

Concept Map of Multidisiplinary Studies on Wasathiyah PAI Based on Research and Technology

Muchammad Iqbal Chailani

Institut Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Temanggung, Indonesia

iqbalchailani39@gmail.com

Abdul Wahab Fahrub

Institut Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Temanggung, Indonesia

abdulwahabfahrub@gmail.com

Gunarti Ika Pradewi

Institut Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Temanggung, Indonesia

gunartiikapradewi@gmail.com

Gandhes Sembrodo Budy

Institut Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Temanggung, Indonesia

gandhesbudy@gmail.com

Abstract

The development of science and technology demands a new approach to Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning that is more contextual, integrative, and adaptable to the challenges of the times. One of the core values that needs to be strengthened in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is wasathiyah (religious moderation), which is highly relevant in maintaining social harmony in the digital age. The study of wasathiyah in Islamic Religious Education has not been extensively researched in a multidisciplinary and research-based manner, nor has it been explored thru technology. Therefore, this article aims to compile a concept map of the study of Islamic Education wasathiyah with a multidisciplinary approach supported by research and technology integration. This research uses a qualitative-descriptive method with literature study and content analysis techniques applied to various relevant scientific sources, ranging from theology, education, sociology, educational technology, to digital studies. The results of this study are expected to produce a concept map that illustrates the interdisciplinary relationships in understanding and implementing the values of wasathiyah in the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. This concept map is also

expected to serve as a reference for curriculum development, digital learning design, and strengthening student character in the 5.0 era. Thus, this study not only enriches academic discourse but also makes a real contribution to building inclusive, moderate, and technology-based religious education practices.

Keywords: *Wasathiyah, Islamic Religious Education, Multidisciplinary, Research & Technology.*

Introduction

The Strategic Role of Wasathiyah-Based Islamic Religious Education in the Multidisciplinary and Digital Era. Islamic Religious Education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam / PAI) occupies a highly strategic position in shaping students' character, worldview, and social attitudes. Its core objectives extend beyond the transmission of doctrinal knowledge to include the formation of individuals who are faithful (iman), morally upright (akhlaq al-karimah), and capable of living harmoniously within a diverse and pluralistic society (Nugroho, 2019). In the Indonesian context—marked by religious, ethnic, cultural, and ideological diversity—PAI plays a critical role in cultivating attitudes of tolerance, mutual respect, and civic responsibility. One of the most essential principles embedded within PAI is wasathiyah, commonly translated as religious moderation, which emphasizes balance, justice, proportionality, and rejection of extremism in belief and practice.

The concept of wasathiyah reflects Islam's ethical commitment to the "middle path," avoiding both rigid literalism and excessive liberalism. It promotes moderation in worship, social interaction, and engagement with differences, thereby fostering peaceful coexistence. In a pluralistic nation such as Indonesia, the internalization of wasathiyah values through education is particularly relevant for strengthening social cohesion and preventing the growth of intolerant, radical, or exclusionary attitudes (Kemenag RI, 2019; Nugroho, & Billah, 2025). As social tensions increasingly emerge in digital spaces and public discourse, PAI is expected to function not only as a moral compass but also as a preventive instrument against ideological polarization. However, despite its strategic importance, the teaching of wasathiyah within Islamic Religious Education remains largely textual and normative. Instruction often focuses on scriptural references and moral injunctions without sufficiently contextualizing them within contemporary social realities (Nugroho, 2024). As a result, students may understand moderation as an abstract religious ideal rather than as a lived ethical practice applicable to real-world challenges. This approach limits students' ability to critically engage with complex

religious issues, particularly those arising from globalization, digital communication, identity politics, and social conflict.

In contemporary society, religious phenomena cannot be adequately explained from a purely theological perspective. Issues such as religious intolerance, online radicalism, identity crises among youth, and the politicization of religion require multidimensional analysis. Therefore, a multidisciplinary approach—incorporating sociology, psychology, anthropology, communication studies, and even technological studies—is essential for developing a more comprehensive and applicable understanding of *wasathiyah*. Abdurrohman and Fitriana (2023) argue that integrating multiple disciplines allows religious education to move beyond moral exhortation toward critical reflection and contextual problem-solving. Through such an approach, students can learn how moderation operates within social structures, cultural dynamics, psychological processes, and digital environments.

The urgency of this transformation is further intensified by rapid technological advancements associated with the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0. These developments have fundamentally reshaped the educational landscape, including the field of Islamic Religious Education. Technology is no longer merely a supplementary learning tool; it has become a primary space for religious discourse. Students increasingly access, interpret, and disseminate religious knowledge through digital platforms such as social media, video-sharing applications, online forums, and artificial intelligence-based systems. While this transformation offers significant opportunities for innovation, it also presents serious challenges, including exposure to misinformation, ideological manipulation, and radical narratives.

In this context, the internalization of *wasathiyah* values must be facilitated through pedagogical approaches that align with the characteristics of the digital era. Interactive learning media, e-learning platforms, digital simulations, and data-driven research activities can help students develop critical awareness and contextual understanding of religious moderation. Unfortunately, existing studies have not sufficiently mapped the concept of *wasathiyah* in Islamic Religious Education through a systematic integration of research and technology. Most available literature remains sectoral and fragmented, addressing moderation, technology, or pedagogy in isolation without demonstrating their interconnectedness.

This gap highlights the importance of concept mapping as a strategic academic and pedagogical tool. Concept maps enable educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers to visualize relationships between key ideas, disciplines, learning outcomes, and instructional strategies. According to Siahaan (2022), concept mapping plays a vital role in curriculum design by organizing complex ideas into coherent structures that reflect both theoretical foundations and practical applications. In the context of wasathiyah-based PAI, a multidisciplinary concept map can illustrate how theological principles intersect with social realities, psychological development, technological tools, and educational objectives.

Moreover, a research-based approach significantly enhances the relevance and effectiveness of wasathiyah education. By grounding learning materials in empirical data, educators can contextualize moderation using real societal phenomena. Examples include students' responses to online religious content, patterns of religious practice in schools, interfaith interactions, and participation in inclusive community activities. Research findings can inform the development of teaching materials, pedagogical strategies, and digital learning tools that resonate with students' lived experiences (Muflich, 2024; Nugroho, 2025). This approach transforms wasathiyah from a normative ideal into an analytical and practical framework for navigating social complexity.

Technology further amplifies the potential of PAI learning when used strategically. Interactive videos, mobile applications, learning management systems, and artificial intelligence (AI) can facilitate personalized and contextual learning experiences. Digital assessments, for instance, allow adaptive evaluation of students' understanding of religious moderation, moving beyond rote memorization toward reflective and analytical competence. Rahman and Ma'ruf (2022) emphasize that technology-integrated, multidisciplinary approaches are crucial for addressing the challenges of education in the digital era, particularly in fostering critical thinking and ethical awareness.

These developments align closely with the demands of twenty-first-century learning, which emphasizes the mastery of the 4Cs: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication. Wasathiyah provides the ethical foundation necessary for cultivating these competencies. Critical thinking enables students to assess religious information responsibly; creativity allows them to express religious values in constructive ways; collaboration fosters social harmony; and communication supports respectful dialogue across differences. Without ethical grounding, however, technological proficiency risks becoming detached from humanity, tolerance, and social responsibility.

Integrating wasathiyah-based character education with technology-enhanced pedagogy ensures that religious learning remains both intellectually rigorous and morally grounded. Baroya (2018) highlights that moderation-oriented education is essential for balancing technological advancement with ethical consciousness. This balance is particularly important in addressing global challenges such as online radicalism, hate speech, and ideological polarization among youth. When religious education fails to adapt to these challenges, it risks becoming irrelevant or, worse, vulnerable to misuse.

Therefore, the development of a multidisciplinary, research-based, and technology-integrated concept map of wasathiyah in Islamic Religious Education offers both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it enriches Islamic education scholarship by demonstrating how religious moderation can be understood through interconnected disciplinary lenses. Practically, it provides a structured framework for designing curricula, learning strategies, and digital tools that respond to contemporary educational needs. Islamic Religious Education grounded in wasathiyah values must evolve in response to societal transformation and technological advancement. A multidisciplinary and research-based approach, supported by digital innovation, is essential for ensuring that PAI remains relevant, effective, and transformative. By systematically mapping the concept of wasathiyah, educators and policymakers can strengthen students' spiritual resilience, social responsibility, and capacity to contribute positively to Indonesia's pluralistic and democratic society.

Discussion

The Importance of a Multidisciplinary Approach to Understanding Wasathiyah in PAI

Understanding wasathiyah (Islamic moderation) within Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam / PAI) requires more than a purely normative or doctrinal explanation. While theological foundations remain essential, moderation as an educational value must be interpreted in ways that are relevant to learners' lived realities. Wasathiyah—commonly understood as balance, tolerance, justice, and proportionality—functions not only as a religious principle but also as a social ethic that guides interaction within diverse and rapidly changing societies. Without the support of multidisciplinary perspectives, PAI risks becoming abstract, idealistic, and disconnected from real-life challenges, particularly in multicultural and digitally mediated contexts (Asari et al., 2023; Nugroho, et al., 2025).

A multidisciplinary approach enables wasathiyah to be understood as a dynamic concept that operates across personal, social, and technological dimensions. From an educational perspective, theories of moral and cognitive development—such as those proposed by Piaget, Kohlberg, and contemporary constructivist scholars—offer valuable insights into how moderation values can be taught in age-appropriate and pedagogically effective ways. Students at different developmental stages require different learning strategies: younger learners benefit from concrete examples and modeling, while older students need critical discussion, ethical dilemmas, and reflective inquiry. Integrating these pedagogical insights ensures that wasathiyah is not merely memorized but internalized as a guiding ethical framework.

From a sociological standpoint, wasathiyah must be contextualized within the realities of pluralism, social inequality, and cultural diversity. Indonesia's multicultural society presents both opportunities and challenges for religious education. Social sciences help educators understand how religious identities are constructed, negotiated, and sometimes contested in public spaces. By drawing on sociological theories of social cohesion, identity formation, and intergroup relations, PAI can frame moderation as a lived practice that promotes empathy, coexistence, and civic responsibility. This approach prevents religious education from becoming insular and encourages learners to see moderation as a tool for managing diversity and conflict constructively.

Psychological perspectives further enrich the understanding of wasathiyah by highlighting the emotional and cognitive processes underlying religious attitudes and behavior. Concepts such as

empathy, moral reasoning, emotional regulation, and cognitive bias are crucial for explaining why individuals may gravitate toward extreme or intolerant views. Integrating psychological insights into PAI allows educators to address not only what students believe, but how and why they believe it. This is particularly important in helping learners develop resilience against radical ideologies and simplistic interpretations of religious texts. By fostering self-awareness and emotional intelligence, PAI can cultivate a balanced religious disposition aligned with the core values of wasathiyah.

Technology studies also play a critical role in a multidisciplinary approach to wasathiyah. In the digital era, religious understanding is increasingly shaped by online content, social media algorithms, and virtual communities. Without critical digital literacy, students may be exposed to fragmented, decontextualized, or extremist religious narratives. Technology provides both challenges and opportunities: while it can amplify polarizing discourse, it can also serve as a powerful medium for promoting moderation. Digital platforms enable interactive learning, collaborative dialogue, and exposure to diverse perspectives, all of which support the internalization of wasathiyah values.

Digital technologies such as interactive videos, collaborative online platforms, and problem-based learning simulations offer experiential learning opportunities that make moderation tangible and relatable. Instead of passively receiving information, students can engage in case studies, role-playing scenarios, and virtual discussions that mirror real-life ethical dilemmas. Rahmawati (2024) emphasizes that technology offers a culturally relevant and engaging medium for delivering messages of moderation, particularly for digital-native learners. Through guided digital interaction, students can practice respectful dialogue, critical evaluation of religious content, and ethical decision-making.

Importantly, a multidisciplinary approach prevents PAI from becoming overly doctrinal or prescriptive. When religious education is confined to textual instruction alone, it risks producing compliance without understanding. In contrast, integrating insights from education, sociology, psychology, and technology encourages critical, reflective, and inquiry-based learning. Students are invited to ask questions, analyze social phenomena, and apply religious values thoughtfully rather than uncritically. Wahyudi and Kurniasih (2022) argue that such integrative strategies strengthen students' ability to navigate complexity and ambiguity—skills essential for living in pluralistic societies.

The integration of Islamic values, modern pedagogical theories, social sciences, psychological insights, and digital technologies is essential for developing a meaningful understanding of

wasathiyah in Islamic Religious Education. A multidisciplinary approach transforms wasathiyah from an abstract moral ideal into a lived ethical practice that resonates with students' experiences. By combining religious principles with contemporary educational strategies and technological tools, PAI can become more relevant, transformative, and responsive to the challenges of multicultural and digital societies (Rahman & Ma'ruf, 2022).

Integration of Wasathiyah Values and Technology

Wasathiyah Values and Digital Literacy in Islamic Religious Education

Wasathiyah values—*tawazun* (balance), *i'tidal* (justice), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *shura* (consultation)—constitute the ethical foundation of Islamic moderation and are increasingly relevant in the context of modern digital literacy. Digital literacy in contemporary education extends far beyond the ability to operate technological devices or access online information. It encompasses ethical awareness, critical thinking, discernment, and responsible participation in digital spaces. Integrating wasathiyah values into digital literacy frameworks is therefore essential for fostering moderate, reflective, and socially responsible engagement in the digital sphere (Saputra & Syahputra, 2021; Nugroho, 2025).

In the digital era, students are continuously exposed to diverse and often contradictory religious narratives through social media, online forums, and algorithm-driven platforms. Without a strong ethical compass, this exposure may lead to confusion, polarization, or susceptibility to extreme interpretations of religion. Wasathiyah offers a normative and practical framework for navigating digital complexity by promoting balance between freedom and responsibility, justice in evaluating information, tolerance toward difference, and consultation through dialogue. When embedded within digital literacy education, these values enable learners to critically assess online religious content while maintaining ethical integrity.

Digital Technology as a Medium for Religious Moderation

Digital technology provides powerful opportunities to internalize wasathiyah values through experiential and contextual learning. Interactive videos, e-learning platforms, and educational simulations allow students to visualize and engage with abstract concepts of moderation in concrete ways. Rather than relying solely on textual instruction, educators can design learning experiences

that place students in simulated social and ethical situations, enabling them to practice moderation in decision-making and interaction.

For example, simulated interfaith dialogue environments can expose students to diverse religious perspectives and encourage respectful communication. Nadhifah et al. (2024) argue that such simulations are more effective in cultivating tolerance than traditional lecture-based methods because they engage learners emotionally and cognitively. Through role-playing and guided reflection, students learn not only what tolerance means but also how to enact it in real-life scenarios. Digital media thus functions as a transformative space where religious moderation is learned through experience rather than abstraction.

Artificial Intelligence and Adaptive Learning in PAI

Artificial intelligence (AI) introduces new possibilities for personalized and adaptive learning in Islamic Religious Education. AI-based learning systems can analyze learners' preferences, performance, and learning patterns to deliver content that aligns with their individual needs. In the context of wasathiyah-based PAI, AI can recommend moderation-oriented materials that correspond to learners' cognitive levels, cultural backgrounds, and ethical challenges.

Aqmarina and Susilo (2025) highlight that AI-supported learning can deepen students' understanding of wasathiyah by presenting relevant case studies, reflective questions, and multimedia resources tailored to their developmental stages. Adaptive assessments enabled by AI also allow educators to evaluate not only students' factual knowledge but their critical reasoning and ethical judgment. However, the use of AI must be guided by clear ethical principles to ensure that technology serves educational and moral objectives rather than replacing human judgment.

Challenges and the Role of Teachers

Despite the potential of digital technology, significant challenges remain in its implementation. Teachers play a central role in ensuring that technology is used ethically and meaningfully in PAI learning. Educators must act not only as content deliverers but also as curators, facilitators, and moral guides who help students navigate the vast and often unregulated digital environment.

Teachers are responsible for selecting credible digital resources, contextualizing online religious content, and guiding students toward moderate interpretations of Islam. Without proper guidance, digital tools risk reinforcing superficial learning or exposing students to misleading and extremist narratives. Therefore, teacher competence in digital pedagogy and ethical discernment is essential for ensuring that technology contributes to the development of moderate character rather than undermining it.

Structure of the Multidisciplinary Concept Map

The proposed multidisciplinary concept map for wasathiyah-based PAI consists of five interconnected components that form a dynamic and adaptive educational ecosystem. First, core wasathiyah values—*tawazun*, *i'tidal*, *tasamuh*, and *shura*—serve as foundational ethical principles guiding all aspects of learning (Chadidjah et al., 2021). These values provide normative direction for interpreting religious teachings and engaging with diversity. Second, contextual PAI strategies link Islamic teachings to students' sociocultural realities. Learning materials are designed to address contemporary issues such as digital communication, social diversity, and ethical dilemmas faced by youth.

Third, digital technology utilization includes e-learning platforms, AI-supported learning, interactive videos, and digital assessment tools. Technology functions as both a medium and a learning environment that supports contextual and student-centered learning. Fourth, multidisciplinary integration brings together pedagogy, developmental psychology, educational technology, and sociology of religion. This integration ensures that wasathiyah is understood holistically and applied effectively across educational contexts. Fifth, character building and digital literacy emphasize ethical online behavior, critical thinking, and information filtering skills. Students are trained to evaluate digital content responsibly and engage constructively in online discourse (Supriadi, 2025). These interconnected nodes create a cohesive framework in which PAI becomes inclusive, adaptive, and technologically competent.

Teacher Challenges and Professional Needs

Implementing this multidisciplinary and technology-integrated model requires teachers to enhance their professional capacities. Beyond technical digital skills, educators must develop

ideological literacy—the ability to critically assess religious narratives and identify extreme or misleading content. Fauziyah et al. (2022) emphasize that teachers must be equipped to guide students toward balanced interpretations while fostering open-minded dialogue. Cross-disciplinary collaboration is also essential. Teachers should engage with experts from sociology, psychology, and technology to enrich curriculum design and instructional strategies. Professional development programs must therefore prioritize both digital competence and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Educational Implications and Consequences

Reconstructing Wasathiyah Across Disciplines

Wasathiyah must evolve beyond normative jurisprudential frameworks and be reconstructed within social, cultural, and digital contexts. Enoch et al. (2023) introduce the concept of “digital piety” as a contemporary expression of moderation, emphasizing ethical online conduct as an extension of religious practice. This reconstruction enables PAI to address modern challenges while remaining faithful to Islamic principles.

Curriculum Reform for Inclusivity and Technological Adaptation

PAI curricula must integrate contemporary issues such as social media ethics, digital diversity, and ideological literacy. Flexible, technology-based learning models are necessary to respond to students’ evolving needs and learning styles (Muvid et al., 2023). Curriculum reform should prioritize inclusivity, critical inquiry, and ethical engagement.

Alignment with National Policy

The findings of this study align closely with Indonesia’s Ministry of Religious Affairs’ Moderasi Beragama program, which promotes inclusive, tolerant, and democratic religious understanding. By offering a multidisciplinary and research-based framework for PAI, this study supports the practical implementation of national policy objectives (Rozaq et al., 2024).

Strategic Recommendations

To ensure effective implementation, this study proposes several strategic recommendations. First, research- and technology-based teacher training programs must be developed to enhance

educators' understanding of wasathiyah and digital pedagogy. Second, thematic teaching modules integrating moderation, digital literacy, and sociocultural contexts should be designed to support contextual learning (Shofyan, 2022). Third, cross-disciplinary collaboration among Islamic scholars, sociologists, psychologists, technologists, and curriculum experts is essential for sustainable PAI development (Kafid, 2023).

Integrating wasathiyah values with digital literacy through a multidisciplinary approach offers a transformative pathway for Islamic Religious Education. By aligning ethical principles with technological innovation, PAI can cultivate moderate, critical, and socially responsible learners capable of navigating the complexities of the digital age.

Conclusion

This study concludes that a multidisciplinary approach is indispensable for understanding and implementing wasathiyah in Islamic Religious Education (PAI), particularly within the context of the digital era. Core wasathiyah values—*tawazun* (balance), *i'tidal* (justice), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *shura* (consultation)—must be reconstructed and internalized through integrated perspectives from education, technology, sociology, and psychology in order to remain relevant and applicable to contemporary learners. The integration of digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, e-learning platforms, and interactive learning media, enables the development of dynamic concept maps that connect Islamic ethical foundations with contextual learning strategies, multidisciplinary insights, and digital character formation. Such integration supports meaningful, reflective, and student-centered learning experiences.

Furthermore, strengthening teacher capacity in digital literacy, ideological awareness, and cross-disciplinary collaboration is crucial for fostering moderate, adaptive, and contextual religious education. Educators play a strategic role in guiding learners to navigate digital religious content critically and ethically. This study is aligned with Indonesia's national policy on religious moderation and offers practical implications for curriculum renewal, thematic module development, and interdisciplinary cooperation. The proposed multidisciplinary concept map serves both as a theoretical framework and a practical tool for renewing PAI to effectively address societal challenges and global technological developments.

Bibliography

- Abdurrohman, F., & Fitriana, A. A. (2023). The role of digital literacy in strengthening student religious moderation. *Annual International Conference on Islamic Education for Students*, 2(1), 238-247.
- Aqmarina, D. N., & Susilo, M. J. (2025). Pengaruh penggunaan media interaktif terhadap hasil belajar siswa pada mata pelajaran pendidikan agama Islam. *Ta'lif: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Agama Islam*, 1(1), 39-53.
- Asari, A., Junaidin, J., Saputra, A., Hermawansyah, H., Satriyadi, S., Sinulingga, N. N., Makruf, S. A., Rahmah, S., Srinawati, R., & Maturidi, A. J. (2023). *Transformasi pendidikan agama Islam*.
- Baroya, E. H. (2018). Strategi pembelajaran abad 21. *As-Salam: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman*, 1(1), 101-115.
- Chadidjah, S., Kusnaty, A., Ruswandi, U., & Arifin, B. S. (2021). Implementasi nilai-nilai moderasi beragama dalam pembelajaran pai: Tinjauan analisis pada pendidikan dasar menengah dan tinggi. *Al-Hasanah: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 6(1), 114-124.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.
- Nugroho, M. A., & Billah, A. (2025). Developing a Scientific-Based Instrument to Measure Wasathiyah Values among Islamic University Students. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Education Studies (IJIES)*, 8 (1), 73-92. <https://doi.org/10.33367/ijies.v8i1.7448>.
- Nugroho, M.A., Billah, A., Rahmah, Y., A., Trisnadariawati, L., P. (2025). Green Wasathiyah Campus as a Space for Transforming Islamic Wasathiyah Values through Ecotheology. *Analisa: Journal Of Social Science and Religion*, 10 (1), 79-100. <https://doi.org/10.18784/analisa.v10i1.3206>
- Nugroho, M. A. (2024). Religious Tolerance Model in Salatiga: Analysis of the Implementation of Religious Moderation Concept in a Multicultural City. *International Journal on Advanced Science, Education, and Religion*, 7(4), 27-43. <https://doi.org/10.33648/ijoaser.v7i4.732>.
- Nugroho, M. A. (2019). Embedding Multicultural Values in Islamic Education: A Portrayal of Contemporary Indonesian Textbooks. *Edukasia Islamika*, 4(2), 226-242. <https://doi.org/10.28918/jei.v4i2.2298>