



From Programs to Ecosystem: Integrating Inclusive, Moderate, and Multicultural Islamic Education Policy in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

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Religious moderation, multicultural education, and inclusive education share a commitment to justice, equality, and human dignity. However, educational policies often treat these agendas as separate programs, limiting their potential for integration. This fragmentation highlights the need for a comprehensive framework that connects their normative foundations, cultural relationships, and institutional practices. This article aims to develop an integrative framework for aligning religious moderation, multicultural education, and inclusive education within Islamic education policy. This conceptual study combines an integrative review of 30 scholarly articles with a document analysis of six regulations. The analysis draws on policy instruments, policy networks, and institutional theory to examine the conceptual relationships, policy configurations, and institutional conditions shaping the three agendas. The findings establish four propositions. First, the three agendas represent complementary epistemic-religious, relational-cultural, and structural-institutional dimensions of a unified normative orientation. Second, integration is constrained by fragmented policy regimes rather than insufficient instruments. Third, institutional effectiveness depends on organizational culture and educator agency, not merely formal regulations. Fourth, scholarly attention to religious moderation exceeds its relative policy emphasis, while access inclusion receives stronger regulatory support. The article proposes an ecosystem model connecting existing policy regimes through cross-agenda instruments at the macro, meso, and micro levels.

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INTRODUCTION

Pluralism is a constitutive feature of Indonesian nationhood, encompassing religious, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity. This diversity can support social progress or generate conflict, depending on how society manages differences (Hasanuddin, 2024). Education plays a crucial role in developing mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and social justice. In Islamic education, these responsibilities extend beyond religious instruction to include the formation of ethical, culturally responsive, and inclusive learning environments. Educational institutions must therefore address differences in religious beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and individual learning needs. These challenges require educational policies that uphold human dignity and equal opportunities for all learners. Religious moderation, multicultural education, and inclusive education offer complementary perspectives for addressing these demands, making their integration an important concern for contemporary Islamic education policy.

Despite their shared commitment to justice and human dignity, religious moderation, multicultural education, and inclusive education are commonly developed through separate conceptual and regulatory frameworks. Religious moderation emphasizes balanced religious understanding, tolerance, and resistance to extremism, whereas multicultural education promotes respect for cultural differences. Inclusive education focuses on equitable participation and learning opportunities, particularly for learners with disabilities and other marginalized groups. These distinctions reflect different historical and institutional priorities, but they can also produce fragmented educational governance. Islamic educational institutions may consequently face overlapping expectations without clear mechanisms for coordinating their objectives, instruments, and implementation strategies. International perspectives emphasize that inclusion and equity require systemic transformation rather than isolated interventions (Ainscow, 2020; UNESCO, 2020). An integrated policy orientation is therefore necessary to connect these agendas while preserving their distinctive contributions.

Empirical and policy developments illustrate this fragmentation. Since 2016, the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) has promoted religious moderation through national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation of local culture (Kementrian Agama RI, 2019; Mukhibat et al., 2023). Presidential Regulation No. 58 of 2023 subsequently established a regulatory foundation for strengthening religious moderation. Meanwhile, multicultural education remains prominent in curricular and pedagogical discussions, while inclusive education operates within disability and special education frameworks. Existing studies examine moderation through Islamic

Religious Education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam*, PAI), teacher competence, and classroom instruction (Ikhwan et al., 2023; Sukari & Yulianto, 2025; Umam et al., 2026). Other research addresses multicultural and inclusive education from Islamic perspectives (Anam, 2023; Nasaruddin et al., 2025; Saripuddin B., 2026). School-level studies also document implementation in a public senior high school in Kudus and an Islamic primary school (Chanigia, 2026; Rozaq et al., 2024).

The literature provides complementary foundations for connecting the three agendas. Inclusive education emphasizes the right to learn without discrimination, while Islamic perspectives extend inclusion to both equitable access and social participation, grounded in *al-'adl* (justice), *rahmah* (compassion), and *ukhuwwah* (fraternity) (Anam, 2023; Mutmainnah, 2023). Religious moderation is rooted in *wasathiyah* and operationalized through national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation of local culture (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019). Its ethical principles include *tawassuth*, *tawazun*, *i'tidal*, and *tasamuh* (Khamim et al., 2025), while critical thinking helps prevent indoctrination (Ikhwan et al., 2023), and moderation can be taught without eroding learners' convictions (Rosyidah & Amrulloh, 2026). Multicultural education treats diversity as *sunnatullah* and addresses curriculum, pedagogy, and institutional culture (Anam, 2023; Saripuddin B., 2026).

However, three significant gaps remain. First, research has not established a comprehensive framework that positions religious moderation, multicultural education, and inclusion as interconnected dimensions of one educational policy orientation. The scarcity of integrated approaches in madrasahs and pesantren has been highlighted by Ikhlas et al. (2026), while Mutmainnah (2023) identifies the absence of an applicable model. Second, existing scholarship emphasizes curricular and pedagogical interventions more than governance arrangements, leaving multi-actor collaboration insufficiently translated into operational policy designs (Ilhami et al., 2026). Third, inclusion is frequently interpreted as social or religious acceptance rather than equitable access for learners with disabilities. These gaps indicate the need to examine not only educational values and teaching practices but also policy instruments, actor networks, institutional cultures, and the processes through which formal regulations become everyday educational practices.

This article advances an Ecosystem Model of Inclusive, Moderate, and Multicultural Islamic Education Policy that integrates the three agendas across macro, meso, and micro levels. Its central argument is that their fragmentation results primarily from disconnected policy regimes rather than an absence of policy instruments. Religious moderation represents the epistemic-religious dimension, multicultural education the relational-cultural dimension, and inclusive education the structural-institutional dimension of a shared normative orientation. The study addresses three questions: how can these agendas be

conceptualized as one policy orientation; how effectively do existing policy architectures support their integration; and what model can connect them in practice? Using policy instruments, policy networks, institutional theory, and policy enactment as analytical lenses, the article contributes an integrated conceptual framework, a multilevel governance approach, and a stronger emphasis on equitable access alongside socio-religious inclusion.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a conceptual research design using the model or theory synthesis approach proposed by Jaakkola (2020). Rather than testing hypotheses, it develops an integrative framework and theoretical propositions for subsequent empirical investigation. The design combines an integrative literature review with regulatory document analysis to examine the relationships among religious moderation, multicultural education, and inclusive education policy. This approach enables the identification of conceptual connections, policy fragmentation, and institutional conditions across the three agendas. The study follows Jabareen's (2009) conceptual framework analysis, encompassing data mapping, reading and categorization, concept identification, conceptual deconstruction, integration, and framework synthesis. Policy instruments, policy networks, institutional theory, and policy enactment guide the interpretation of policy architecture and institutional practices.

The literature review covered scholarly publications on inclusion, religious moderation, and multicultural education policy in Islamic education. Searches were conducted on 21 September 2026 using Publish or Perish with Google Scholar, supplemented by Scopus. Two search strings were applied: ("kebijakan pendidikan Islam" OR "Pendidikan Agama Islam") AND ("moderasi beragama" OR "pendidikan multikultural" OR "pendidikan inklusi"); and ("Islamic education policy" OR "Islamic religious education") AND ("religious moderation" OR "multicultural education" OR "inclusive education"). The publication period was restricted to 2021–2026. Regulatory sources comprised six documents: Law No. 20 of 2003, Law No. 8 of 2016, Government Regulation No. 13 of 2020, Presidential Regulation No. 58 of 2023, Minister of Religious Affairs Decree No. 450 of 2024, and Yogyakarta Special Region Governor Regulation No. 21 of 2013. These documents represent national and subnational policy frameworks governing the three agendas.

The initial search yielded 1,000 records. After duplicate removal using DOI and title matching, 948 records remained. Title and abstract screening, followed by manual verification, identified 100 potentially relevant records. These were ranked by relevance, with citation counts used as an additional prioritization criterion, resulting in 50 records for full-text assessment. The final corpus comprised 30 articles selected purposively according to four criteria: relevance to at least one agenda in Islamic education; a policy, institutional, or

implementation dimension; publication in a peer-reviewed journal or proceedings; and full-text availability. All selected articles were read in full. Regulatory documents were selected because they governed at least one agenda and applied to, or offered a comparable policy framework for, Islamic educational institutions. Regulatory quotations were translated into English by the authors. Data collection recorded concepts, policy provisions, actors, and implementation challenges.

Analysis proceeded through thematic coding, regulatory mapping, and interpretive synthesis. The 30 articles were coded according to concepts, policy instruments, actors, and implementation challenges, alongside descriptive mapping of publication year, research design, and educational level. Regulatory provisions were mapped across religious moderation, multiculturalism, and inclusion, using four instrument categories: mandates, inducements and funding, capacity-building, and system-changing, following McDonnell and Elmore (1987). Keyword searches were combined with contextual, article-by-article reading. Following Jabareen (2009), the analysis identified, deconstructed, and integrated concepts across sources to develop the framework and formulate theoretical propositions. The first author conducted two coding rounds, examined discrepancies against full texts, and maintained an audit trail to support trustworthiness. The purposive, predominantly Indonesian-language corpus limits statistical generalization. As the study used published literature and public regulations without human participants, informed consent was unnecessary, and all sources were cited in accordance with research integrity principles.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Three Dimensions, One Normative Orientation

The synthesis of the corpus indicates that religious moderation, multicultural education, and inclusion are not three parallel programs. They are three dimensions of a single normative orientation, namely justice and human dignity in a plural society. They differ in the domain in which each operates (Table 1).

Table 1. Conceptual Synthesis of Religious Moderation, Multicultural Education, and Inclusive Education

Aspect	Religious moderation	Multicultural education	Inclusive education
Dimension	Epistemic-religious	Relational-cultural	Structural-institutional
Core question	How to practice religion justly and in balance?	How to live together amid difference?	How to ensure that all learners are served?
Islamic value basis	<i>Tawassuth, tawazun, i'tidal, tasamuh</i>	<i>Ta'aruf, ukhuwah, diversity as sunnatullah</i>	<i>Al-'adl, rahmah, ukhuwwah</i>

Main instruments	PAI curriculum, moderation programs, teacher training	Intercultural curriculum, dialogic learning, school culture	Adaptive services, inclusive leadership, teacher training
Risk of reduction	Becoming state-program indoctrination	Becoming a ceremonial display of diversity	Becoming a technical matter of special education

Religious moderation concerns the way religion is understood and lived (Khamim et al., 2025; Rosyidah & Amrulloh, 2026). Multicultural education concerns the way people relate to those who differ from them (Anam, 2023). Inclusion concerns the way institutions guarantee equitable access and participation (Ainscow, 2020; Mutmainnah, 2023). The three dimensions are mutually dependent. Moderation without structural inclusion stops at attitudes, whereas inclusion without moderation and multicultural awareness risks becoming a technical service that does not touch social relations.

This integrative formulation is not merely an academic construct. DIY Governor Regulation No. 21 of 2013 defines inclusive education as a system that involves all learners “without distinguishing their social, political, economic, ethnic, religious or belief, group, gender, or physical and mental backgrounds, so that the school becomes a miniature of society” (Article 1, point 1). KMA No. 450 of 2024 likewise establishes the principle of fair assessment, which must not disadvantage learners “on the basis of differences in gender, religion, ethnicity, culture, customs, socio-economic status, or special educational needs”. Both formulations demonstrate that the relational and structural dimensions can be united within a single policy norm (Figure 1).

Three agendas operate in three dimensions of one normative orientation

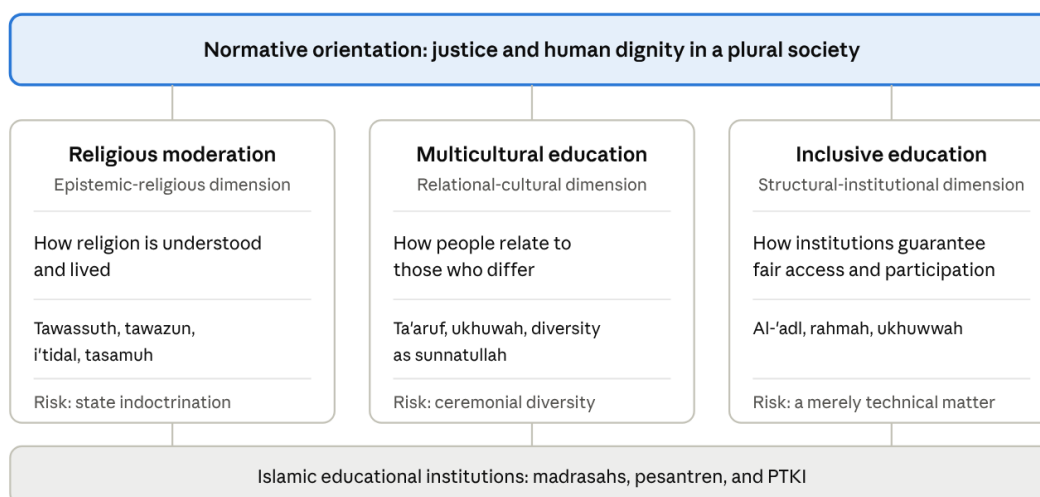


Figure 1. Moderation, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion as Three Dimensions of a Single Normative Orientation

Proposition 1. Religious moderation, multicultural education, and inclusion constitute the epistemic-religious, relational-cultural, and structural-institutional dimensions of a single orientation of Islamic education policy. Integration means aligning the three dimensions, not merging three programs into one.

Policy Architecture and Instruments: Complete Within Agendas, Fragmented Across Them

The analysis of the six regulatory documents shows that the principal problem is not an absence of instruments but their fragmentation. Each agenda has its own instrument regime, and these regimes scarcely refer to one another (Table 2).

Table 2. Mapping of Regulatory Documents by Dimension and Type of Policy Instrument

Document	Dimension	Mandate	Funding	Capacity-building	Institutions and coordination	Accountability
Law No. 20/2003 (National Education System)	M and MC as principles; I as special education	Non-discrimination, religious and cultural values, national pluralism (Art. 4(1)); right to religious education (Art. 12); special education (Art. 5(2), Art. 32)	General; at least 20% of national and regional budgets (Art. 49)	Not specified	Not regulated	Not regulated
Law No. 8/2016 (Persons with Disabilities)	I (access)	Obligation to provide inclusive and special education (Art. 40); religious rights (Art. 14)	Scholars and education costs (Art. 40(6)–(7))	Mandatory inclusive education course in teacher education (Art. 44)	Disability Service Units (Art. 42)	Graduated administrative sanctions (Art. 42(7); Art. 43(3))
Government Regulation No. 13/2020 (Reasonable Accommodation)	I (access)	Reasonable accommodation across all pathways, levels, and types (Arts. 2–3)	National and regional budgets (Arts. 4–5)	Preparation of educators and curricula (Art. 4)	Disability Service Units for madrasahs and religious education through district/municipal MoRA offices (Arts. 32–35)	Annual monitoring reported to the President (Art. 37); sanctions and public complaints (Arts. 38–40)
Presidential Regulation No. 58/2023 (Religious Moderation)	M; MC through the religion–culture strategy	General guidelines and four indicators (Art. 4; Annex)	National budget, regional budgets, other sources (Art. 15)	Socialization, advocacy, mentoring (Art. 8); moderation-oriented curricula and educators (Annex)	Inter-ministerial Joint Secretariat chaired by the Minister of Religious Affairs (Art. 9)	Six-monthly regional reports and annual report to the President (Arts. 11–13); no sanctions
KMA No. 450/2024 (Madrasah Curriculum)	M, MC, and I at the madrasah level	Mandatory P5RA projects with moderation content; inclusive	Not regulated	Accommodative instruction for learners with special needs	P5RA team in each madrasah	Principle of fair assessment

		madrasahs add special-needs programs				
DIY Governor Regulation No. 21/2013 (Inclusive Education)	I (access and social)	Every education unit must admit learners with special needs (Art. 3)	Districts /municipalities must guarantee funding (Art. 2)	Special assistant teachers; competence development (Arts. 2, 4)	Inclusive Education Resource Centers (Art. 4)	Guidance, supervision, and evaluation by the Education Office (Art. 5)

Note: M = religious moderation; MC = multicultural education; I = inclusion; P5RA = *Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila dan Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* (Pancasila and Rahmatan lil 'Alamin Student Profile Strengthening Project).

Three patterns emerge from this mapping. *First*, the access inclusion regime possesses the most complete set of instruments. Law No. 8/2016 and Government Regulation No. 13/2020 contain mandates, funding, capacity-building, implementing units, annual monitoring, complaint mechanisms, and graduated administrative sanctions. The religious moderation regime has inter-ministerial coordination, periodic reporting, and funding, but its success is measured through attitudinal indicators and is not backed by sanctions. Multicultural education has no dedicated regulation. It appears as a principle in the National Education System Law (Article 4(1)), as a strategy for harmonizing religion and culture in Presidential Regulation No. 58/2023, and as the “global diversity” (*berkebinekaan global*) dimension of P5RA.

Second, the three regimes barely refer to one another. Based on both the term search and the article-by-article reading, Presidential Regulation No. 58/2023 does not mention persons with disabilities, whereas Law No. 8/2016 and Government Regulation No. 13/2020 do not mention religious moderation. None of the documents uses the term “multicultural”. The word “inclusive” in Presidential Regulation No. 58/2023 is used in a social sense, for example public services that are “inclusive and non-discriminatory”, rather than in the sense of access for learners with disabilities. The National Education System Law itself still frames disability as “special education”, whereas Law No. 8/2016 shifts it toward inclusive education.

Third, an institutional point of convergence already exists but remains unused. The Ministry of Religious Affairs chairs the Joint Secretariat for Religious Moderation (Presidential Regulation No. 58/2023, Article 9(3)) and is simultaneously responsible for Disability Service Units in madrasahs and religious education through its district/municipal offices (Government Regulation No. 13/2020, Article 32). At the madrasah level, the three agendas meet in KMA No. 450/2024, but with unequal weights of obligation. Every madrasah is “obliged” to organize projects with religious moderation content, whereas special-needs programs apply only to “madrasahs that provide inclusive education”.

These findings correct a common reading in the literature. The literature tends to emphasize curricular and pedagogical instruments (Sukari & Yulianto, 2025; Umam et al., 2026), creating the impression that regulatory and financial instruments are underdeveloped. The document analysis shows that this impression reflects the focus of the literature rather than the state of regulation. What is missing are cross-agenda instruments: shared indicators, integrated monitoring, and coordination mechanisms that connect the moderation regime with the inclusion regime. In McDonnell and Elmore's (1987) terms, mandates, inducements, and capacity-building instruments are available within each regime, but system-changing instruments that unite them are absent.

Proposition 2. The integration of inclusive, moderate, and multicultural Islamic education policy is hindered not by an absence of instruments but by the fragmentation of instrument regimes. Moderation is strong in coordination and curriculum, access inclusion is strong in mandates and sanctions, and multiculturalism exists only as a principle. Cross-agenda instruments are not yet available.

Translation at the Institutional Level: Formalization and Embeddedness

Implementation evidence in the corpus shows that policy effectiveness at the institutional level depends more on embeddedness in institutional life than on the degree of formalization. Two patterns of translation can be distinguished.

The formal pattern. At a public senior high school in Kudus (SMAN 1 Bae Kudus), a school characterized by religious, ethnic, and socio-cultural diversity, religious moderation was incorporated into the school's vision and mission. Moderation was then enacted through activities such as Friday charity (Jumat berkah), joint condolence visits, and the production of tolerance-themed content, involving both Islamic and Christian religious education teachers (Rozaq et al., 2024).

The cultural pattern. At MIS Nurul Muslimin, an Islamic primary school, multicultural education policy was not formally articulated. Instead, it developed implicitly through habituation, social interaction, and role modeling, yet it still succeeded in instilling tolerance, justice, and mutual respect (Chanigia, 2026). A similar pattern appears in habituation programs designed and adapted by PAI teachers to integrate moderation values into learners' daily activities (Heryana et al., 2024). Policy in this pattern operates directly on the cultural-cognitive pillar, that is, on what is regarded as normal in the everyday life of the madrasah.

The contrast between these two patterns is consistent with the policy enactment thesis. Schools do not merely implement policy but interpret and translate it according to their contexts and cultures. Formal policy without culture risks becoming a dead letter. Conversely, culture without formal policy is vulnerable to leadership turnover. Formalization therefore serves to sustain practice rather than to guarantee its effectiveness.

The principal translators of policy are institutional leaders and educators. Principals create policies and a climate that support multicultural values, while teachers are the primary agents who integrate tolerance into instruction (Nasaruddin et al., 2025). In higher education, lecturers act as facilitators and role models in moderation-oriented learning (Khamim et al., 2025). These findings position educators as *street-level bureaucrats* in Lipsky's (2010) sense: their everyday pedagogical decisions effectively become the face of policy itself. Another study summarizes the success factors as institutional policy, teacher competence, an inclusive curriculum, and a school culture that supports dialogue (Suhendri et al., 2025).

This pattern also explains why the mandate in KMA No. 450/2024 is not necessarily sufficient. The obligation to organize projects with religious moderation content operates on the regulative pillar. Its effectiveness depends on whether such projects become part of the madrasah's culture and are carried out by teachers with adequate capacity. The same challenge appears in the digital sphere. The use of technology contributes to learners' tolerant attitudes, but it is constrained by low digital literacy and limited educator capacity (Cholid et al., 2026; Iswar et al., 2025).

Proposition 3. The effectiveness of inclusion, moderation, and multicultural policy at the institutional level is determined by its embeddedness in the normative and cultural-cognitive pillars of the institution. Formalization serves to sustain practice, not to guarantee its effectiveness. Policy instruments should therefore recognize and institutionalize existing cultural practices rather than replace them with uniform programs.

An Inverted Asymmetry and Non-Operational Collaboration

A comparison between the literature corpus and the regulatory documents reveals an inverted asymmetry. The literature discusses religious moderation most and access inclusion least, whereas regulation is most complete precisely on access inclusion.

The corpus mapping shows that 18 of the 30 articles (60%) are library-based conceptual studies, four are literature reviews, two are comparative policy analyses, and only six (20%) are field or mixed-methods studies. Twenty-three articles (76.7%) were published in 2024–2026. Beyond the studies discussed elsewhere in this article, the corpus also covers state ideology and the politics of Islamic education policy (Nasrowi, 2021; Putra, 2023; Zamrie & Saifudin, 2026), religious tolerance in plural societies (Hafiz et al., 2024; Saputra et al., 2025), and moderation and inclusivity in Islamic higher education (Mufida et al., 2026). Thematically, the religious moderation discourse dominates, while only a small number of articles explicitly address learners with special needs. Inclusion is more often read as socio-religious inclusiveness (Anam, 2023; Nasaruddin et al.,

2025) than as equitable access. Yet, as Table 2 shows, Government Regulation No. 13/2020 already mandates Disability Service Units for madrasahs and religious education through district/municipal MoRA offices, complete with annual monitoring and sanctions.

This asymmetry has two consequences. *First*, knowledge of how madrasahs and pesantren fulfill their reasonable accommodation obligations is almost non-existent, so access inclusion policy in Islamic educational institutions operates without academic feedback. *Second*, the moderation discourse develops without engaging the rights of learners with disabilities, even though Article 14 of Law No. 8/2016 also guarantees their religious rights, including access to scriptures and religious literature suited to their needs.

The next issue concerns collaboration. Almost all studies recommend synergy among government, educational institutions, educators, religious organizations, and civil society (Ilhami et al., 2026; Steven & Purba, 2024; Suhendri et al., 2025; Umam et al., 2026). This consensus indicates that policy cannot operate through hierarchy alone, in line with the policy network perspective. However, such recommendations are rarely accompanied by a governance design specifying who coordinates whom, with what resources, and how fragmentation is to be managed. At the national level, Presidential Regulation No. 58/2023 has in fact established a Joint Secretariat and a reporting mechanism. This forum, however, covers only the moderation agenda, operates at the ministerial level, and is not connected to inclusion implementing units such as the Disability Service Units.

The third issue is the tension between moderation as a state program and moderation as reflective awareness. Presidential Regulation No. 58/2023 affirms that strengthening moderation “is not an effort to moderate religion, but to moderate the understanding and practice of religion”. Nevertheless, because it is pursued through socialization and measured by attitudinal indicators, moderation risks being perceived as a top-down agenda and meeting resistance (Ikhwan et al., 2023; Yanto et al., 2023). An inclusive normative framework also does not always guarantee just practice. The implementation of religious policy still encounters discrimination against minority groups (Steven & Purba, 2024), and religious dress regulations in multicultural schools can become a source of exclusion (Rosyidah & Amrulloh, 2026).

Proposition 4. Without cross-agenda coordination instruments and evidence-based feedback, the Islamic education policy network remains rhetorical. Academic and policy attention should be redirected toward access inclusion in madrasahs and pesantren, where regulation is strongest but knowledge is scarcest.

An Ecosystem Model of Inclusive, Moderate, and Multicultural Islamic Education Policy

Building on the four propositions, this article proposes an Ecosystem Model of Inclusive, Moderate, and Multicultural Islamic Education Policy. The model rests on three principles. The principle of *integration* treats the three agendas as three dimensions of a single normative orientation (P1). The principle of *multilevel operation* situates policy at the macro, meso, and micro levels simultaneously (P3). The principle of *networking* emphasizes cross-agenda coordination instruments and evidence-based feedback (P2, P4). The structure of the model is presented in Table 3 and Figure 2.

Table 3. Components of the Policy Ecosystem Model

Level	Key actors	Policy instruments	Indicators of success	Basis
Macro (state)	MoRA, regional governments, legislature	Shared indicators for moderation, diversity, and access inclusion; integrated monitoring linking reports under Presidential Regulation No. 58/2023 and Government Regulation No. 13/2020; inclusion budgets for madrasahs	Coherence across regimes; equal access; fair treatment of minorities	P2
Meso (institution)	Madrasah principals, pesantren and PTKI leaders, district/municipal MoRA offices	A single institutional plan combining P5RA and services for learners with special needs; Disability Service Units; institutionalization of cultural practices; interfaith partnerships	Moderation values embedded in culture; accommodative services available; minimal conflict	P1, P3
Micro (learning)	Teachers, lecturers, learners	Dialogic, contextual, and differentiated instruction; habituation; fair assessment; digital religious literacy	Tolerant attitudes, critical thinking, participation of all learners	P3
Cross-level	Religious organizations, civil society, families, media, academics	Network coordination forums; evaluative research; complaint and feedback mechanisms	Trust among actors; evidence-based policy	P4

Note: PTKI = *Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam* (Islamic higher education institutions); P1–P4 = Propositions 1–4.

Policy operates at three levels at once and learns from research feedback

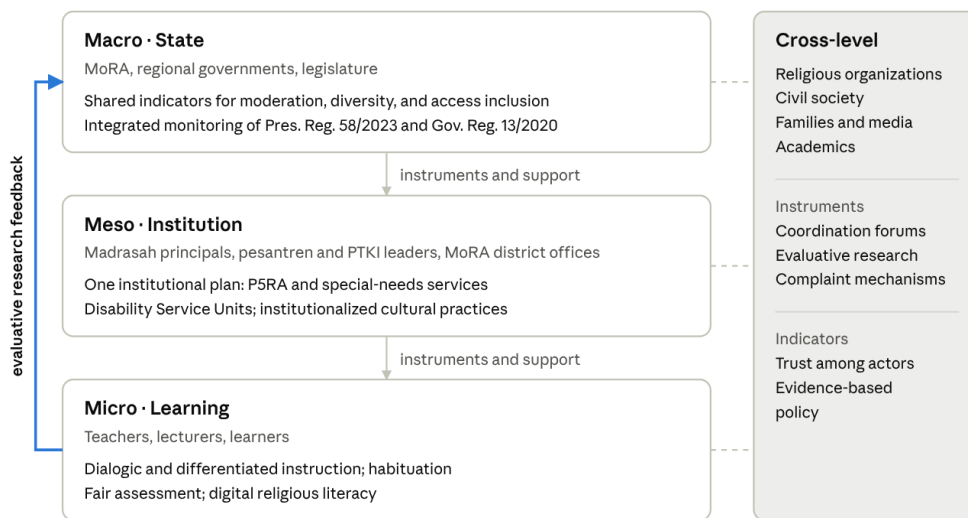


Figure 2. Ecosystem Model of Inclusive, Moderate, and Multicultural Islamic Education Policy

In this model, instruments flow from the macro to the micro level, cross-level actors are connected to every level, and evaluative research returns evidence from the classroom to policy formulation. The novelty of the model lies in three features. *First*, it places access inclusion on a par with socio-religious inclusiveness, thereby correcting the asymmetry in the literature. *Second*, it does not propose new regulations but connects existing regimes through cross-agenda instruments, with the Ministry of Religious Affairs as the hub because it administers both regimes. *Third*, it incorporates evaluative research as a cross-level component, enabling policy to learn from evidence.

Experiences from other countries offer contextual notes for the model. Malaysia pursues moderation with Islam as the state religion but faces difficulties in protecting minority rights (Arafat & Budiwati, 2024). Jordan demonstrates the importance of synergy between the state and religious institutions (Kandiri et al., 2025), while Islamic education in the Netherlands reveals both opportunities for innovation and weak standards when Islam occupies a minority position (Muharrani et al., 2025). These notes underline that the model must be adapted to the state–religion relationship in each context. The model is heuristic and requires empirical testing.

Implications and Limitations

Theoretically, this article extends the study of Islamic education policy by combining the lenses of policy instruments, policy networks, and institutional theory. The finding of an inverted asymmetry indicates that reading policy solely through the literature can be misleading, so document analysis of regulations

should form part of policy research. Practically, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and regional governments should develop shared indicators and integrate the monitoring of religious moderation with the monitoring of reasonable accommodation. Leaders of madrasahs, pesantren, and Islamic higher education institutions should combine P5RA with services for learners with special needs in a single institutional plan and institutionalize existing cultural practices, while educators should be equipped with competencies in dialogic, differentiated, and accommodative instruction.

This study has several limitations. The literature corpus was selected purposively and is predominantly in Indonesian, so its thematic patterns may be influenced by the search strategy. The document analysis is limited to six documents, including one subnational regulation, and does not yet cover implementing regulations such as ministerial regulations on Disability Service Units within the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Future research should therefore pursue multi-site studies of reasonable accommodation in madrasahs and pesantren, impact evaluations of religious moderation policy using mixed-methods designs, and validation of the ecosystem model through the Delphi technique or focus group discussions with experts and practitioners.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that integrating religious moderation, multicultural education, and inclusive education requires an ecosystemic approach that connects their epistemic-religious, relational-cultural, and structural-institutional dimensions within a shared normative orientation of justice and human dignity. The key lesson is that policy fragmentation, rather than the absence of policy instruments, constitutes the main barrier to integration. While access inclusion has the most comprehensive regulatory instruments, religious moderation is supported by coordination and curricular mechanisms, whereas multicultural education remains primarily a guiding principle. The implications of the research findings are that policymakers should strengthen cross-agenda coordination, align policy instruments across macro, meso, and micro levels, and foster institutional cultures that support educator agency, equitable access, and meaningful participation. The study contributes to Islamic education policy scholarship by integrating policy instruments, policy networks, and institutional theory into an Ecosystem Model of Inclusive, Moderate, and Multicultural Islamic Education Policy. However, the findings are limited by the purposive literature corpus and the analysis of a small number of regulatory documents. Future research should validate the proposed model through empirical studies in madrasahs and pesantren, examine the implementation of reasonable accommodation, and assess how cross-agenda coordination influences educational practices and outcomes.

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