim and Christian organizations in the UK are working together to help the vulnerable and homeless during the Christmas period this year. Several organizations, including Muslim Aid, the Al Khair Foundations, Streetlytes and churches across London, are putting their efforts into providing food and temporary shelter. These diverse religious groups are helping each other to ensure those most in need of protection are protected from the cold and won't go hungry during the holidays when many shops and social services are not operating.

There is an idea about the relationship between religious and political entities in space for social independence insight from Israel. In the context of this notion, every public discourse must be separated from the dynamics of doctrinal and conceptual space of religious propositions. Religion is seen as a private matter that describes the humanist relationship

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[29] Kementerian Agama RI, "Moderasi Beragama."

between humans and their Creator, separated by various political affairs and power. At this stage, dimensions of religion is seen as a supraempirical space between humans and The Divine, meanwhile, politics is considered as an empirical social space of society. The concept of social relations between religions and politics are placed in two different portions so that a process of separation occurs firm relationship between the two entities. At this point, religion is no longer relevant to various political affairs of the power of a society or vice versa.

The concept of moderation promoted by Israel can be seen from political manoeuvres, not in education at the school level. Politics plays a crucial role in justifying a non-moderate person or a country. Israel sticks to the principle of commitment to the government's decision. Commitment to oppression and commitment to the establishment of a State.[30] Israel does consider tolerance as a shield to launch a political mission, so the religious moderation carried by the country has always been associated with the political policies that the government will take.

Conclusion

The term religious moderation, which is strongly echoed by the government, has serious implications if a person or group contradicts and rejects these indicators of religious moderation. Isitlah and the indicator have significant differences between the Quran, hadith and also between countries. This is a boomerang for governments that want to fight radical groups, which will ignite many groups that are not in line with the established indicators. In this study, it was found that, between the countries of Israel, the UK and Indonesia, the indicators of religious moderation are very different, but there is one common indicator, namely tolerance.

The idea of religious moderation is on the agenda of world governments that have a specific purpose for Muslims. Political power and discourse had a major influence on the idea of religious moderation. Likewise, to be moderate, without following the currents of a dominant government and politics, would be difficult to label as moderate. The suggestion for further research, the meaning of tolerance will also experience differences in the limits of its meaning and use, becoming interesting to be discussed and studied.

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Enclosure:

No	First author	Title	Location	Design	Time	Moderation Indicators
1	Serafettin Pektas	A comparative analysis of three Sunni Muslim organizations on moderate and radical Islam in Egypt, Morocco and Indonesia	Mesir Maroko Indonesia	Komparatif	2021	Indicators developed in religious moderation are tolerance, balance, fairness
2	Paul Smalley	A critical policy analysis of local religious education in England	UK	Critical analysis	2020	Tolerance and soft moderation indicators
3	Leonie Schmidt	Aesthetics of authority: *Islam Nusantara* and *Islamic radicalism* in Indonesian film and social media	Indonesia	Descriptive	2021	Indonesia's moderate Islamic indicators determined by the ways in which Muslims approach the Qur'an and hadith

4	Margareth a A. van Es	Beyond 'radical' versus 'moderate'? New perspectives on the politics of moderation in Muslim majority and Muslim minority settings	Indones ia	Compara tive	2021	Indicators of moderation are having an open mind, tolerant, non-violent, having the same perspective as the government
5	Alexander R Arifianto	Islamic Campus Preaching Organizations in Indonesia: Promoters of Moderation or Radicalism?	Indones ia	Compara tive	2018	Recognizing Pancasila as the state ideology and supporting the government
6	Adrian Streete	Moderation and religious criticism in William Cartwright's The Ordinary (1635)	UK	Deskripti ve	2016	Moderation indicators are finding a middle ground and looking for common ground in response to two disputing groups
7	As'ad	Being al-Wasatiyah Agents: The Role of Azharite Organization in the Moderation of Indonesian Religious Constellation	Indones ia	Descripti ve	2021	Moderation indicators are without liberalism and radicalism
8	Craig Larkin	The *inclusion-moderation* illusion: re-framing the Islamic movement inside Israel	Israel	Descripti ve	2021	In line with the government and following the prevailing political currents
9	Martin Kear	Wasatiyyah and Hamas's modulating positions on the two-state solution and Israel: finding the middle path	Israel	Descripti ve	2021	Moderation indicators are open, not rigid, tolerant