

Local Wisdom Accommodation Models for Religious Moderation in Madrasah Aliyah: A Multiple-Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This study examines models of local wisdom accommodation for religious moderation in Madrasah Aliyah in Indonesia. Although religious moderation has become a key agenda in Islamic education, research on how institutions, culture, and curricula accommodate local wisdom remains underexplored. This study aims to identify models of local wisdom accommodation, examine their socio-religious contexts, and analyze their contribution to religious moderation. Using a qualitative multiple-case study design, the study was conducted at four Madrasah Aliyah in Banyumas, Purbalingga, and Kediri. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, documentation, and focus group discussions involving 28 participants, including principals, teachers, and students, selected through purposive and snowball sampling. The findings identify three models of local wisdom accommodation: introducing local culture, forming school culture, and integrating local wisdom into the curriculum. The introduction model familiarizes students with local traditions and cultural values; the school culture model institutionalizes local traditions through everyday school practices; and the curricular integration model incorporates local wisdom into the curriculum, learning activities, and school vision and mission. These models provide contextual opportunities for cultivating religious moderation, particularly tolerance, rejection of violence, and accommodative attitudes toward local cultural traditions. The study contributes an empirically grounded typology of local wisdom accommodation and demonstrates how local cultural resources can be connected with institutional, cultural, and curricular practices in Islamic education.

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INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation has become an important issue in contemporary educational and social discourse, particularly in multicultural and multireligious societies such as Indonesia (Hefner 2023; Zaman and Hefner 2010; A. H. bin Abdullah 2026; Masuwd et al. 2025). In Indonesia, religious moderation is promoted as a strategic approach to managing religious diversity, maintaining social cohesion, and preventing exclusivist and violent expressions of religion within educational and social institutions (Azra 2006, 2019; Sutisna and Khorri 2024; Amalia 2026). The Ministry of Religious Affairs identifies four indicators of religious moderation: commitment to national values, tolerance, rejection of violence, and accommodation of local culture (Indonesia, 2019). These indicators position religious moderation not merely as an individual religious attitude but also as a social and educational process through which religious commitments are expressed in relation to national identity, social diversity, and local cultural realities (A. Abdullah et al. 2023; Asrori et al. 2025; Lapasere et al. 2025; Rohmah et al. 2023).

Among these indicators, accommodation of local culture is particularly relevant to Islamic education because local wisdom provides cultural resources through which religious values can be contextualized within students' everyday social environments (Mukhibat et al. 2023; Alam et al. 2026; Masdar et al. 2024; Fahmi et al. 2025). Local wisdom in this study refers specifically to locally developed knowledge, values, norms, practices, and meanings that have been transmitted and maintained within a particular community and that provide guidance for social interaction and collective life (Musslifah et al. 2025; Rozanita et al. 2026). It should therefore be distinguished from the broader concept of local culture. Local culture encompasses the wider range of cultural expressions, traditions, symbols, language, arts, and social practices of a community, whereas local wisdom refers to the values and knowledge embedded within those cultural expressions that are considered meaningful for guiding social behavior (Arizona et al. 2025; Lestari et al. 2025; Rizal et al. 2025). This distinction is important because not every local cultural practice automatically constitutes local wisdom or necessarily supports religious moderation.

The relationship between local wisdom and religious moderation can be understood through an educational process involving several interconnected stages: local wisdom, educational practice, internalization, and religious moderation (Ainiyah et al. 2025; Ayyubi et al. 2025; Ilham and Ramadani 2024; Salim et al. 2024). Local wisdom initially functions as a cultural resource containing values such as mutual respect, communal responsibility, social harmony, and peaceful coexistence (Leu 2025; Rasidi et al. 2025). When these values are selected and translated into educational activities, they become part of pedagogical practice through classroom learning, school routines, extracurricular activities, institutional programs, or interactions among members of the school community (Astra et al. 2024; N. Huda et al. 2024). Repeated participation in these practices creates opportunities for students to internalize the underlying values through experience, habituation, reflection, and social interaction. Religious moderation may consequently be expressed in students' attitudes and practices, particularly in their ability to respect differences, reject violence, and respond accommodatively to legitimate local traditions (Damanhuri et al. 2025; M. T. Huda et al. 2025). Thus, the significance of local wisdom for religious moderation does not lie simply in the presence of cultural traditions in schools, but in how their underlying values are pedagogically interpreted, institutionalized, and internalized.

This perspective also requires a distinction between local wisdom and several related concepts frequently used in Islamic educational settings. Religious traditions refer to practices associated with religious observance and transmission, such as communal prayer, recitation, or celebrations of Islamic religious occasions. Pesantren culture refers to the distinctive norms, practices, relationships, and educational traditions developed within pesantren environments, including patterns of respect toward teachers and religious learning traditions (Baihaqi et al. 2023; Fatah et al. 2025; Baihaqi et al. 2023; Budiyo et al. 2024). Although pesantren culture may contain local wisdom, the two concepts are not synonymous. Similarly, school culture refers to the shared values, norms, routines, relationships, and behavioral patterns institutionalized within a particular educational organization. School culture may

become a mechanism through which local wisdom is accommodated, but it is not itself equivalent to local wisdom. Finally, Islamic values refer to values derived from Islamic teachings and normative sources, whereas local wisdom represents values and knowledge rooted in particular socio-cultural communities (Ma'arif et al. 2026; Karmina et al. 2024). In practice, these dimensions may intersect, particularly where local traditions have developed through long-term interaction with Islamic teachings. The analytical distinction is nevertheless necessary to identify whether a practice represents a local cultural resource, an Islamic religious tradition, an institutional school practice, or a combination of these elements.

Historically, the interaction between Islam and local culture has demonstrated the capacity of Islamic communities to negotiate religious teachings with diverse social and cultural environments. In Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, Islamic traditions have developed through complex processes of cultural interaction rather than through complete separation from existing local practices (Azra 2006). This historical interaction provides an important context for understanding local wisdom as a potential resource for religious moderation. At the same time, cultural accommodation cannot be assumed to be inherently moderate. Local traditions may contain inclusive values that support social cohesion, but they may also carry particularistic meanings that potentially exclude groups outside the community. Consequently, the educational significance of local wisdom depends on how institutions interpret, select, and transform cultural resources within their religious and pedagogical frameworks (Kamilah et al. 2026; Rahman et al. 2025; Adnan et al. 2026).

Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic Senior High Schools) provide an important institutional context for examining this process. As Islamic secondary education institutions under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Madrasah Aliyah operate at the intersection of religious education, national educational objectives, and local socio-cultural environments. Students encounter religious teachings not only through formal subjects but also through school routines, institutional programs, community interactions, extracurricular activities, and cultural practices (Ikhwan et al. 2025; Saputro et al. 2026; Miftah et al. 2024). Previous studies have identified various forms of local wisdom accommodation in Islamic educational settings, including curriculum integration, school culture development, and community-based cultural activities (Andriyani and Leksono 2024; Isnaeni et al. 2025; Hussain 2025; Maisura et al. 2026). However, existing studies have generally examined particular practices or individual institutional contexts and have provided limited explanation of how different forms of accommodation are structured and how they function as educational processes for cultivating religious moderation.

The unresolved problem is therefore not simply the absence of comparisons between schools. More specifically, previous research provides insufficient empirical explanation of how local wisdom moves from being a cultural resource to becoming an educational practice, how such practices are institutionalized within different madrasah environments, and how their underlying values are internalized in relation to religious moderation. The literature also provides limited understanding of whether accommodation occurs only at the level of cultural introduction, becomes embedded in everyday school culture, or is formally incorporated into curriculum and institutional planning. This limitation makes it difficult to understand the different degrees and mechanisms through which madrasah accommodate local wisdom. A comparative multiple-case examination is therefore needed to identify recurring patterns while also explaining how those patterns are shaped by different socio-religious educational contexts.

This study addresses this gap by examining four Madrasah Aliyah located in Banyumas, Purbalingga, and Kediri. The cases provide different institutional contexts in which local cultural traditions, Islamic educational practices, school programs, and community values intersect. Preliminary observations indicate that local wisdom is accommodated through several distinct practices, ranging from the introduction of local cultural traditions and values to their institutionalization in school culture and their integration into curriculum and educational programs.

These variations provide an empirical basis for developing a typology of local wisdom accommodation rather than assuming the existence of a single accommodation model.

In relation to the four national indicators of religious moderation, this study recognizes commitment to national values, tolerance, rejection of violence, and accommodation of local culture as the broader policy framework. However, because the study specifically investigates the accommodation of local wisdom, the empirical analysis gives particular attention to tolerance, rejection of violence, and accommodative attitudes toward local culture, which have the most direct conceptual relationship with the phenomenon under investigation. Commitment to national values is retained as a contextual dimension, particularly where local cultural practices intersect with civic identity, national belonging, and respect for diversity, but it is not treated as the primary analytical dimension unless supported by the empirical data.

Accordingly, this study asks three questions: (1) What models of local wisdom accommodation are developed in Madrasah Aliyah in Banyumas, Purbalingga, and Kediri? (2) How are these models shaped by the socio-religious contexts of the madrasah educational ecosystems? and (3) How do these accommodation models contribute to the cultivation of religious moderation, particularly tolerance, rejection of violence, and accommodative attitudes toward local culture? The study contributes to the literature by developing an empirically grounded typology of three local wisdom accommodation models—introduction of local culture, formation of school culture, and curricular integration—and by explaining the educational processes through which local cultural resources are transformed into institutional and pedagogical practices related to religious moderation. Rather than claiming measurable effectiveness, the study offers a contextual explanation of how different forms of accommodation operate within Islamic secondary education and provides practical insights for madrasah seeking to connect local cultural resources with religious education and moderation-oriented practices.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative multiple-case study design to examine how Madrasah Aliyah accommodate local wisdom in promoting religious moderation. The multiple-case approach was selected because the study focused on examining practices of religious moderation and local-wisdom accommodation across four different madrasah contexts and identifying both case-specific characteristics and patterns shared across cases.

The study explored three main dimensions: the forms of local wisdom accommodated in madrasah education, the contribution of these practices to the development of religious moderation, and the ways in which local wisdom was incorporated into curricular, co-curricular, extracurricular, and everyday madrasah activities. A qualitative approach enabled the researchers to understand these practices from the perspectives of members of the madrasah community and to examine them within their natural educational contexts.

The research was conducted in four Madrasah Aliyah: MAN Purbalingga in Central Java, MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok in Banyumas, MAN 2 Kota Kediri in East Java, and MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri in East Java. The four sites were purposively selected because they represented madrasah contexts in which religious moderation was promoted through educational practices, institutional culture, religious activities, and the accommodation of local cultural and religious traditions.

Participants were selected purposively based on their involvement in the planning, implementation, supervision, and experience of religious moderation and local-wisdom practices. They included principals, vice principals, curriculum and student-affairs coordinators, teachers, extracurricular supervisors, and students. Focus Group Discussions were also conducted with relevant members of the madrasah community. The involvement of participants with different roles enabled the researchers to obtain diverse perspectives on institutional policies, educational practices, habituation processes, and students' experiences.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and documentation. These techniques were used complementarily to obtain comprehensive information and to compare reported practices with practices observed in the madrasah setting.

In-depth interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format with principals, vice principals, teachers, extracurricular supervisors, and other relevant participants. The interviews focused on the implementation of religious moderation, the forms of local wisdom incorporated into education, the processes of habituation and teacher role modeling, and the contribution of these practices to students' tolerance, rejection of violence, and accommodative attitudes. The interviews also explored the institutional rationale for selecting and implementing particular local-wisdom practices.

Participant observation was conducted to examine the implementation of religious moderation and local wisdom in everyday madrasah activities. The observations focused on classroom learning, religious routines, student-teacher interactions, extracurricular and co-curricular activities, cultural programs, social activities, and other forms of institutional habituation. Observation data were used to identify how values such as tolerance, respect, cooperation, politeness, and accommodation of differences were manifested in actual educational practices.

FGDs were conducted to obtain collective perspectives and to clarify information obtained through individual interviews and observations. The discussions addressed the development of religious moderation, the accommodation of local wisdom, the role of madrasah culture, and the sustainability of these practices. Information obtained from the FGDs was compared with individual interview accounts and observational evidence.

Documentation was used to examine the institutional and curricular basis of the practices under study. Relevant documents included madrasah profiles, curriculum documents, annual work programs, project documents, records of extracurricular and co-curricular activities, and other institutional materials related to religious moderation and local wisdom. Documentary data were used to strengthen contextual understanding and support the interpretation of interview, observation, and FGD findings.

Data analysis was conducted interactively throughout the research process. Interview and FGD data, observation notes, and documentary materials were first organized and examined to identify information relevant to the research questions. The researchers then coded statements, activities, and events related to religious moderation and local wisdom, including tolerance, rejection of violence, accommodative attitudes, local cultural values, religious traditions, habituation, teacher role modeling, curriculum integration, extracurricular activities, and community engagement.

The codes were subsequently grouped into categories and themes within each case. Within-case analysis was conducted to identify the characteristics of each madrasah, followed by cross-case analysis to compare similarities and differences among the four cases. Through this process, the study identified three broad patterns of local-wisdom accommodation: introduction, in which students were exposed to local cultural and religious values; school-culture formation, in which these values were strengthened through habituation, institutional routines, and role modeling; and integrative accommodation, in which local wisdom was incorporated across curricular, co-curricular, extracurricular, and community-based activities.

The trustworthiness of the data was strengthened through triangulation of sources and data-collection techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from principals, vice principals, teachers, extracurricular supervisors, and students. Method triangulation was conducted by comparing evidence from interviews, observations, FGDs, and documents. The researchers also conducted cross-case comparisons to examine the consistency of emerging patterns across the four madrasahs. Differences or inconsistencies among sources were examined in relation to the context of each madrasah rather than being automatically excluded. This process enhanced the credibility and dependability of the findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study examined how four Madrasah Aliyah—MAN Purbalingga, MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok, MAN 2 Kota Kediri, and MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri—accommodate local wisdom in promoting religious moderation. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews, participant observations, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and document analysis. Rather than treating local wisdom as a fixed cultural artifact, the findings indicate that it functions as a set of values, practices, and social norms embedded in learning, religious routines, interpersonal interactions, extracurricular activities, and community engagement.

The analysis produced three forms of local-wisdom accommodation: introduction, school-culture formation, and integrative accommodation. These are not three different types of schools and should not be understood as rigid sequential stages. Rather, they are analytical categories derived from recurring patterns across the four cases. The categories differ mainly in the depth of institutionalization: introduction emphasizes exposure and awareness, school-culture formation emphasizes habituation and role modeling, while integrative accommodation connects local wisdom systematically across curricular, co-curricular, extracurricular, and community-based practices.

Case Findings and Forms of Local Wisdom Accommodation

MAN Purbalingga

At MAN Purbalingga, local wisdom was accommodated through curricular learning, extracurricular activities, co-curricular programs, and religious-pesantren activities. Interview data indicate that religious moderation was already embedded in the madrasah curriculum, particularly in Qur'an-Hadith, Aqidah Akhlak, Fiqh, and Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam. To'in Asngad, a teacher interviewed on August 2, 2025, explained that the PAI materials provided by the Ministry were not substantially modified; instead, teachers adjusted examples and explanations to the classroom context. This indicates that local wisdom was used primarily as a contextual pedagogical resource rather than as a separate subject.

Interview evidence from Akhmad Saghli, Vice Principal for Student Affairs (August 2, 2025), further showed that moderation values were explicitly accommodated in several extracurricular activities, including scouting, school publications, scientific activities, Keputrian, broadcasting, and environmental programs. This finding demonstrates that moderation was not confined to religious subjects but was reproduced in broader student activities.

The co-curricular programs provided stronger contextualization. Ahmad Akrom, an OSIS mentor interviewed on July 31, 2025, described leadership training that emphasized democracy, deliberation, tolerance, and respect for differences. Similarly, Aman Nurkhayanto, Vice Principal for Student Affairs, explained in an FGD on October 18, 2025, that the annual Karya Wisata and Ziyarah Waliyullah program included visits to Bali to expose students to a Muslim minority context within a predominantly Hindu environment. The activity allowed students to encounter religious difference in a concrete social setting rather than only through classroom explanations.

Local wisdom was also visible in the P5 and PPRA programs. The 2024/2025 madrasah work document recorded activities involving traditional food, local arts, and community-based cultural experiences. Interview and FGD data from Awal Tri Riyadi, To'in Asngad, and Krido Prihatno indicated that students were exposed to cultural diversity in Desa Buntu, Wonosobo, where religious and cultural heterogeneity became part of the learning experience. Canggih Finalti, an art teacher and Sendra Tasik supervisor, also described the annual Sarasehan Budaya as a space for maintaining local arts while strengthening students' participation in collective cultural activities.

The Pesantren Ummul Qura program provided an additional religious-cultural dimension. According to To'in Asngad, the program accommodated classical Islamic learning and Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah traditions within the wider madrasah environment. Thus, at MAN Purbalingga, local

wisdom operated through both cultural contextualization and Islamic-pesantren traditions, with moderation emerging through tolerance, participation, respect for difference, and social interaction.

MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok

At MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok, local wisdom was closely related to NU traditions, Banyumas cultural practices, religious education, and vocationally oriented educational programs. Khusniatus Sholihah, Vice Principal for Curriculum, explained in an interview on August 5, 2025, that religious moderation was embedded in the curriculum in accordance with the madrasah curriculum framework and reinforced through habituation and institutional culture, even when it was not always written explicitly in teachers' administrative documents.

An important distinctive feature was the local subject of Ke-NU-an. Kyai Dawam, a Ke-NU-an teacher interviewed on August 5, 2025, explained that the subject introduced values associated with *mabadi' khair al-ummah*, including *ash-shidqu*, *al-amanah wa al-wafa bi al-'ahd*, *al-adalah*, and *al-tawazun*. These values provide a direct bridge between local religious tradition and the principles of religious moderation.

Local wisdom was also reinforced through interaction beyond the madrasah. The school collaborated with the Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama (FKUB) Banyumas and organized interfaith dialogue and visits to places of worship. Such activities exposed students to religious diversity through direct social interaction. They therefore functioned differently from classroom instruction by creating opportunities for students to encounter and communicate with people from different religious backgrounds.

The P5/PPRA program further connected local culture to student activities. According to Khusniatus Sholihah, cultural performances at the end of the 2024 semester involved traditional arts, drama, Genjring Kunglung, and traditional Banyumas foods. Students were not merely introduced to cultural products but also involved in producing, performing, and presenting them.

Arif Rahmanudin, the head of the madrasah, explained in an FGD on October 21, 2025, that the institution also collaborated with approximately ten partner pesantren. These pesantren contributed to the teaching of PAI, Ke-NU-an, and classical Islamic texts. This cooperation demonstrates how local religious traditions were reproduced through a broader educational network.

However, the accommodation of local wisdom was not equally intensive in all programs. The Pawai Budaya Lokal, for example, was not conducted regularly because of preparation requirements and costs. The Saturday *Bahasa Jawa Halus* program was also described in the FGD as not yet fully implemented. These findings provide important evidence that institutional commitment did not automatically produce uniform implementation.

MAN 2 Kota Kediri

MAN 2 Kota Kediri showed the strongest emphasis on school culture and habituation. Interview data from Nur Salim, the head of the madrasah (July 1, 2025), as well as Fachris and Agus, indicated that religious moderation was embedded in daily routines rather than treated only as a curricular topic.

The daily program included Qur'anic recitation from 06:45 to 07:00, congregational Dhuhr and Asr prayers, and Friday morning istighosah and joint prayer. Observation on June 27, 2025, confirmed participation in the Friday religious routine by students with different organizational backgrounds, including NU, Muhammadiyah, and LDII. Agus explained that students from nearby pesantren could perform the Asr prayer at their own pesantren, indicating that the madrasah accommodated differences in students' religious routines rather than imposing a single organizational practice.

Fachris also described the Rohis program as "Madrasah Ramah Anak dan Moderat," which was designed to respect students' social, cultural, and academic diversity while incorporating the values of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila and Profil Pelajar Rahmatan lil 'Alamin. Cross-school and inter-institutional activities were supported through FORSIKA and cooperation with FKUB Kediri Raya.

Teacher role modeling was another central finding. Agus and Abd Fakhor emphasized the importance of teachers demonstrating openness, fairness, politeness, and balance in interactions with students. This was consistent with the observation of everyday norms. One example recorded in the field report was the student expression, “nuwun sewu saya tak makan dulu, monggo,” illustrating the use of polite language in classroom interaction. The cultural value of *unggah-ungguh* was also reinforced through everyday practices, including students getting off their motorcycles and walking them through the school gate when teachers were on duty.

Fahris explained in an interview on July 3, 2025, that local religious traditions such as *tahlilan*, *Maulid*, *Isra Mi'raj*, *halal bihalal*, *Yasin*, *Asmaul Husna*, and *istighosah* were maintained within the madrasah. These practices were not presented solely as ritual obligations but also as opportunities to understand social and communal values.

The findings therefore indicate that MAN 2 Kota Kediri accommodated local wisdom primarily through institutional routines, interpersonal ethics, socio-religious traditions, and teacher role modeling.

MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri

MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri demonstrated a more explicit integration between madrasah education and pesantren traditions. Qomar, the head of the madrasah, explained in an interview on July 28, 2025, that PAI learning used *fiqh*, *tafsir*, *akhlak*, and *turats* or classical Islamic texts. Safii, a *fiqh* teacher interviewed on the same date, described the teaching of differences among the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence, including differences concerning ablution and *qunut*. Rather than presenting one interpretation as the only legitimate position, these differences were explained as part of the diversity of Islamic legal thought.

Rizna, a SKI teacher, also explained that historical learning included local Islamic traditions such as *tahlilan* and *kenduren*, which were discussed in relation to their social and spiritual functions. This illustrates that local religious practices were not simply preserved as rituals but were interpreted pedagogically.

The habituation of local and religious values was visible in the morning routine. Observation on July 28, 2025, recorded *tadarus*, prayer, *Asmaul Husna*, and moral messages concerning togetherness, honesty, and responsibility. Cholis, the curriculum coordinator, confirmed that these activities were routinely conducted and involved students from the madrasah and the affiliated MTs sharing the same environment.

The madrasah also maintained traditions such as *megengan* before Ramadan and communal prayers for ancestors, founders, teachers, and students. Qomar explained that these traditions remained part of the madrasah's communal identity.

Teacher role modeling formed another important component. According to Qomar, teachers—many of whom had pesantren educational backgrounds—were expected to demonstrate fairness, openness, politeness, and warmth. The principle was summarized in the statement, “Guru bukan hanya mengajar, tetapi juga menjadi contoh hidup.” This illustrates how the transmission of local wisdom depended not only on formal teaching but also on the visible conduct of educators.

The findings further show that local Javanese ethics such as *tepo seliro*, *andhap asor*, and *rukun* were reflected in communication, cooperation, social service, and relationships between teachers and students. Thus, MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri combined pesantren-based Islamic traditions with Javanese social ethics to construct a moderate educational culture.

Cross-Case Comparison

The four cases reveal both substantial similarities and important differences.

First, all four madrasahs accommodated local wisdom as a living educational practice rather than merely as cultural content. However, the specific cultural resources varied. MAN Purbalingga emphasized local arts, community experiences, environmental awareness, and pesantren learning; MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilogok emphasized NU traditions, Banyumas culture, interfaith engagement, and

Javanese language; MAN 2 Kota Kediri emphasized *unggah-ungguh*, religious routines, social solidarity, and local socio-religious traditions; while MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri emphasized pesantren traditions, Javanese ethics, classical Islamic scholarship, and communal religious practices.

Second, the four cases differed in the dominant mechanism through which local wisdom was institutionalized. MAN Purbalingga relied strongly on curricular contextualization and structured project activities. MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok demonstrated the strongest connection between local wisdom, NU traditions, interfaith engagement, and vocational/community partnerships. MAN 2 Kota Kediri showed the most visible emphasis on daily habituation and school culture. MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri integrated local wisdom most explicitly with the pesantren tradition and classical Islamic scholarship.

Third, the cases indicate that the accommodation of local wisdom is not uniform across all programs within a single institution. Some programs were highly institutionalized, while others were limited by time, resources, preparation, or the absence of systematic implementation. This pattern was particularly visible at MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok, where the local cultural parade was not conducted regularly and the *Bahasa Jawa Halus* initiative was not yet fully implemented.

How the Three Accommodation Models Emerged

The three models emerged inductively from repeated patterns identified across the four cases rather than being assigned to particular madrasahs in advance.

The introduction model was identified when local wisdom appeared primarily as content used to increase students' awareness and recognition of cultural or religious values. Examples include the use of local traditions in classroom explanations at MAN Purbalingga, the teaching of Ke-NU-an at MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok, the explanation of local religious traditions in history learning at MAN 2 Kota Kediri, and the teaching of differences among Islamic legal schools at MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri.

The school-culture formation model emerged when local values were repeatedly institutionalized through daily routines, teacher role modeling, regulations, and shared norms. Evidence included religious routines at MAN 2 Kota Kediri and MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri, polite communication and *unggah-ungguh* at MAN 2 Kota Kediri, and habituation and school culture at MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok.

The integrative model emerged where local wisdom was connected across several educational domains and required students to actively participate. P5/PPRA, traditional arts, cultural projects, interfaith activities, social service, community programs, and pesantren collaboration provided evidence of this broader integration. MAN Purbalingga and MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok showed particularly visible examples of this pattern, although elements of integration were also found at the other two sites.

Accordingly, the three models should be understood as analytical categories representing increasing breadth and depth of institutionalization, not as three mutually exclusive stages. A single madrasah could demonstrate all three models simultaneously.

Divergent and Limiting Evidence

Although most participants described local wisdom positively, the data also revealed limitations that complicate any assumption that all local wisdom automatically promotes moderation.

First, implementation was uneven. At MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok, the Pawai Budaya Lokal was not conducted regularly because of preparation demands and financial considerations. The *Bahasa Jawa Halus* initiative had also not been fully implemented. These findings demonstrate that institutional recognition of local wisdom does not necessarily guarantee continuous implementation.

Second, some forms of local wisdom require interpretive mediation. At MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri, differences among Islamic legal schools were taught explicitly so that students would understand plurality within Islamic jurisprudence. This indicates that religious traditions cannot

simply be presented without explanation; their potential contribution to moderation depends partly on how teachers frame differences.

Third, several practices were deeply rooted in particular organizational or religious traditions, such as NU traditions, pesantren culture, or particular communal rituals. The data did not indicate that these practices produced direct exclusion in the observed settings. Nevertheless, their moderating effect depended on whether they were presented as shared educational values rather than as markers of superiority over other groups.

Thus, the evidence supports a more cautious conclusion: local wisdom has moderating potential, but its educational effect depends on contextualization, inclusive interpretation, repeated habituation, and institutional support.

Synthesis of Cross-Case Findings

Table 1. Cross-Case Synthesis of Local Wisdom Accommodation in Four Madrasah Aliyah

Case	Dominant Wisdom	Local Main Mechanisms	Educational	Evidence of Religious Moderation	Main Limitation
MAN Purbalingga	Local community traditions, environmental values, pesantren traditions	arts, PAI, P5/PPRA, extracurricular activities, leadership, pesantren programs	OSIS democratic cultural programs, pesantren	Tolerance, respect for difference, OSIS democratic deliberation, cross-cultural awareness	Local wisdom depends on teacher contextualization and program design
MA Ma'arif NU Cilogok	NU values, Banyumas 1 Javanese language, community traditions	Ke-NU-an, P5/PPRA, interfaith dialogue, cultural performances, pesantren partnerships	P5/PPRA, interfaith dialogue, cultural performances, pesantren partnerships	Tolerance, balance, openness, social responsibility	Cultural parade and Javanese-language habituation were not consistently implemented
MAN 2 Kota Kediri	<i>Unggah-ungguh, andhap asor</i> , socio-religious traditions, gotong royong	Daily routines, teacher modeling, extracurriculars, social programs	religious teacher role modeling, social programs	Respect, non-violence, accommodation of organizational differences, polite interaction	Strong dependence on habituation and institutional consistency
MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri	Pesantren traditions, Javanese ethics, <i>turats</i> , communal rituals	PAI, SKI, morning routines, religious commemorations, teacher modeling	morning religious commemorations, teacher modeling	Respect for jurisprudential differences, humility, harmony, communal responsibility	Moderating effects depend on interpretive framing of traditions

The cross-case evidence indicates that local wisdom was accommodated through different institutional pathways but consistently functioned as a contextual medium for translating abstract religious-moderation principles into everyday educational practices. The strongest recurring mechanisms were contextual learning, habituation, teacher role modeling, participatory cultural activities, and direct interaction with diversity.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that local wisdom contributes to religious moderation in Madrasah Aliyah through more than the transmission of cultural knowledge. Across MAN Purbalingga, MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok, MAN 2 Kota Kediri, and MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri, local wisdom was embedded in classroom learning, religious routines, school culture, extracurricular and co-curricular activities, teacher-student interactions, and community engagement. These findings suggest that the relationship between local wisdom and religious moderation is mediated by processes of contextualization, habituation, and institutional reinforcement. At the same time, the findings indicate that local wisdom does not automatically produce moderation; its contribution depends on how cultural practices are interpreted, mediated, and institutionalized within the madrasah.

Local Wisdom as a Contextual Mechanism for Religious Moderation

The first contribution of the study concerns the role of local wisdom as a contextual mechanism for making religious moderation meaningful to students. Values such as *tepo seliro*, *andhap asor*, *guyub rukun*, *gotong royong*, politeness, respect for teachers, and pesantren traditions provide culturally familiar reference points for understanding broader principles of religious moderation, including tolerance, balance, justice, humility, and social responsibility. Rather than encountering moderation exclusively as an abstract religious principle, students experience these values through everyday forms of communication, communal activities, religious practices, and cultural traditions.

This finding is consistent with previous research demonstrating that local wisdom can provide a contextual basis for religious moderation. Zahrah et al., (2024) found that pesantren traditions and local cultural practices could be incorporated into madrasah learning and culture to strengthen religious moderation, particularly through teacher exemplarity, institutional culture, and curricular integration. Sugianto et al. similarly found that moderation in pesantren was constructed through the interaction of local traditions, institutional rules, leadership, and students' everyday practices. More recent research on Sunan Kudus local wisdom likewise shows that culturally grounded Islamic learning can connect local values with religious moderation through curriculum integration, reflective learning, teacher role modeling, and habituation.

The present study extends these findings by demonstrating that contextualization occurs across different institutional settings and cultural configurations, rather than through a single local tradition. MAN Purbalingga incorporated local cultural references, arts, P5/PPRA activities, and pesantren learning; MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok drew on NU traditions, Banyumas culture, Javanese language, and community engagement; MAN 2 Kota Kediri emphasized *unggah-ungguh*, *andhap asor*, communal religious traditions, and social solidarity; while MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri combined pesantren traditions, Javanese ethics, and classical Islamic scholarship.

This cross-case pattern suggests that the effectiveness of local wisdom does not depend on reproducing one particular tradition. Rather, its pedagogical value lies in its capacity to provide students with culturally intelligible forms of moral reasoning and social interaction. This interpretation is also supported by Ramedlon et al., (2024) who found that local wisdom could provide relevant values and learning media for Islamic Religious Education when incorporated into learning activities and opportunities for student reflection. Thus, local wisdom functions as a bridge between normative religious concepts and students' lived realities.

From Cultural Exposure to Institutionalized Practice

The three categories identified in this study introduction, school-culture formation, and integrative accommodation should be interpreted as analytical categories rather than three different school types or rigid sequential stages. They emerged from recurring differences in the breadth and depth of institutionalization across the four cases.

The introduction category represents the process through which students first encounter local cultural and religious values in meaningful educational contexts. At MAN Purbalingga, for example,

teachers contextualized religious education through local examples, while P5/PPRA activities exposed students to traditional food, arts, and culturally diverse communities. At MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilogok, the Ke-NU-an subject connected religious education with *mabadi' khair al-ummah* values such as honesty, trustworthiness, justice, and balance. At MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri, differences among Islamic schools of jurisprudence were used as learning material to demonstrate the legitimacy of diversity within Islamic legal thought. These practices indicate that contextual exposure creates the cognitive foundation from which students can interpret moderation in relation to their own social environment.

This finding is compatible with (Misdah et al. 2025; Ritonga and Nurawati 2025; Asrohan et al. 2025), who argue that introducing religious moderation through local wisdom is meaningful because the values are connected to children's immediate social environment. However, the present study shows that exposure alone is not sufficient. The findings indicate that moderation becomes more deeply embedded when cultural values are repeatedly enacted through school routines, teacher example, and institutional expectations (Azkiya et al. 2024; Jannah et al. 2023).

The school-culture formation category therefore represents a deeper level of institutionalization. MAN 2 Kota Kediri provides a strong example through *tadarus*, communal prayers, *istighosah*, Yasin, polite communication, social cooperation, and teacher role modeling. MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri similarly institutionalized local and religious values through morning religious routines, communal traditions, teacher example, and the etiquette associated with Javanese and *pesantren* culture. In these contexts, students encounter the same moral expectations repeatedly across daily interactions. This suggests that school culture transforms local wisdom from knowledge about values into socially expected ways of behaving.

This finding is consistent with Sugianto et al., (2024), whose study shows that religious moderation becomes institutionalized through rules, leadership, social interaction, and daily practices in *pesantren*. It also resonates with recent research showing that local wisdom-based moderation is strengthened when cultural values are supported simultaneously by curriculum, school culture, institutional policy, teacher role modeling, and habituation (Sa'ad et al. 2025; Amalia et al. 2025; Aisah et al. 2025; Supriyanto et al. 2025).

The integrative category extends this process across multiple educational domains. P5/PPRA, cultural performances, extracurricular activities, social service, interfaith encounters, community programs, and *pesantren* partnerships provide students with opportunities to apply values beyond the classroom (Humaidi et al. 2024). This broader integration is important because students encounter moderation in different social situations and are encouraged to connect cultural values with practical action.

The contribution of the present study therefore lies in identifying a mechanism of institutionalization: cultural exposure establishes recognition, habituation embeds expectations, and cross-context integration provides opportunities for enactment. These categories are analytically related, but they should not be understood as a universal sequence that every *madrasah* must follow. A *madrasah* may employ all three simultaneously, with different degrees of emphasis.

The Moderating Potential and Ambivalence of Local Wisdom

The findings also require a qualification to the common assumption that local wisdom is inherently supportive of religious moderation. The data demonstrate that cultural practices become moderating resources only when they are interpreted through inclusive religious and educational principles.

One important example is the treatment of religious differences at MAS Hasan Muchyi Kediri. Differences among the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence were not presented simply as competing claims but as legitimate forms of scholarly diversity. The moderating potential therefore emerged from the pedagogical framing of difference, not merely from the existence of multiple traditions. Similarly, local religious traditions at the four *madrasahs* were connected to broader values of harmony, social responsibility, and respect rather than presented as exclusive markers of group identity.

This qualification is important because cultural traditions can simultaneously strengthen internal solidarity and create boundaries between insiders and outsiders. The present study did not identify direct evidence that the observed traditions produced exclusion or intolerance (Wonuola et al. 2025; Zulkifli et al. 2026). However, the uneven implementation of some programs demonstrates that institutional recognition does not automatically ensure consistent outcomes. At MA Ma'arif NU 1 Cilongok, for example, the Pawai Budaya Lokal was not regularly conducted because of preparation and financial constraints, while the *Bahasa Jawa Halus* initiative had not yet been fully implemented. These findings indicate that the presence of local wisdom in institutional discourse should not be equated with uniform implementation.

Recent studies similarly emphasize that local wisdom becomes effective when deliberately integrated into curriculum, school culture, teacher practices, and institutional support rather than simply added as cultural content. Fuad et al., (2026), for example, found that systematic integration of local wisdom into curriculum, learning, school culture, and institutional policies supported the development of moderation as a lived experience. Likewise, research on Madurese and pesantren contexts shows that local traditions contribute to moderation through specific social and institutional mechanisms rather than through cultural inheritance alone.

The findings therefore position local wisdom as conditionally moderating. Its contribution depends on at least four conditions: inclusive interpretation of tradition, teacher mediation, repeated institutional practice, and opportunities to encounter social or religious difference. This finding moves the discussion beyond a celebratory view of local culture and introduces a more critical understanding in which local wisdom is a potential educational resource whose effects depend on pedagogical and institutional conditions.

Theoretical Contribution, Practical Implications, and Research Limits

Theoretically, this study contributes to culturally responsive pedagogy by demonstrating that local wisdom can function not merely as curriculum content but also as a cultural and moral infrastructure for learning. Cultural values provide students with familiar language, interactional norms, routines, and social contexts through which religious principles are interpreted and practiced. This extends previous studies that primarily examine individual traditions or specific learning activities by showing how local wisdom can operate across an entire madrasah ecosystem. Recent research on local-culture integration similarly emphasizes the importance of contextualizing educational content within students' cultural knowledge and experience.

The study also contributes to scholarship on religious moderation by showing that moderation is produced through the interaction of cognitive understanding, affective internalization, and behavioral enactment. Previous research has established the relevance of curriculum integration and local cultural values, but the present cross-case analysis clarifies how these elements are connected. The introduction category supports recognition and understanding; school-culture formation creates repeated behavioral expectations; and integrative accommodation provides opportunities for students to enact these values across different contexts.

For Islamic education, the findings further indicate that the relationship between Islam and local culture is not adequately understood as either rejection or preservation of tradition. The four madrasahs demonstrate a process of pedagogical mediation, in which culturally embedded practices are interpreted in light of broader Islamic ethical principles such as *tawazun*, *tasamuh*, *i'tidal*, mutual respect, and social responsibility (Ainiyah et al. 2025; Ghafar et al. 2025; Indasari et al. 2025). This resonates with current research on local-wisdom-based Islamic education, including studies of Sunan Kudus and Madurese contexts, which show that culturally contextualized religious education can strengthen moderation when supported by reflective learning and teacher mediation.

Practically, the findings suggest that madrasah leaders should not limit local-wisdom integration to cultural performances or occasional celebrations. Greater impact is more likely when local values are connected across curriculum, daily routines, extracurricular activities, student projects, teacher

modeling, and community partnerships. Teacher development is particularly important because teachers serve as cultural mediators who determine how local traditions are explained, whether differences are treated inclusively, and how students are guided to connect tradition with contemporary social realities (Banks 1993).

The study nevertheless has important limitations. First, the four cases are situated within specific Javanese and pesantren-related contexts; therefore, the three analytical categories should not be presented as a universally transferable or replicable model. Their value lies in explaining patterns of accommodation found in these cases. Second, although the findings demonstrate institutionalization through repeated routines and organizational support, the study does not provide longitudinal evidence sufficient to establish long-term sustainability. Institutionalization indicates that practices have become embedded in organizational routines, but their persistence and effects over time require further investigation.

Overall, the study suggests that local wisdom strengthens religious moderation when it is transformed from cultural knowledge into contextual learning, from contextual learning into habitual practice, and from habitual practice into institutionally supported participation. The principal contribution of the study is therefore not the claim that local wisdom is inherently moderate, but the demonstration that culturally grounded practices can become powerful mechanisms of religious moderation when they are critically interpreted, pedagogically mediated, repeatedly practiced, and institutionally reinforced.

CONCLUSION

The findings reveal that Madrasah Aliyah accommodate local wisdom through curricular, co-curricular, extracurricular, and cultural practices that integrate religious education with students' social and cultural contexts. Across the four madrasahs, local wisdom contributes to religious moderation by fostering tolerance, respect for differences, balance, humility, cooperation, and non-violence through three interconnected forms: introduction to local traditions, school-culture formation through habituation and role modeling, and integrative accommodation through projects, extracurricular activities, community engagement, and pesantren partnerships. However, the implementation varies according to institutional context, cultural background, leadership, resources, and teachers' capacity to interpret local traditions inclusively.

Theoretically, the study contributes to research on culturally responsive pedagogy, religious moderation, school culture, and Islamic education by conceptualizing local wisdom as a **mediating** cultural and moral framework through which abstract religious values are translated into lived educational practices. The study further suggests that the moderating potential of local wisdom is conditional rather than automatic: it depends on inclusive interpretation, teacher mediation, repeated practice, and institutional support.

The findings have practical implications for madrasah leadership and teacher development. Because the empirical evidence shows that moderation is reinforced through curriculum, habituation, teacher role modeling, student activities, and community engagement, professional development and school policies should support the integration of relevant local values across these interconnected domains rather than treating local wisdom as an occasional cultural activity. At the same time, institutional actors should critically assess cultural practices to ensure that they promote inclusion and respect for difference.

This study is limited by its focus on four madrasahs within specific Javanese and pesantren-related contexts and by its qualitative, cross-sectional design. Although the findings demonstrate institutionalization through established routines and organizational practices, they do not establish long-term sustainability or effects beyond the period of schooling. Future research should therefore examine additional cultural and geographical contexts and employ longitudinal designs to investigate whether institutionalized local-wisdom practices are sustained over time and how they influence students' attitudes and social engagement after graduation.

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