# MODERATE INTERPRETATIONS IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEXTBOOKS: A CASE STUDY IN AN INDONESIAN ISLAMIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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**ABSTRACT**

Previous studies have identified radical content in Islamic religious education (PAI) textbooks. However, no comprehensive examination of 12 PAI textbooks in Indonesian Islamic high schools (Madrasah Aliyah) has been conducted. This study aims to address two questions: (1) What forms of non-moderate interpretation threaten religious moderation? (2) What forms of moderate interpretation strengthen religious moderation? This qualitative study gathered data through documentation, interviews with PAI textbook authors, and discussions with PAI experts in scientific forums. Data were analysed using an interactive model. The findings of this study identified three forms of non-moderate interpretations in PAI textbooks that threaten religious moderation: (1) Textual interpretations undermining national commitment (*wataniyyah*), obedience to legislation (*dusturiyyah*), and acceptance of tradition (*urfiyyah*); (2) Partial interpret-tations compromising equality (*mubadalah*), compassion (*rahamutiyyah*), and justice (*adalah*); (3) Monodimensional interpretations on benefit (*maslahat*), humanity (*insaniyyah*), and tolerance (*tasamuh*). Conversely, moderate interpretations that strengthen religious moderation include: (1)

Contextual interpretations combining objective text meanings with relevant subjective contexts; (2) Holistic interpretations integrating comprehensive understanding of the Qur'an through the *maudu'i* (thematic) method with collective expert validation (taqrir jama'i); (3) Multidimensional interpretations merging insights from Islamic science experts (*shar'i*) with those from natural, social, and humanities sciences (*kawni*). The practical implications highlight the need for developing mufassir education programs to produce contextual interpretations, expanding scientific forums for holistic interpretations, and enhancing collaboration between shar'i and kawni experts for multidimensional interpretations.

**Keywords:** Interpretations, Islamic Education Textbooks, Moderate, Religious Moderation

**ABSTRAK**
*Artikel-artikel sebelumnya telah mengidentifikasi konten radikal dalam buku ajar Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI). Namun, belum ada artikel yang secara komprehensif meneliti buku ajar PAI di Madrasah Aliyah di Indonesia. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menemukan jawaban atas dua pertanyaan. Pertama, bagaimana bentuk penafsiran non-moderat yang mengancam moderasi beragama? Kedua, bagaimana bentuk penafsiran moderat yang memperkuat moderasi beragama. Artikel ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif. Pengumpulan data melalui teknik dokumentasi, wawancara dengan penulis buku ajar PAI, dan diskusi ahli dengan para pakar PAI dalam forum ilmiah. Kemudian data dianalisis dengan model interaktif hingga menghasilkan dua temuan utama. Pertama, bentuk-bentuk penafsiran non-moderat dalam buku ajar PAI yang mengancam moderasi beragama di Indonesia adalah tafsir tekstual yang mengancam nilai-nilai komitmen kebangsaan (wataniyyah), ketaatan pada perundang-undangan (dusturiyyah), dan penerimaan terhadap tradisi ('urfiyyah); tafsir parsial yang mengancam nilai-nilai kesetaraan (mubadalah), kasih sayang atau anti-kekerasan (rahamutiyyah), dan keadilan ('adalah); dan tafsir monodimensional yang mengancam nilai-nilai kemaslahatan umum (maslahat), kemanusiaan (insaniyyah), dan toleransi (tasamuh). Kedua, bentuk-bentuk tafsir moderat yang memperkuat moderasi beragama di Indonesia adalah tafsir kontekstual yang memadukan makna objektif teks dengan konteks subjektif yang relevan dengan kehidupan umat muslim Indonesia; tafsir holistik yang memadukan pemahaman komprehensif terhadap isi Al-Qur'an melalui metode maudu'i (tematik) dengan validasi para ahli secara kolektif (taqrir jama'i); dan tafsir multidimensional yang memadukan pemahaman para ahli ilmu-ilmu keIslaman (syar'i) dengan para ahli ilmu-ilmu alam, sosial, dan humaniora (kawni). Implikasi praktis artikel ini adalah signifikansi pengembangan program pendidikan mufasir yang mampu menghasilkan tafsir kontekstual; perluasan forum-forum ilmiah yang melibatkan banyak ahli*

*untuk menghasilkan tafsir holistik; dan peningkatan kolaborasi antara tim ahli syar'i dan tim ahli kawni untuk menghasilkan tafsir multidimensional.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Buku PAI, Madrasah Aliyah, Moderasi Beragama, Tafsir Al-Qur'an, Tafsir Moderat.*

## INTRODUCTION

Many contemporary Islamic "experts" have emerged and "hijacked "Islamic traditions and claim to be the spokespersons representing all Muslims.[1] This issue is aligned with the title of El-Fadl's book, *Speaking in God's Name*, which refers to Islamic experts who interpret Al-Qur'an authoritarian based on highly subjective readings.[2]

Authoritarian interpretations treat Al-Qur'an as a closed and ahistorical corpus. As a result, these reproductive interpretations emphasize classical interpretations considered sacred. Whereas productive interpretations highlight new interpretations that are appropriate for contemporary Muslims' lives.[3] An example of productive interpretation is *maqasidi tafsir* which mediates the two main streams of interpretation, namely textual and contextual.[4] As well as semiotic-based interpretation which functions to

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[1] Omid Safi, "Introduction: The Times They Are a-Changin'-a Muslim Quest for Justice, Gender Equality and Pluralism," in *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism*, ed. Omid Safi (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003), 19.

[2] Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women*, *Oxford: Oneworld Publications* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2023), 2–5.
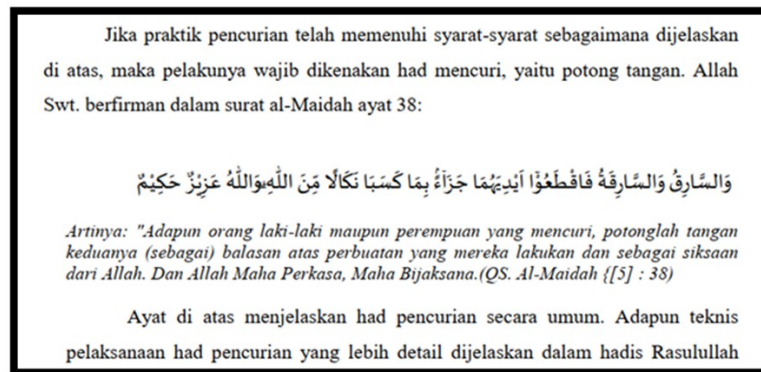
[3] Amin Abdullah, *Islamic Studies Di Perguruan Tinggi, Pendidikan Integratif-Interkoneksi* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2012), 139.

[4] M. Ainur Rifqi and A. Halil Thahir, "Maqasidi Interpretation; Building Interpretation Paradigm Based on Mashlahah," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies* 18, no. 2 (2019): 335–56, https://doi.org/10.20885/millah. vol18.iss2.art7.

show the meaning of the Al-Qur'an, while also being scientific-cally accountable.[5]

The problem is that authoritarian and reproductive interpretations are found in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) textbooks at Islamic senior high schools (MA). However, there has been very little comprehensive analysis of the PAI textbooks that contain some of the following non-moderate interpretations:[6]

*First example*, there is a textual interpretation found in Fiqh Class XI MA textbook as follows:[7]

Jika praktik pencurian telah memenuhi syarat-syarat sebagaimana dijelaskan di atas, maka pelakunya wajib dikenakan had mencuri, yaitu potong tangan. Allah Swt. berfirman dalam surat al-Maidah ayat 38:

وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوْٓا اَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَاۤءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِّنَ اللّٰهِۗوَاللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ

*Artinya: "Adapun orang laki-laki maupun perempuan yang mencuri, potonglah tangan keduanya (sebagai) balasan atas perbuatan yang mereka lakukan dan sebagai siksaan dari Allah. Dan Allah Maha Perkasa, Maha Bijaksana.(QS. Al-Maidah {[5] : 38)*

Ayat di atas menjelaskan had pencurian secara umum. Adapun teknis pelaksanaan had pencurian yang lebih detail dijelaskan dalam hadis Rasulullah

In this example, the author of the book only quotes a textual translation of Al-Qur'an without providing a contextual explanation regarding positive law in Indonesia. This textual interpretation can encourage the academic community to adopt radical ideologies. For example, 23.42% of teachers agreed that the Indonesian government is '*taghut*' (tyrant), as it has taken

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[5] Sukron Kamil, Rizqi Handayani, and Abdurrosyid, "Semiotics As a Standard for Interpretation of Islamic Texts: Studies Based on Science of Balagah and Exegesis," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 21, no. 2 (2023): 493–526, https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v21.i2.1129.

[6] In Indonesia, Islamic high schools are called *Madrasah Aliyah* (MA), and Islamic Religious Education is called *Pendidikan Agama Islam* (PAI).

[7] Atmo Prawiro, *Fikih MA Kelas XI* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2020), 49.

Allah's right as the lawmaker.[8] In other words, textual interpretation is an inhibiting factor in the spread of religious moderation in Indonesia.[9]

In order to avoid the trap of textual interpretation, textbook authors must understand the three categories of Al-Qur'an verses. *First*, the *muhkam* (explicit) verse which only has one meaning. *Second*, the *mutashabihat* (vague) verse which has another meaning beyond the literal meaning. *Third*, verses that do not fall into the *muhkam* or *mutashabihat* categories.[10]

An example of a non-textual interpretation of *Surah al-Ma'idah* [5]: 38 is the interpretation of KH. Afifuddin Muhajir stated that the prescribed punishment (*hadd*) of hand amputation is understood as the maximum punishment. Therefore, when the maximum punishment cannot be applied because the conditions are not met, the punishment that can be applied by a judge is discretionary punishment (*ta'zir*)[11], such as in Articles 362-367 of the Criminal Code, which provides for a maximum sentence of 5 years, life imprisonment, or even the death penalty.

*Second,* Partial Interpretation. This occurs when the author of the book quotes one or two verses, then draws conclusions without comparing them with other relevant verses, as done in thematic exegesis. For example, in Al-Qur'an Hadith XII MA textbook, the author discusses the concept of patience by quoting

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[8] Mehulika Sitepu, "Enam Dari Sepuluh Guru Muslim 'Intoleran', Kemajemukan Harus Masuk Penilaian Akreditasi," www.bbc.com, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/indonesia-45887762.

[9] Zuly Qodir, Haedar Nashir, and Robert W. Hefner, "Muhammadiyah Making Indonesia's Islamic Moderation Based on Maqāsid Sharī'ah," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* 23, no. 1 (2023): 77–92, https://doi.org/10.18326/IJTIHAD.V23I1.77-92.

[10] Sayyed Ziaoddin Olyanasab, Sayyid Mohammad Olyanasab, and Sayyid Majid Nabavi, "A Review and Critique of the Theory of the Speculativeness of the Implication (Ẓannī Al-Dilāla) of the Qurʾān," *Religious Inquiries* 11, no. 1 (2022): 21–39, https://doi.org/10.22034/RI.2022.248925. 1437.

[11] Afifuddin Muhajir, *Fiqh Tata Negara: Upaya Mendialogkan Sistem Ketatanegaraan Islam* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2017), 208.

the text and translation of *Surah al-Baqarah* [2]: 155-157, and then provides the following explanation:[12]

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c. Penjelasan

Sesungguhnya Allah akan menguji kaum muslimin dengan berbagai ketakutan, kelaparan, kekurangan harta, jiwa dan buah-buahan (bahan makanan). Dengan ujian ini kaum muslimin menjadi umat yang kuat mentalnya, umat yang mempunyai keyakinan yang kokoh, jiwa yang tabah, dan tahan uji.

Ada beberapa istilah yang digunakan al-Qur'ân untuk menunjuk sesuatu yang tidak disenangi, antara lain (*musibah*), (*balâ'*), (*'adzâb*), (*'iqâb*) dan (*fitnah*).

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A partial interpretation present the meaning of patience as a passive attitude. However, many other verses explain patience as a proactive attitude, such as *Surah Taha* [20]: 132,

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا

*And order your family to pray and be patient in doing it* (Q.S. Thaha [20]: 132).

Regarding "*wastabir 'alaiha,*" al-Mawardi interpreted it as a proactive attitude:[13]

﴿ وَٱصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا ﴾ أي اصبر على فعلها وعلى أمرهم بها .

*Be patient in praying and order your family to pray.*

Partial interpretations can result in atomistic and reduction-nist understandings that conflict with the values of religious moderation. For example, sectarian conflict in West Sumatra in

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[12] M. Abdul Jalil, *Al-Qur'an Hadis MA Kelas XII* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2020), 22.
[13] Abu al-Hasan 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Habib Al-Mawardi, *Al-Nukat Wa Al-'Uyun: Tafsir Al-Mawardi* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr al-'Ilmiyyah, 2010).

the 18th century, between the Padri who spread puritanical Islam and Muslims who adhered to local culture.[14]

In order to avoid partial interpretations that produce atomistic and reductionist understanding, book writers must master the thematic interpretation method (*maudu'i*) which produces holistic understanding. For example, the understanding of KH Ahmad Dahlan (1869–1923) was moderate, humanist, and non-sectarian.[15] Alternatively, other Muslim figures who were able to compromise between Islam and local culture was Gus Dur through the Indigenousization of Islam, KH. Said Aqil Siradj through *Islam Nusantara*, and Lukman Hakim Saifudin through Religious Moderation.[16]

*Third,* Mono-dimensional Interpretation: This refers to an interpretation from a single perspective without incorporating other perspectives. For example, in Aqidah Akhlak XI MA textbook, the author only discusses the legal status of *liwat* (homosexuality) from the perspective of its prohibition:[17]

Adapun tentang keharaman perbuatan yang termasuk dalam kategori *fahisy* (keji/jijik) dijelaskan oleh QS. QS. al-A'rāf (7): 33 sebagaimana berikut:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ

Artinya: *Katakanlah: "Tuhanku hanya mengharamkan perbuatan yang keji, baik yang nampak ataupun yang tersembunyi, (QS. Al-A'rāf [7]: 33)*

Jika *liwaṭ* disebut dengan *fahisyah*, sementara dalam ayat yang lain ditegaskan bahwa Allah mengharamkan *fahisyah*, maka hal itu menunjukkan dengan jelas tanpa keraguan bahwa *liwaṭ* adalah perbuatan maksiat yang diharamkan Allah Swt.

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[14] Jajang Jahroni, "Ritual, Bid'ah, and the Negotiation of the Public Sphere in Contemporary Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 25, no. 1 (2018): 1–35, https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v25i1.5308.

[15] Mohammad Hasan and Muhammad Taufiq, "Ahmad Dahlan and the Moderate, Humanist, and Non-Sectarian Islam," *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 24, no. 1 (2023): 100–107, https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.24.2023.272.

[16] Moh. Ashif Fuadi et al., "Religious Moderation in the Context of Integration Between Religion and Local Culture in Indonesia," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 19, no. 1 (2024): 47–59, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol19no1.4.

[17] Sihabul Milahudin, *Akidah Akhlak MA Kelas XII* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2020), 52.

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The book author only presents the negative impact of homosexuality from the perspective of Al-Qur'an without comparing it with other perspectives. The impact of monodimensional interpretation is a binary mindset, not a spectrum mindset. At the same time, such one-dimensional interpretations can lead to social polarization, such as adopting a hostile and intolerant attitude towards homosexuals.

Therefore, monodimensional interpretation can be an inhibiting factor in religious moderation. For example, understandding *jihad* in Al-Qur'an only means war. It should not be interpreted in other ways, such as *jihad* against poverty and ignorance.[18] This is reinforced by 301 posts on Instagram from 2016 to 2018, which provide "dark inspiration" in the form of calls for *jihad* through violence.[19]

The preliminary findings from these three non-moderate interpretations became the background for this article. It elaborates on various non-moderate interpretations encountered by previous articles and affirms the religious moderation policy since 2019, which the Ministry of Religious Affairs designated as the Year of Religious Moderation.

Examples of previous articles that found radical content are indoctrination of radicalism through PAI textbooks, has been found by Hasniati (2017) in PAI Senior High School textbooks published by The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (MoECRT), Erlangga, and Yudistira. Ironically, content related to radicalism is mainly found in books published

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[18] Hamdi Muluk, Nathanael G. Sumaktoyo, and Dhyah Madya Ruth, "Jihad as Justification: National Survey Evidence of Belief in Violent Jihad as a Mediating Factor for Sacred Violence among Muslims in Indonesia," *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 16, no. 2 (2013): 101–11, https://doi.org/-10.1111/ajsp.12002.

[19] Lena Frischlich, "#Dark Inspiration: Eudaimonic Entertainment in Extremist Instagram Posts," *New Media and Society* 23, no. 3 (2021): 554–77, https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444819899625.

by MoECRT.[20] Even Hasim (2015) found indications of radicalism in PAI elementary school learning materials, such as religious militancy driven by the teachings of *jihad* and anti-ethnicity towards groups or adherents of other religions, as well as a narrow religious understanding.[21]

Similarly, previous articles that found religious moderation content include Bahri *et al.* (2022), who found religious moderation values in the Islamic financial literacy series books circulating in the community.[22] Meanwhile, Nurochim *et al.* (2020) found multiculturalism values in PAI textbooks at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.[23]

Previous studies that reviewed the strategy of strengthening religious moderation policies promoted by the government were SDIT Assalamah Semarang and SD Putra Kaili Permata Bangsa Palu make various efforts to prevent radicalism, such as selecting PAI textbooks.[24] Another strategy can be implemented is deradicalization through 12 Living Values Education (LVE) as a reference in developing PAI textbooks.[25] This religious mode-

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[20] Hasniati, "Analisis Muatan Radikalisme Dalam Buku Teks PAI SMA" (UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2017), https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/33885.

[21] Moh. Hasim, "Potensi Radikalisme Di Sekolah Studi Terhadap Buku Pendidikan Agama Islam Sekolah Dasar," *EDUKASI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama dan Keagamaan* 13, no. 2 (2015): 255–68, https://doi.org/-10.32729/edukasi.v13i2.242.

[22] Andi Bahri S et al., "Sharia Financial Literature in Promoting Religious Moderation in Indonesia," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 20, no. 2 (2022): 413–44, https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v20i2.1091.

[23] Nurochim Nurochim et al., "Multikulturalisme: Analisis Wacana Kritis Terhadap Teks Dalam Buku Ajar Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 18, no. 1 (2020): 197–222, https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v18i1.775.

[24] Zaimah, "Strategi Menangkal Radikalisme Melalui Pembelajaran PAI Di Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu (SDIT) Assalamah, Bandarjo, Ungaran Barat, Semarang" (UIN Walisongo, 2019), http://eprints.walisongo.ac.id/9960/; Nuhayati and Abdul Hamid, "Radicalism Prevention Through Islamic Religious Education Learning At Elementary School," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 1 (2020): 109–26, https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v6i1.8352.

[25] Syamsul Arifin, "Islamic Religious Education and Radicalism in Indonesia: Strategy of De-Radicalization through Strengthening the Living

ration must be actualized in order to eliminate radical Islamic thought that is not in accordance with Indonesian ideology, such as the tolerant attitude of 926 students in North Sumatra public schools and madrasah in 2021.[26] Conversely, the attitudes of Muslims towards tolerance, both in their personal lives and in the broader societal context, are influenced by their understanding of the Qur'anic text and its interpretation.

The paucity of research that has previously examined PAI textbooks in MA in a comprehensive manner will be addressed by this article, which aims to identify the types of non-moderate interpretations while offering moderate types of interpretations. Therefore, two problem formulations are proposed. First, what types of non-moderate interpretations in PAI books hinder religious moderation? Second, what types of moderate interpretations in the PAI book support religious moderation?

In line with the problem formulation, the article's contribution is twofold: first, it presents empirical evidence of non-moderate interpretations contained in PAI textbooks, and second, it offers moderate interpretations that can serve as a guide to efforts to substantively revise the content of PAI textbooks so that they align with the values of religious moderation in Indonesia.

The identification of non-moderate interpretations and recommendations for moderate interpretations in this article are based on four theories of interpretation, which serve as the theoretical basis. First, contextual interpretation. Rachmawan (2013) identified four operational steps in Saeed's contextual interpretation.[27] Fina (2011) posits that Saeed's interpretation places

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Values Education," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 6, no. 1 (2016): 93–126, https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v6i1.93-126.

[26] Muhammad Zakki, "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Kitab Tasawuf Al-Muntakhabāt Karya KH. Ahmad Asrori Al-Ishaqi," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 19, no. 1 (2021): 269–306, https://doi.org/10.31291/jlk.v19i1.928; Sulaiman Mappiasse and Hayadin, "Students' Religious Tolerance: Comparing Muslim Students at Public Schools and Pesantren," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 16, no. 2 (2022): 326–51, https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2022.16.2.326-351.

[27] Hatib Rachmawan, "Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Kontekstual: Metode Menafsirkan Al-Qur'an Abdullah Saeed," *Afkaruna: Indonesian Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Studies* 9, no. 2 (2011): 148–61, https://doi.org/10.18196/AIIJIS.2013.

significant emphasis on ethical and legal verses, identified as potential sources of complications when Islam encounters modernity.[28] Second, Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics. It can be delineated in four categories: the objective poles of objectivation and distantiation, and the subjective poles of the world of text and appropriation.[29] Ricoeur's hermeneutics distinguishes between the objective pole of the text (Al-Qur'an) and the subjective pole of the reader (the author and interpreter). There will be no confusion between the text of the Qur'an, which is static and eternal (*al-thawabit*), and the author's understanding, which is dynamic and temporary (*al-mutaghayyirat*).[30] Saeed's contextual interpretation and Ricoeur's hermeneutic function as alternative solutions to textual interpretation.

*Third,* thematic interpretation (*maudu'i*) method. Muslim (1989) divides thematic interpretation into keyword, topic and *Surah*.[31] It can utilize a deductive or inductive approach, starting from Al-Qur'an or social reality, thus producing an applicative-solution interpretation.[32] This results in an applicative-solution interpretation as an alternative to partial interpretation.

*Fourth*, El-Fadl's hermeneutics. It is a response to authoritarian interpretation, which is truth-claiming, despotic, intolerant, and literal. It disregards *maqasid shariah*, rationality, and Wes-

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[28] Lien Iffah Naf'atu Fina, "Interpretasi Kontekstual: Studi Pemikiran Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Abdullah Saeed," *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 12, no. 1 (2011): 159–180, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v12i1.707.

[29] Haryatmoko, *Membongkar Rezim Kepastian: Pemikiran Kritis Post-Strukturalis* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2016), 91–92.

[30] Mohammed Rosidin, "Reading Tafsīr Tarbawī (Qurānic Educational Interpretation) of Abuddin Nata from the Perspective of Paul Ricoeur's Hermeneutics," *AlBayan* 16, no. 1 (2018): 1–21, https://doi.org/10.1163/22321969-12340056.

[31] Musthafa Muslim, *Mabahits Fi Al-Tafsir Al-Mawdhu'I* (Damaskus: Dar al-Qalam, 1989), 21–23.

[32] Lilik Ummi Kaltsum and Ahmad Syaifuddin Amin, "The Development of Qur'anic Thematic Exegesis in Indonesia: Historical Landscape and Shifts of Authority," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 25, no. 2 (2024): 296–319, https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v25i2.5422.

tern influences.[33] El-Fadl's approach to interpreting Al-Qur'an and Hadith involves a two-pronged strategy. He emphasizes the importance of contextualizing the text within its historical revelation setting and advocates for preserving the text's autonomy.[34]

The present research is constrained by two limitations in terms of both its focus and scope. Firstly, the research object is PAI textbooks used in grades X, XI, and XII MA, published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) of the Republic of Indonesia in 2020. Secondly, the content of the book studied is the text, translation, and interpretation of Al-Quran contained in the PAI MA textbooks.

**METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative approach as defined by Moleong (2016), which is suitable for researchers intending to investigate a subject in depth.[35] The qualitative approach is characterized by prolonged involvement, persistent observation, and thick descriptions.[36]

The methodological steps initially conducted by a comprehensive review of 12 PAI textbooks for Grades X, XI, and XII MA was conducted. MoRA published these textbooks in 2020. They cover Al-Quran Hadith, Aqidah Akhlak, Fiqh, and SKI[37]. The PAI textbooks published in 2020 were selected as the

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[33] Tholhah Choir & Ahwan Fanani, *Islam Dalam Berbagai Pembacaan Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2009), 153–65.

[34] Muhammad Fauzinudin Faiz, Dawam Multazamy Rohmatulloh, and Muhammad Solikhudin, "Challenging the Status Quo: Khaled M. Abou El Fadl's Perspectives on Islamic Legal Authority and the Restrictive Fatwa on Women's Solo Travel," *Journal of Islamic Law* 4, no. 1 (2023): 47–66, https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v4i1.1071.

[35] Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif: Edisi Revisi* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2016).

[36] Janice M. Morse, "Critical Analysis of Strategies for Determining Rigor in Qualitative Inquiry," *Qualitative Health Research* 25, no. 9 (2015): 1212–22, https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732315588501.

[37] Access the complete PAI textbooks collection via the following link:
https://sikurma.kemenag.go.id/portal/Buku/data_buku?ref_katbook=e mFIUTlCQ2tpeHNQTmVuSkdVdHZVZz09OmJUUmtjalJ6TkdoaU1YTTBa REJ1T1E9PQ

research object because they were the first official books publics-shed by MoRA following the declaration of religious moderation as a government policy in 2019. Therefore, it is possible to ascertain whether the textbook aligns with the policy.

For the sake of effectiveness and efficiency in presentation, the researchers have compiled the following codes:

**Table 1**
Code for PAI Textbooks

| Code | Book titles |
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| QH1 | Syaifullah Amin, *Al-Qur'an Hadits Kelas X Madrasah Aliyah* |
| QH2 | Pahrurroji, *Al-Qur'an Hadits Kelas XI Madrasah Aliyah* |
| QH3 | M. Abdul Jalil, *Al-Qur'an Hadits Kelas XII Madrasah Aliyah* |
| AA1 | Nurul Hidayah, *Akidah Akhlak Kelas X Madrasah Aliyah* |
| AA2 | Sihabul Milahudin, *Akidah Akhlak Kelas XI Madrasah Aliyah* |
| AA3 | A. Yusuf Alfi Syahr, *Akidah Akhlak Kelas XII Madrasah Aliyah* |
| FQ1 | M. As'ary, *Fikih Kelas X Madrasah Aliyah* |
| FQ2 | Atmo Prawiro, *Fikih Kelas XI Madrasah Aliyah* |
| FQ3 | Dewi Masyithoh, *Fikih Kelas XII Madrasah Aliyah* |
| SKI1 | Elfa Tsuroyya, *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam (SKI) Kelas X Madrasah Aliyah* |
| SKI2 | Moh. Sulaiman, *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam (SKI) Kelas XI Madrasah Aliyah* |
| SKI3 | M. Samsul Arifin, *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam (SKI) Kelas XII Madrasah Aliyah* |

Source: Researcher Document, 2021

The next step was to identify examples of non-moderate interpretations in the 12 PAI textbooks. A thorough review of the 12 PAI textbooks revealed three notable categories of non-moderate interpretations: textual, partial, and mono-dimensional interpretations. This categorization depends on the perspective of method (*manhaj*) and pattern (*lawn*) of interpretation, so it is subject to bias. This finding is a significant limitation of the

present article and establishes a foundation for future research to identify additional types of non-moderate interpretations.

*Fifth*, online semi-structured[38] interviews with the authors of the PAI textbooks were conducted as part of data triangulation. Online interviews are one of the interview techniques, alongside offline interviews (face to face) and FGDs.[39] The researcher selected the author of the PAI textbooks to be interviewed using the purposive sample technique to address the data needs that prioritize the interpretation of Al-Qur'an and its legal ramifications for religious moderation in Indonesia. The authors of Al-Qur'an Hadith and Fiqh textbooks were chosen for the interview. This online interview was conducted with Atmo Prawiro, S.HI, ME.Sy (Fikih Class X MA), M. Abdul Jalil, MA (Al-Qur'an Hadith Class XII MA) and Dr. Pahrurroji, S.HI (Al-Qur'an Hadith Class XI MA) on 9-11 September 2021.
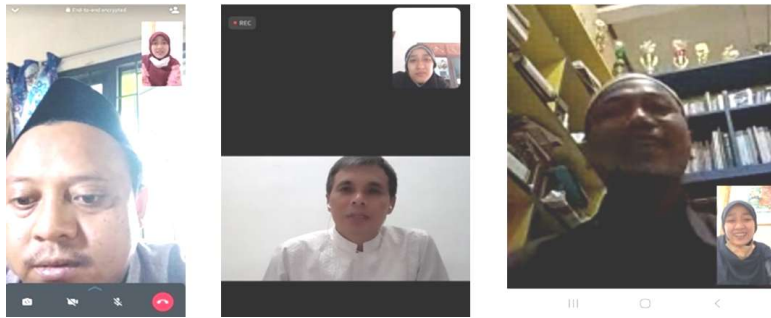


Source: Researcher Document, 2021

**Figure 1.** Online Interview with PAI Textbooks Authors

*Sixth*, present the research findings online via Zoom Meetings with PAI experts, Prof. Dr. H. M. Atho Mudzhar, M.A. and Dr. (H.C.) KH. Husein Muhammad. Both PAI experts are national figures widely recognized as supporters of religious

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[38] Antonius Alijoyo, Bobby Wijaya, and Intan Jacob, *Structured or Semi-Structured Interviews: Wawancara Terstruktur Atau Semi-Terstruktur* (Bandung: CRMS, 2021).

[39] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Pendekatan Metode Kualitatif, Kuantitatif Dan Campuran*, ed. Translator Achmad Fawaid and Rianayati Kusmini Pancasari (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2019).

moderation through their written works and work in institutions and the wider community.



Source: Researcher Document, 2021
**Figure 2.**Online Seminar with PAI Experts

The article uses Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's (2018) interactive model analysis technique to produce a thick description. This technique involves data collection, condensation, presentation, and conclusion-drawing.[40] Data collection and condensation spanned four months, from September to December 2021.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION
### Finding

Based on an examination of the Al-Qur'an verses data, there are three types of non-moderate interpretations that hinder religious moderation were found:

### 1. Textual Interpretation

Researchers encountered three forms of textual interpretation:

*First,* the absence of references to *tafsir lughawi* (linguistic interpretation) books. QH1, AA1, AA2, FQ1, FQ2, FQ3, SKI1, SKI2, and SKI3 do not refer to the Translation of Al-Qur'an at all. Meanwhile, QH2 and AA3 only quote references to the translation of Al-Qur'an. Only one textbook meets the criteria for

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[40] Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (California: SAGE Publications, 2018), 14.

using *tafsir lughawi* references, namely QH3, which cites references to *al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Qur'an* by al-Raghib al-Ashfahani.

The very minimal space for references to *tafsir lughawi* could be due to the limited duration of the lesson. According to Pahruroji as the author QH2, one chapter is designed for one lesson.[41] This is in line with Prawiro's statement as the author FQ2, who noted that in the learning process, the textbook serves only as a guide.[42] Meanwhile, according to Jalil, PAI books were prepared based on the Decree of the Minister of Religion (KMA) Number 183 concerning PAI and Arabic Curriculum in Madrasas.[43]

*Second*, relevant references of *tafsir tahlili* (analytical interpretation) are not cited. Only two textbooks quote relevant references of *tafsir tahlili*, namely QH2 and QH3, which both cite the *tafsir tahlili* of Ibn Kathir and al-Maraghi. Meanwhile, eleven other textbooks do not cite relevant *tafsir tahlili* references at all. M. Atho Mudzhar as a PAI expert stated that this is very sad, because some textbook writers do not refer to tafsir books when writing teaching materials, but only commentary books which happen to quote certain verses from Al-Qur'an.[44]

*Third*, minimal contextualization. For example, although QH2 includes a chapter on religious tolerance, citing 4 categories of verses: al-Kafirun [109]: 1-6; Yunus [10]: 40-41; al-Kahf [18]: 29; and al-Hujurat [49]: 10-13;[45] there is very little contextual interpretation of religious tolerance in Indonesia. The researcher only found two examples of interpretations with a tone of religious tolerance: the understanding and practice of al-

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[41] Pahrurroji, interviewed by Masyithah Mardhatillah, 2021, *Teknis Penyusunan Buku PAI* (11, 09).

[42] Atmo Prawiro, interviewed by Masyithah Mardhatillah, 2021, *Teknis Penyusunan Buku PAI* (09, 09).

[43] M. Abdul Jalil, interviewed by Masyithah Mardhatillah, 2021, *Teknis Penyusunan Buku PAI* (10, 09).

[44] M. Atho Mudzhar, *Seminar Hasil Penelitian Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Quran (LPMQ)*, (19, 11).

[45] Pahrurroji, *Al-Qur'an Hadis Kelas XI MA* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2020), 55–73.

Kafirun [109]: 1-6, which says, "Tolerance is only justified in social and human relations (*muamalah*)."

However, the author of QH2 does not provide any contextual interpretation related to actual examples of religious tolerance in Indonesia, nor do they offer practical suggestions for fostering interfaith tolerance or among religious communities based on a blend of Islamic values and Indonesian pillars.

## 2. Partial Interpretation

Researchers encountered three forms of partial interpretation:

*First,* the failure to quote verses from the Al-Qur'an. SKI3 does not quote verses from Al-Qur'an at all. SKI2 only quotes verses from Al-Qur'an as 'accessories'. For example, in the chapter-long review, there is no further explanation regarding the interpretation of Surah Ali 'Imran [3]: 110 in the historical context of the Daulah Mughal.[46]

*Second*, The lack of application of *tafsir maudu'i* (thematic interpretation). For example, QH3, when discussing the chapter on "preaching Islamic hospitality," quotes three categories of verses: al-Nahl [16]: 125; al-Shu'ara' [26]: 214–216; and al-Hijr [15]: 94–96.[47] The author does not address the topic of Islamic hospitality, which should be the main focus.

*Third*, the opinion of the author as an "interpreter" (*mufasir*) of Al-Qur'an. For example, in AA3, which discusses the defamation sub-chapter, the operational definition of '*fitnah*' (persecution) is stated as '*fitnah*' according to Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), meaning lying of another person. However, the author quotes verses from Al-Qur'an about '*fitnah'*, particularly the well-known verse "*al-fitnah ashaddu min al-qatl*" (Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]: 191), which means "For persecution is far worse than killing".[48] The author does not explain that the

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[46] Moh. Sulaiman, *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam Kelas XI MA* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2020), 50–63.

[47] Jalil, *Al-Qur'an Hadis MA Kelas XII*, 63–70.

[48] A. Yusuf Alfi Syahr, *Akidah Akhlak Kelas XII MA* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2020), 139.

word '*fitnah'* involves severe torture inflicted by infidels on believers like Bilal ibn Rabah to force them out of Islam. Thus, the verse refers to extreme forms of persecution, not spreading false news to others.

### 3. Monodimensional Interpretation

Researchers found three forms of monodimensional interpretation that may hinder religious moderation:

*First*, references affiliated with Salafi-Wahabi thought, which is known for its radicalism.[49] For example, AA1 includes several references to Salafi-Wahabi thought: a) Abu Isma'il Muslim al-Arsani, *As-Sunnah Magazine*, 2016; b) Abdul Aziz bin Sarayan al-Ushaimi, *Falaisa Minna*, 2002; c) Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab, *Syarah Buku al-Tauhid*, 1984.

*Second*, Monodimensional interpretation from a specific religious perspective. For instance, the author of QH1 limits the interpretation of Surah al-Rahman [55]: 19-20 to images of different colored seas, without addressing the broader theological and ethical implications of the verses:[50]



Selat Gibraltar menjadi bukti atas kebenaran QS al-Raḥmān: 19-20, yaitu pertemuan dua air yang berbeda. Foto: lidabrud.com

Source: Syaifullah Amin, *Al-Qur'an Hadis Kelas X MA*, 2020
**Figure 3**.Examples of Partial Interpretation in
PAI MA Textbooks

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[49] Imron R. Ahmad, *Rekam Jejak Radikalisme Salafi Wahabi: Sejarah, Doktrin Dan Akidah* (Surabaya: Khalista, 2014), 2–5.

[50] Syaifullah Amin, *Al-Qur'an Hadis Kelas X MA* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2020), 50.

This means that to understand the Qur'anic miracle, Muslims should consider a sea like the Strait of Gibraltar. However, if the author had consulted *tafsir* books related to this verse, they would have found that the term "*bahraini*" does not exclusively mean 'two seas,' but can also refer to 'two types of water,' such as a river and a sea. In fact, the English version of the Quran translation is more accurate in translating Surah al-Rahman [55]: 19-20, meaning fresh water (river) and salt water (sea). [51] This English translation is consistent with various *Tafsir Tahlili*. For example, *al-Nukat wa al-'Uyun* by al-Mawardi, the term *bahraini* in Surah al-Rahman [55]: 19-20 denotes salt water (seas) and fresh water (rivers).[52] Similarly, in *al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir* by Ibn Ashur, *bahraini* refers to the Euphrates River and the Persian Gulf.[53] Al-Ashfahani's *al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Qur'an* supports this interpretation, stating that when 'river' and 'sea' are combined, they are referred to as *bahraini*, just as 'sun' and 'moon' together are called *qamarani*.[54]

Interpreting *bahraini* as a river and sea is more accessible for students than seeing it as two seas that do not meet. One argument for why rivers and seas do not mix is that rivers are positioned higher than the ocean, preventing sea water from salting river water; conversely, the vast volume of sea water means it cannot be made fresh by river water.[55]

*Third*, interpretations are often based solely on the author's perspective without validation from expert interpreters. For example, all PAI textbooks in this study lack evaluation from the Religious Education Book Assessment Team (*Penilai Buku Pendidikan Agama* or PBPA) of MoRA, were not prepared with

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[51] Mustafa Khattab, "Surah Al-Rahman," quran.com, n.d., https://quran.com/55?startingVerse=19.

[52] Al-Mawardi, *Al-Nukat Wa Al-'Uyun: Tafsir Al-Mawardi*, 429–30.

[53] Muhammad al-Thahir ibn 'Ashur, *Al-Tahrir Wa Al-Tanwir*, Juz 27 (Tunis: Dar al-Tunisiyyah, 1984), 248–49.

[54] Al-Raghib Al-Ashfahani, *Al-Mufradat Fi Gharib Al-Qur'an* (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Tawfiqiyyah, 2003), 47–48.

[55] M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2021).

input from a team of Qur'anic interpretation experts, and had minimal public dissemination and review.

## Discussion

Based on data findings, there are three types of non-moderate interpretations found in PAI textbook, namely textual, partial and monodimensional interpretation.

## Textual Interpretation

Textual interpretation can lead to a closed-minded attitude within the academic community. Being closed-minded is a tendency to reject other ideas.[56] A current example of closed-mindedness caused by textual interpretation is the Salafi doctrine labeled *al-wala' wa al-bara'* (loyalty and disavowal). In fact, according to data from Dar al-Ifta' al-Mishriyyah, the *al-wala' wa al-bara'* doctrine has triggered 90% of their legal fatwas, which forbid social relations with Christians.[57]

A number of scientific findings verify the dangers of the *al-wala' wa al-bara'* doctrine for religious moderation. This doctrine firmly informs Salafis about who is appropriate to associate with and who they should distance themselves from.[58] The doctrine of *al-wala' wa al-bara'* has become a modern Salafi ideology to justify unfriendly actions, closed attitudes and hostility towards non-Muslims. Such as violence against the Ahmadiyah group in Indonesia, because they are considered

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[56] Kanyaka Anindita, "Open-Minded VS Close-Minded, Pilih Yang Mana?," uici.ac.id, 2022, https://uici.ac.id/open-minded-vs-close-minded-pilih-yang-mana/.

[57] Al-Markaz Al-I'lami, "إرهابيون' من الجديد العدد في الإفتاء مرصد'," www.dar-alifta.org, 2017, https://www.dar-alifta.org/ar/Articles/4938/-مرصد-الافتاء-في-العدد-الجديد-من-ارهابيون-قاعدة-الولاء-والبرامرصد-الافتاء-في-العدد-الجديد-من-ارهابيون-قاعدة-الولاء-والبرا.

[58] Sabine Damir-Geilsdorf, Mira Menzfeld, and Yasmina Hedider, "Interpretations of Al-Wala' Wa-l-Bara' in Everyday Lives of Salafis in Germany," *Religions* 10, no. 2 (2019): 1–18, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10020124.

heretical.[59] In fact, *al-Wala' wa al-Bara'* became one of the five key elements that formed ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Sham), alongside the Salafi-Wahabi ideology, Trilogy of *Tauhid*, *Tauhid al-Hakimiyah* and Takfirism.[60]

In Indonesian religious moderation, textual interpretation relies on a pure Islamic tradition (high tradition) based on Al-Qur'an and Hadith, rejecting Islam as it is characterized by local traditions (low tradition).[61] Adherents of textual interpretation tend to oppose the principles of Pancasila and NKRI as pillars of nationality (*wataniyyah*), the 1945 Constitution as a pillar of legislation (*dusturiyyah*), and *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* as a pillar of cultural diversity (*'urfiyyah*).

### Partial Interpretation

Partial interpretation can also lead to logical fallacies. For instance, the fallacy that views the relationship between religion and the state as antagonistic. Logical fallacies regarding the relationship between religion and the state trigger conflicts that hinder religious moderation. For example, the Indonesian Islamic State (NII) carried out a religious-based rebellion in Indonesia. NII is the forerunner of radical movements such as Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI).[62] The case study of HTI (2018-2022) shows that HTI carried out movements that tried to undermine the Muslim community's trust in democratic values that support

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[59] Ahmad Najib Burhani, "It's a Jihad: Justifying Violence towards the Ahmadiyya in Indonesia," *TRaNS: Trans-Regional and -National Studies of Southeast Asia* 9, no. 1 (2021): 99–112, https://doi.org/10.1017/trn.2020.8.

[60] Muhammad Rashidi Wahab et al., "Dabiq Magazine As Medium of Propagation for Thought of Tawhid By Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (Isis)," *Afkar* 23, no. 2 (2022): 339–404, https://doi.org/10.22452/afkar.vol23no2.10.

[61] Nor Hasan dan Edi Susanto, *Relasi Agama Dan Tradisi Lokal (Studi Fenomenologis Tradisi Dhammong Di Madura)* (Surabaya: CV. Jakad Media Publishing, 2021).

[62] Nur'aini Azizah, Hamdi Muluk, and Mirra Noor Milla, "Pursuing Ideological Passion in Islamic Radical Group's Insurgency: A Case Study of Negara Islam Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 13, no. 1 (2023): 1–27, https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v13i1.1-27.

religious moderation.[63] In fact, the Islamic caliphate that HTI has long fought for, apparently does not have an ideological, sociological and epistemological basis. It is only a reaction to government policies which are considered to have failed to meet the needs of Muslims.[64]

In Indonesian religious moderation, partial interpretations lead to a patriarchal mindset that rejects the interdependence between men and women (*mubadalah*), fanaticism or bias that erodes objective attitudes (*'adalah*) towards others; and violence that denies compassion (*rahamutiyyah*), such as the phenomenon of 'laskarization' in Solo, namely the transformation of thugs into part of a radical Islamic Laskar that vented its violence behind the agenda of fighting immorality in society.[65]

**Monodimensional Interpretation**

Monodimensional interpretation can lead to narrow-mindedness, which limits critical and creative reasoning. A current example of narrow-mindedness is digital addiction. This digital addiction leads to various dangers, such as exposure to radical ideologies from frequently accessing e-jihad content, which is a serious concern raised by Gary R. Bunt in his book titled *Islam in the Digital Age: E-Jihad, Online Fatwas and Cyber Islamic Environments*.[66]

The e-jihad content put forward by Bunt is in line with 907 articles relevant to the keywords "Radicalism" and "Digital Technology" from 2018 to 2023. These findings show that there

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[63] Rizky Alif Alvian, "How Extremist Movements Delegitimise Religious Moderation Campaigns: A Case of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (2018-2022)," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 17, no. 3 (2023): 23–41, https://doi.org/10.19165/MDOT2199.

[64] Lahaji and Ahmad Faisal, "'Caliphate No in Indonesia': Nurcholish Madjid and Yudian Wahyudi Critiques toward Islamic State Discourse in Indonesian Islam," *Cogent Social Sciences* 9, no. 2 (2023), https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2278207.

[65] Yudi Setianto et al., "Transforming Preman to Radical Islamic Laskar in Solo, Central Java," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (2022): 1–7, https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i4.7285.

[66] Gary R. Bunt, *Islam in the Digital Age: E-Jihad, Online Fatwas and Cyber Islamic Environments* (London: Pluto Press, 2003), 12.

is a strong relationship between radicalism and digitalization.[67] Meanwhile, the results of a survey of 100 high school students in the city of Depok show the influence of digital media on radicalism. Even though the influence is not significant, it is recommended to increase digital literacy for teenagers aged 12-20, in order to inhibit radical behavior.[68]

In Indonesian religious moderation, monodimensional interpretations yield constrained perspectives, such as assessing the benefit (*maslahat*) is static, not dynamic; treating people based on religious differences, not human equality (*insaniyyah*), so that the meaning of tolerance (*tasamuh*) becomes very limited in scope. Such as the intolerant attitude towards Shia and Ahmadiyya followers, even though they deserve to be protected. President Abdurrahman Wahid's (Gus Dur) policy is to protect Ahmadiyya and Shia followers because it is a provision of the 1945 Constitution, regardless of their religious sect.[69]

**Moderate Interpretation**

To address textual, partial, and mono-dimensional interpretations that impede religious moderation, a move towards contextual, holistic, and multidimensional interpretation is necessary to support religious moderation.

**Contextual Interpretation**

As a discourse, PAI textbooks have two poles of meaning: subjective and objective. Subjective meaning is what the author intends; objective meaning is what the text intends. The objective

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[67] Sri Wahyuni Tanshzil et al., "Radicalism in the Age of Digital Technology: A Bibliometric Study," *Journal of Advanced Research in Applied Sciences and Engineering Technology* 50, no. 2 (2025): 18–29, https://doi.org/10.37934/araset.50.2.1829.

[68] Suraya and Ahmad Mulyana, "Radicalism on Teens as the Effect of Digital Media Usage," *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication* 36, no. 1 (2020): 76–89, https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2020-3601-05.

[69] Yenny Zannuba Wahid et al., *Ragam Ekspresi Islam Nusantara* (Jakarta: The Wahid Institute, 2008), ix.

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meaning is divided into 'meaning' and 'reference'.[70] 'Meaning' concerns 'what' the text of Al-Qur'an says based on its original meaning, which refers to textual interpretation; while 'reference' concerns 'about what' the text of Al-Qur'an says based on its contextual interpretation.

For example, *al-wala' wa al-bara'*, which is understood according to textual interpretation, produces a radical *Salafi* ideology. On the other hand, *al-wala' wa al-bara'*, which is understood according to contextual interpretation, produces a moderate *wasati* ideology.[71] This shows the significance of contextual interpretation, as an alternative solution to textual interpretation which has the potential to produce radical understanding and movements.

The contextual interpretation model offered by this article is Saeed's contextual interpretation and Ricoeur's hermeneutics that can be applied based on the following methodological steps:

*First*, the author interprets the textual meaning of the Qur'anic text based on linguistic interpretation. For example, the verbal meaning of the word *wala'* is closeness, such as closeness of place, religion and friendship;[72] while the verbal meaning of *bara'* is freedom from things that are hated.[73]

*Second*, the author interprets the contextual meaning of the Qur'anic text with an interpretation that is in accordance with the current Indonesian context. For example, the author refers to the book *Tafsir Tematik Moderasi Beragama* published by Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an in 2022 which explains in detail the interpretation of *al-wala' wa al-bara'*. Muhammad ibn 'Umar Bazmool, Mufti of Makkah, interpreted it radically, making it difficult for cohesion and harmonious relations between Muslims and other people in the nation-state; while 'Abdullah bin Bayyah,

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[70] Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Texas: The Texas Christian University Press, 1976), 19–20.

[71] Uriya Shavit, "Can Muslims Befriend Non-Muslims? Debating Al-Walā Wa-Al-Barā (Loyalty and Disavowal) in Theory and Practice," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 25, no. 1 (2014): 67–88, https://doi.org/ 10.1080/09596410.2013.851329.

[72] Al-Ashfahani, *Al-Mufradat Fi Gharib Al-Qur'an*, 292.

[73] Al-Ashfahani, 57.

Chairman of the Emirates Council for Sharia Fatwas, interpreted it moderately, so that it is in accordance with the conditions of Muslims in nation-states, such as Indonesia today.[74]

*Third,* the author checks the feasibility of the interpretation. According to Saeed, indicators of the appropriateness of contextual interpretation include: not conflicting with the values of the independent context; greater attention and need for time; makes sense; the sensibilities of the wider religious community; and the values and views of the interpreting community.[75]

This standard of appropriateness of contextual interpretation has implications for the openness of Islamic teachings. The impact of this openness is the reduction of literal interpretations which are becoming increasingly widespread, while also opening up to advancements in natural, social, and cultural sciences.[76] A current example of the openness of Islamic teachings is the rise of scientific interpretation (*al-tafsir al-'ilmi*) of Al-Qur'an as an integration of science and religion, which is being implemented in various State Islamic Universities in Indonesia.[77] From this integration of science and religion, various ideas and movements of religious moderation in Islamic education have emerged.[78]

The urgency of contextual interpretation to inhibit radicalism and support religious moderation is strengthened by the contextual interpretation model applied by Buya Hamka in *Tafsir Al-Azhar* and Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.[79] Contextual

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[74] Muchlis M. Hanafi et al., *Tafsir Tematik Moderasi Beragama* (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2022), 59–63.

[75] Abdullah Saeed, *Al-Qur'an Abad 21: Tafsir Kontekstual*, ed. Translator Ervan Nurtawab (Bandung: Mizan Pustaka, 2016), 160–61.

[76] Jasser Auda, *Membumikan Hukum Islam Melalui Maqashid Syariah*, ed. Rosidin dan Ali Abd el-Mun'im (Bandung: Mizan Pustaka, 2015), 328–29.

[77] Wardani, *Tafsir Ilmiah (Al-Tafsīr Al-Ilmī) Al-Qur'an Sebagai Integrasi Ilmu* (Yogyakarta: Zahir Publishing, 2021), 2–3.

[78] Zainuddin Syarif and Abdul Mukti Thabrani, "Ma'had Internasional: Integrasi Agama-Sains Berbasis Moderasi Islam," *Islamika Inside: Jurnal Keislaman Dan Humaniora* 5, no. 2 (2021): 292–321, https://doi.org/10.35719/islamikainside.v5i2.74.

[79] Anwar Mujahidin, Muhammad Shohibul Itmam, and Ahmad Choirul Rofiq, "The Dynamic of Contextualization in Indonesian Qura`Anic Tafsirs:

interpretation has also been proven to be used by religious leaders as a resolution of conflict between the Malay Sambas and Madurese ethnic groups in West Kalimantan.[80] On that basis, one of the requirements for a mufassir is to understand the context of the verses of the Qur'an being interpreted.[81]

An educational program is necessary to develop contextual tafsir within the community. Pusat Studi Al-Qur'an (PSQ) is leading this initiative: the *Mufassir* Cadre Education program. The six-month intensive curriculum will cultivate *mufassirs* who can produce a societal benefit.[82] This initiative aims to counter the impact of *mufassir*, who may propagate harmful ideologies, such as the *Hakimiyah* ideology, which uses religious texts to justify radical actions that cross the line between religion and state.[83]

**Holistic Interpretation**

The holistic interpretation model offered by this article is thematic interpretation (*maudu'i*) through the methodological steps of al-Farmawi's *tafsir maudu'i*:[84]

*First,* Data Collection: Verse data is collected through manual sources such as *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfaz al-Qur'an* by al-Baqi maupun sumber digital seperti Zekr software.

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A Comparative Study of Tafsir Al-Azhar And Tafsir Al-Mishbāh on The Story of The Prophet Moses," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 25, no. 2 (2024): 221–446, https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v25i2.5397.

[80] Syarif and Saifuddin Herlambang, *Building Peace Through Qur'anic Interpretation in Muslim Communities in the Post-Conflict West Kalimantan*, *Ulumuna*, vol. 27, 2023, https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v27i1.629.

[81] M. Quraish Shihab, *Kaidah Tafsir* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2013), 395–99.

[82] Pusat Studi Al-Qur'an, "Pendidikan Kader Mufassir (PKM)," www.psq.or.id,2019, https://www.psq.or.id/program/pendidikan-kader-mufassir-pkm/.

[83] Muchlis Muhammad Hanafi, "Konsep Ḥākimiyyah: Menimbang Ayat Suci Dan Ayat Konstitusi Dalam Negara Demokrasi," *Suhuf* 15, no. 1 (2022): 1–19, https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v15i1.734.

[84] Abd. Al-Hayy Al-Farmawi, *Metode Tafsir Mawdhu'iy: Sebuah Pengantar*, ed. Sufyan. A. Jamrah (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 1996), 45–46.

Meanwhile, *asbab al-nuzul* (causes of revelation) and *munasabah* (relevance), refer to special sources, such as *Asbab al-Nuzul* by al-Wahidi, as well as general sources, such as *Tafsir al-Mishbah* by Shihab.

*Second,* Data Analysis: The data analysis must adhere to standards of *adab al-mufassir* (interpretive procedures): a) Interpret Al-Qur'an using Al-Qur'an; b) Use Hadith; c) Incorporate the opinion of *Sahabah* (companions); d) Consider the opinion of *Tabi'in* (successors); e) Apply Arabic linguistic; f) Utilize other knowledge through *ijtihad* (legal reasoning) and *istinbat* (legal deduction)[85]

*Third*, the data presentation stage. The author provides substantive interpretations that include key concepts related to the theme; and avoids elaborating on interpretive material that is not relevant to the theme.

Holistic interpretation can function to minimize or even eliminate reductionist and atomistic approaches that rely on only one or two texts without considering other related texts.[86] The implication of holistic interpretation is the combination of *nusus* (texts) and *maqasid* (context) in Islamic law, making it *salih li kulli zaman wa makan* (compatible with all times and places), and avoiding the arrogance of liberalism and the narrowness of conservatism.[87] A current example of Islamic teachings that are *salih li kulli zaman wa makan* is the principles of religious moderation, which include the values of justice (*'adalah*), balance (*tawazun*), and tolerance (*tasamuh*).[88] These values are contained in Pancasila, so that Pancasila as the philosophy of the Indonesian nation, is considered to be in accordance with Islamic

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[85] Ridlwan Nasir, *Memahami Al-Qur'an: Perspektif Baru Metodologi Tafsir Muqarin* (Surabaya: Indra Media, 2003), 10–11.

[86] Auda, *Membumikan Hukum Islam Melalui Maqashid Syariah*, 12–13.

[87] Muhajir, *Fiqh Tata Negara: Upaya Mendialogkan Sistem Ketatanegaraan Islam*, 221.

[88] Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, *Moderasi Islam: Tafsir Al-Qur'an Tematik* (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2012), 16, https://pustakalajnah.kemenag.go.id/detail/103.

teachings.[89] So, holistic interpretation produces moderate interpretation (tawasut) which is in harmony with the current Indonesian context.

The harmonious relationship between Islam and the Indonesian state is in line with the views of Imam al-Ghazali which likened to twins that strengthen each other. Religion is the foundation so that the state does not easily collapse, while the state is the guardian so that religion does not easily disappear.[90] Evidently, Indonesia uses nationalism as a strategy against religiously motivated violent ideologies, such as the Mujahidin Indonesia Timur (MIT) movement which wants to replace Indonesia's ideology based on the four pillars of the nation (Pancasila, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, UUD 1945, NKRI) with Islamic ideology.[91]

Implement a rigorous oversight framework for PAI textbooks disseminated within the community to cultivate holistic interpretations. Experts should curate and evaluate PAI textbooks, assess readability, and disseminate compositions in public forums to mitigate partial interpretations. Bahtsul Masa'il Nahdlatul Ulama is an example of this approach, using *istinbath jama'i*, a collective legal decision-making process, instead of individual adjudication.[92]

## Multidimensional Interpretation

The multidimensional interpretation model offered by this article is authoritative interpretation, not authoritarian, because it

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[89] Badrun et al., "Pancasila, Islam, and Harmonising Socio-Cultural Conflict in Indonesia," *Al-Jami'ah* 61, no. 1 (2023): 137–56, https://doi.org/10.14421/AJIS.2023.611.137-156.

[90] Al-Imam Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' Ulumiddin: Menghidupkan Kembali Ilmu-Ilmu Agama*, ed. Ibnu Ibrahim Ba'adillah (Jakarta: Republika Penerbit, 2011), 51.

[91] Munajat, "Religion and Nationalism in Shaping the Fiqh of Armed Jihad: A Lesson to the Indonesian National Counterterrorism Policy," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 22, no. 2 (2022): 311–34, https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v22i2.26130.

[92] Luthfi Hadi Aminuddin, *Dari Qawli Hingga Manhaji: Dinamika Metode Penetapan Fatwa Hukum Islam Di Nahdlatul Ulama* (Surabaya: LTN Pustaka, 2022).

is produced through the following five pillars of interpretation according to Khaled El-Fadl:

*First,* Honesty: Ensure that interpretive data is presented honestly, without omitting or altering interpretations based on personal biases*Second*, Diligence: Approach interpretive analysis with dedication. *Third*, Comprehensive: Provide interpretations from various perspectives. *Fourth*, Rational: Present interpretations in ways that encourage critical thinking and creativity. *Fitth*, Self-Control: Consult with Quranic interpretation experts, conduct public tests in academic forums, and assessment by authorized evaluator. Multidimensional interpretation serves as an alternative solution to the religious texts dilemma which have been considered 'contradictory', such as issues of war and peace, by reconciling them in a multidimensional context.[93] For instance, in the context of Palestine fighting against Israel, the relevant *jihad* is *jihad qitali* (war). However, in the peaceful context of Indonesia, the relevant forms of *jihad* are *jihad tarbawi* (education), *thaqafi wa al-hadari* (cultural and civilization), *iqtisadi* (economic) and *ijtima'i* (social).[94]

A current example of a multidimensional interpretation is the jurisprudence for minorities (*fiqh al-aqalliyah*) applied in Muslim diaspora countries, such as in Europe and America.[95] Meanwhile comparative jurisprudence (*fiqh al-muqarin*) is often implemented in Muslim-majority countries like Indonesia.

Another example of multidimensional interpretation is being able to see the positive and negative sides of technological developments. This is reinforced by scientific findings that digital technology, such as the internet, has a dual function for radicalism, namely a tool to introduce radicalism and a tool to

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[93] Auda, *Membumikan Hukum Islam Melalui Maqashid Syariah*, 13–14.

[94] Kementerian Agama RI, *Tafsir Tematik Al-Qur'an: Jihad, Makna Dan Implementasinya* (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2012), 154–59.

[95] Ahmad Imam Mawardi, *Fiqh Minoritas: Fiqh Al-Aqalliyyât Dan Evolusi Maqâshid Al-Syarî'ah Dari Konsep Ke Pendekatan* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2010), 95.

help escape radicalism.[96] Furthermore, being able to choose wise actions in responding to the duality of internet functions, such as 2,983 videos from 43 accounts of Islamic TikTok creators from Germany are dominated by anti-radicalism content.[97]

In order to enhance the prevalence of multidimensional interpretations within society, there is a necessity for interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and multidisciplinary collaborations. A notable example is *Tafsir Salman: Tafsir Ilmiah atas Juz 'Amma*, a collaborative effort between interdisciplinary experts from the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) [98] and *Tafsir Tematik Al-Qur'an* by Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Quran (LPMQ) emerged from a partnership between the *Shar'i* team, which is expert in Islamic sciences, and the *Kawni* team, which is versed in natural, social, and humanities sciences.[99]

**CONCLUSION**

This article identifies non-moderate interpretations in PAI textbooks that can strengthen radicalism and hinder religious moderation. The forms of moderate interpretation found are textual interpretation, partial interpretation and monodimensional interprations. Additionally, this article formulates moderate forms of interpretation that function as solutions to strengthen religious moderation and inhibit radicalism. This include contextual interpretation, holistic interpretation and multidimensional interpretation.

The contribution of this article is as a guide for selecting PAI textbooks circulating in society, especially in educational

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[96] Faiqotul Mala et al., "Socio-Religious-Based Critical Digital Media Literacy for Disengagement from Radicalism for Ex-Terrorist Convicts," *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 1 (Special Issue 2023) (2023): 1205–18.

[97] Nader Hotait and Rami Ali, "Exploring (Anti-)Radicalism on TikTok: German Islamic Content Creators between Advocacy and Activism," *Religions* 15, no. 10 (2024): 1–30, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15101172.

[98] Tim Tafsir Ilmiah Salman ITB, *Tafsir Salman: Tafsir Ilmiah Atas Juz'Amma* (Bandung: Mizan, 2014).

[99] Kementerian Agama RI, *Tafsir Tematik Al-Qur'an: Jihad, Makna Dan Implementasinya*.

institutions, that people are not exposed to radicalism but instead help strengthen religious moderation in Indonesia.

This study, however, is limited in terms of scope of the PAI textbooks studied, namely PAI textbooks published by the Ministry of Religion in 2020. This study does not include PAI textbooks published by private parties, such as institutions or commercial publishers. On that basis, this article recommends that future researchers conduct research on PAI textbooks used in General Universities and Islamic universities.

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