How Does a Teacher's Multicultural Leadership Affect the Students' Moderation? A Study of Junior High School Students

Medianto[1*], Taridi[2], Susanto[3], Dedi Kundan[4], Hendri Ardianto[5], Iin Avitasari[6], Widiyanto[7]

Jinarakkhita Buddhist College of Lampung, Jl. Raya Suban, Pidada, Kec. Panjang, Kota Bandar Lampung, Lampung, Indonesia, 35241

medianto@sekha.kemenag.go.id

Abstract: This study aimed to find the effect of multicultural leadership on religious moderation in student studies. The problems that occur are minority students feeling inferior, lack of awareness of the importance of respecting and accepting religious differences, lack of instillation of multicultural values and religious moderation, the presence of multi-ethnic students, the deepening of faith from students facilitated by the school, fair treatment of minority students. This study uses a quantitative approach, with the Random Sampling survey method, using a random system. A proportional allocation of 96 samples of 28 students was carried out to determine the sample size in each class. This study was conducted in a Private School with student respondents in the 2023/2024 academic year. The study showed a significant favorable influence between multicultural leadership and religious moderation with a t count of -17.559 and a significance value (p) of 0.001 <0.05. The simple regression analysis calculation results obtained the R Square value as 0.828. Multicultural leadership influences religious moderation by 82.8%, and other factors affect the remaining 17.2%.

Keyword: Multicultural leadership; Religious moderation; Buddhist education; Educational leadership

1. Introduction

Indonesia is known to have a very high diversity of tribes, cultures, ethnicities, and religions [1]. As an archipelagic country with more than 17,000 islands and more than 300 ethnic groups [2]. Indonesia faces a significant challenge in maintaining harmony and tolerance between religious communities, and this challenge is also reflected in the world of education, where schools become miniatures of multicultural societies. Therefore, it is essential to understand how multicultural leadership in schools can influence religious moderation among students. Multicultural leadership is an idea that was born out of concern for the rampant social conflicts caused by differences in cultural, ethnic, spiritual, and other identities. The most common problems in multicultural leadership are misunderstandings in communication between groups and differences in values and norms; of course, many issues develop in a multicultural society; some of the problems that often occur include intercultural tensions, misunderstandings, discrimination, and injustice, injustice is a situation where individuals or groups do not

receive equal and fair treatment in various aspects of life. Injustice can occur in multiple forms, such as social, economic, legal, political, and identity differences, and identity differences that often give rise to conflict in multicultural societies. First, the primordial view of the group considers differences originating from genetics, such as ethnicity, race as the primary source of ethnic and religious conflicts [3].

Multicultural leadership seeks to teach the values of tolerance, mutual respect, and cooperation between students from different cultural backgrounds. Multicultural leadership is a concept that pays attention to and accommodates cultural diversity in the local environment, and multicultural leadership must be able to understand and manage cultural differences and create an inclusive and equitable environment. An inclusive and equitable environment is where all individuals, regardless of their background, identity, or abilities, feel valued and have an equal opportunity to participate and succeed [4], [5]. Intolerant attitudes towards tolerance between students are behaviors or actions that reject or do not respect differences in culture, religion, ethnicity, or other backgrounds. This attitude can take various forms, such as discriminatory behavior, social exclusion, spreading prejudice, or verbal and physical harassment of different students. Intolerant attitudes towards tolerance between students can appear in various forms, such as discriminatory behavior, verbal harassment, or rejection of differences. Several factors, including a lack of understanding of the diversity of cultures, religions, or social backgrounds of peers, can cause this intolerance. It can damage the school environment, disrupt student harmony, and cause division and discomfort [6].

To overcome intolerance among students, an approach is needed that encourages respect for differences, education about the importance of inclusivity, and learning social skills, such as empathy and cross-cultural communication. Teachers also play an essential role in teaching the values of tolerance and creating a space for dialogue between students so that they can learn to respect and understand each other's differences. Understanding each other's differences is essential in creating an inclusive and harmonious environment, especially in schools [7]. Not respecting and accepting religious differences can significantly impact interpersonal relationships and social and personal stability. Indifference to religious differences can lead to tensions and conflicts between groups with different beliefs, which can ultimately lead to violence or discrimination. Without adequate awareness, minority groups can experience discriminatory or marginalized treatment and feel unwelcome or mistreated because of their beliefs. Lack of respect for religious differences can lead to social segregation, where individuals from different religious backgrounds do not interact or work together, thus hindering the formation of an inclusive society (Magnolia et al., 2020).

2. Method

This research is included in the survey method with a quantitative approach. Quantitative research is a research approach based on the philosophy of positivism, used to research a particular population or sample and collect data using research instruments. Data analysis is quantitative/statistical in developing and testing established hypotheses. The subject of the study is a unit (person, group, or object) that is the primary source of

information for the study. Namely, the parties that are observed, measured, or tested to obtain information that is relevant to the objectives of the study. The subjects in this study were Buddhist students in grades VII to IX of SMP Xaverius 2 Bandar Lampung in 2024, totaling 96 students.

Table 1 Number of Buddhist Students at Xaverius 2 Middle School, Bandar Lampung

NO	Class	Number of Students
1.	VII	28
2.	VIII	38
3.	IX	30
	AMOUNT	96

(Source: 2024 researcher data)

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

Validity Test of Multicultural Leadership Instruments

Based on the trial of the validity instrument of the multicultural leadership influence instrument on religious moderation using SPSS 27.0, the results showed that out of 40 items, there were 38 valid items. Invalid statement numbers were 1 and 4 for the multicultural leadership indicator. Several of these item statements were declared invalid by comparing the r table on 30 respondents, and a significance level of 0.05 was 0.349. Statement items number 1 and 4 <r table (0.349.) so that these statement items were no longer used in collecting research data. While the valid statement items were 38 items in the multicultural leadership variable, valid statements will be used to obtain research data from 38 items.

Validity Test of Religious Moderation Instrument

Based on the validity test of the instrument of the influence of multicultural leadership on religious moderation using SPSS 27.0, the results showed that out of 40 items, there were 39 valid items. The invalid statement number was number 44 on the religious moderation variable. One statement item was declared invalid by comparing the r table with 30 respondents; the significance level of 0.05 was 0.349. Statement item number 44 < r table (0.349.) so that the statement item was no longer used in collecting research data. While the valid statement items were 39 on the religious moderation variable, the total items from variable (X) and variable (Y) amounted to 77 items used for research or data collection.

Reliability Test of Multicultural Leadership Instruments and Religious Moderation Based on the research reliability test results, the Reliability Analysis Scala (alpha) obtained using SPSS 27.0 produces alpha 0.967 because more than $p > 0.05$ means the measuring instrument is declared reliable. It can be concluded that the research instrument used in this study meets the requirements of good validity and reliability.

Table 2. Instrument Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach'sCronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.967	77

(Source: 2024 researcher data)

Descriptive Analysis

Based on data processing using SPSS 27.0 computer software, it is known that the multicultural leadership variable (X) from the questionnaires filled out by 66 respondents obtained a range score of 100, a minimum score of 87, a maximum score of 187, a mean score of 136.25, a standard deviation of 20,256 and a variance score of 410,317.

Table 3. Statistical Description of Multicultural Leadership Variables

Descriptive Statistics							
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Multicultural Leadership	66	100.00	87.00	187.00	136.2576	20.25629	410,317
Valid N (listwise)	66						

(Source: 2024 data processing results using SPSS 27.0)

Based on data processing using SPSS 27.0 computer software, it is known that the religious moderation variable (Y) from the questionnaire filled out by 66 respondents obtained a range score of 108.00, a minimum score of 78, a maximum score of 186, a mean score of 139.448, a standard deviation of 21.422 and a variance score of 458.938. The multicultural leadership variable consists of 39 statement items divided into four indicators. The following are the criteria for each indicator and a recapitulation of the religious moderation variable.

Table 4. Moderating Variables of Religion

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Religious Moderation	66	108.00	78.00	186.00	139.3485	21.42284	458,938
Valid N (listwise)	66						

(Source: 2024 data processing results using SPSS 27.0)

Normality Test

The purpose of the normality test is to see whether the distribution of residual value data is normal or not. The normality test is carried out using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The requirement for sample data comes from a normally

distributed population with a significance level of 0.05 or 5%. Based on the results of the normality test obtained from 66 respondents, the significant value (2-tailed) is 0.200, which means > 0.05, so it can be concluded that the data is usually distributed. The results of the normality calculation using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test are presented in the following table.

Table 5. Normality Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			Unstandardized Residual
N			66
Normal Parameters A,b	Mean		.0000000
	Std. Deviation		8.88193411
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		.097
	Positive		.097
	Negative		-.044
Test Statistics			.097
Asymp. Sig. (2- tailed) c			.200 d
Monte Carlo Sig. (2- tailed) e	Sig.		.124
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.115
		Upper Bound	.132
a. Test distribution is Normal.			
b. Calculated from data.			
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.			
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.			
e. Lilliefors'Lilliefors' method based on 10000 Monte Carlo samples with starting seed			

(Source: 2024 data processing results using SPSS 27.0)

Homogeneity Test

A homogeneity test is a way to determine whether several population variants are the same. A homogeneity test is required to analyze independent sample tests using Compare Means One-way ANOVA. The underlying assumption in the analysis (Anova) of the population variance is the same. If the test criteria are more than 0.05 or 5%, then it can be said that the variance of the two data groups is the same. The results of the homogeneity test are seen from the output of the test of homogeneity variance. The significance values of multicultural leadership and religious moderation are 0.425 and 0.425, which means 0.425> 0.05, so it can be said that both data are homogeneous. For more details, see the table of tests for homogeneity of variances below.

Table 6. Homogeneity Results

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances					
		Levene Statistics	df1	df2	Sig.
Variables X and Y	Based on Mean	.645	1	64	.425
	Based on Median	.825	1	64	.367
	Based on the Median and with adjusted df	.825	1	60,064	.367
	Based on trimmed mean	.644	1	64	.425

(Source: Results of 2024 data processing using SPSS 27.0)

Hypothesis Testing and Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Data analysis techniques are used to answer the research questions posed through hypotheses. This hypothesis is tested as a temporary answer to the question, "Is there an influence of multicultural leadership on religious moderation at Xaverius 2 Bandar Lampung School?". Hypothesis testing in this study uses a simple linear regression formulation, and data is obtained through SPSS 27.0. Testing with simple linear regression gives the following results.

Table 7. Results of Hypothesis and Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Coefficients						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	8.213	7,549			1,088	.281
X	.962	.055	.910		17,559	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Y						

(Source: 2024 data processing results using SPSS 27.0)

Based on the output results by reading the coefficients, a constant value of 8.213 is obtained, meaning that if multicultural leadership has a value of 0, then the consistent value of the religious moderation variable is 8.213. The regression coefficient on the multicultural leadership variable (X) is 0.962, meaning that multicultural leadership has increased or developed, so the religious moderation variable (Y) will increase by 0.962 with the following regression equation.

$$Y = 8.213 + 0.962X$$

Statistical hypothesis

Ha: Is there any influence of multicultural leadership on religious moderation in students' studies?

Ho: Multicultural leadership has no influence on students' religious moderation.

Table 8. Anova Analysis Output

ANOVA a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	24703.216	1	24703.216	308,322	.001 b
	Residual	5127.769	64	80.121		
	Total	29830.985	65			
a. Dependent Variable: Y						
b. Predictors: (Constant), X						

(Source: Results of 2024 data processing using SPSS 27.0)

From the ANOVA analysis output, the calculated F value is 308.322 with a significance of 0.000, so there is no need to match the F table because SPSS already provides the significance value. The importance of 0.001 <0.05 indicates that Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted. It shows that multicultural leadership affects religious moderation, where leaders can understand and accommodate cultural and religious diversity, which can encourage creating an inclusive and harmonious environment. This kind of leadership not only facilitates cross-cultural and interfaith dialogue but also reinforces the values of moderation that emphasize tolerance, respect for differences, and rejection of extremism. This inclusive leadership also encourages the creation of a harmonious climate of cooperation between students from various backgrounds so that they can learn and develop in an environment of mutual support and respect. In addition, this approach teaches the importance of diversity as a strength that enriches the learning experience, not as a source of division.

Table 9. Value of R Square Determination Coefficient

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.910 a	.828	.825	8.95106
a. Predictors: (Constant), X				
b. Dependent Variable: Y				

The determination coefficient above is R Square, which has a value of 0.828, meaning that 82.8% of multicultural leadership influences religious moderation while other variables affect the remaining 17.2%. The results of the quantitative analysis showed that the normality test obtained a residual significance value of 0.200. Because the residual value is more significant than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data population is normally distributed. From the homogeneity test results, an essential result of 0.425 was

obtained because the significance was ≥ 0.05. It can be concluded that the data on multicultural leadership and religious moderation had the same variance. The magnitude of the influence can be seen from the R square value of 82.8%; multicultural leadership influences religious moderation, while the remaining 17.2% is influenced by other factors not included in the regression equation. It shows the influence of multicultural leadership on religious moderation at Xaverius 2 Junior High School, Bandar Lampung. It means that multicultural leadership can influence religious moderation by 82.8% through a linear relationship $Y = 8.213 + (0.962).X$

3.2. Discussion

Based on the results of the data analysis, there is a significant favorable influence between multicultural leadership and religious moderation. It can be seen from several pieces of evidence that have been carried out through research results in the form of questionnaires, then analyzed from each variable to obtain an analysis result that can be tested and accounted for its truth and can be used in making decisions and conclusions of the study. The higher it is, the higher the level of multicultural leadership. Religious moderation is an attitude and approach to religion that prioritizes balance, tolerance, and respect for differences. It means practicing religious beliefs non-extremely, not forcing views on others, and respecting the diversity of beliefs in society. In this era of globalization, it is essential for students with diverse cultural backgrounds to build multicultural leadership, improve teachers' abilities in dealing with diversity, and develop multicultural attitudes in students. Multicultural leadership respects understands, and manages cultural diversity in an organization or community [8], [9], [10]. In this context, leaders work not only with one cultural group but also with various groups with different cultural values, beliefs, and practices. Multicultural leadership is essential in a modern society that is increasingly diverse and interconnected. The sigalovada sutta has instructions on relationships between individuals and how to respect and treat others well. In the context of multicultural leadership, this sutta teaches about the obligation of leaders to act with integrity, treat everyone with respect, and create a just environment. Multicultural leadership values, understands and embraces cultural diversity within an organization or group. Multicultural leaders can work effectively with individuals from various cultural, religious, ethnic, and social backgrounds. They accept differences and use this diversity as a strength to achieve common goals. It is especially relevant in an increasingly global and heterogeneous society, where awareness of cultural differences is essential to building harmony, enhancing collaboration, and maximizing productivity and innovation within a team or organization. The Kutadanta Sutta teaches about the importance of a wise leader who acts for the welfare of the people. In a multicultural context, it teaches that a leader must be wise in deciding policies that are fair to all, regardless of cultural background.

Northouse (2019) emphasizes that multicultural leadership is understanding, appreciating, and working effectively with culturally diverse groups. Leaders must adapt their leadership style to navigate different cultural backgrounds and build strong partnerships. Multicultural leadership is appreciating, understanding, and integrating

cultural diversity within an organization or group. Multicultural leaders are aware of cultural differences and have the skills to work effectively with people from different ethnic, religious, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. They can create an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and recognized and leverage this diversity to foster better collaboration, innovation, and creative solutions to the complex challenges of the modern world. Multicultural leaders must have skills such as cross-cultural empathy—culture, which enables them to understand the feelings and perspectives of others from different backgrounds. In addition, intercultural communication skills are essential to bridge differences in language, expression, and diverse social norms. They must also have a deep understanding of differences in cultural values to be able to navigate various social situations and work with individuals from different backgrounds without causing tension [10], [11], [12]

Another essential leadership skill is resolving cultural conflicts, where leaders must resolve differences or friction arising from cultural differences effectively and harmoniously. In addition, multicultural leaders are also expected to facilitate intercultural dialogue, create space for open and inclusive conversations, and value contributions from different perspectives, ensuring that every voice has a place in decision-making [13]. Religious moderation plays a role in shaping an inclusive society, easing religious conflicts, and strengthening peace. Through moderate religious education, individuals and communities can act as agents of positive change in creating harmony between religions. [14]. Buddhism emphasizes the importance of living moderately, which can be found in his first sermon, the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta. In this sutta, the Buddha advises five ascetics in the Isipatana Deer Park to avoid two extremes: self-mortification and indulging in lust. The Buddha encourages them to follow the middle way principle (*Majjhima Patipada*), which indicates that religious practice should not be excessive and should be done wisely without ignoring the correct understanding of spiritual teachings [15].

Religious moderation is used as a basis for providing public policy because it is the essence of religion in the public sphere and the moral responsibility of leaders to interpret it into the real life of society, avoiding excessive behavior in religion and choosing to take a balanced middle path, thus creating harmony in social life [16]. Religious moderation also highly prioritizes universal values such as tolerance, namely the willingness to accept diversity of beliefs among fellow human beings. A person who is moderate in religion can respect religious beliefs. In the discourse on Dhammacakkappavattana, the Buddha introduced the middle way (Majjhima Patipada), a balanced way of life between sensual pleasure and self-torture. This middle way is relevant to moderation in religion because it avoids extremist attitudes. Religious moderation also encourages constructive dialogue between religious communities, where differences of opinion are used to learn from each other and enrich insight, not as a trigger for conflict. A moderate attitude in religion also means upholding universal human values, such as justice, compassion, and peace, which can be used as a basis for interacting with others. Thus, religious moderation maintains harmony in a diverse society and becomes the foundation for creating a peaceful and respectful life amidst religious plurality [17], [18].

Religious moderation maintains harmony in a diverse society and becomes the foundation for creating a peaceful and respectful life amidst religious plurality. It is becoming increasingly important in the current global context, where religious-based conflicts and intolerance still often occur. By prioritizing a moderate attitude, society can focus more on the values of equality between various religions while also building awareness of the importance of maintaining unity in diversity to realize shared prosperity. Religious moderation also emphasizes the importance of cooperation and solidarity among adherents of different religions. With this attitude, a person not only thinks about the interests of his religious group but also pays attention to the common welfare, including those from different religious backgrounds [19]. It can be reflected in various social activities, interfaith dialogues, and efforts to build togetherness amidst diversity. All of this is done without sacrificing the beliefs held but rather strengthening beliefs by expanding understanding and respect for others[20]. Religious moderation is needed because extreme attitudes toward religion conflict with religious teachings' essence [21]. Religious moderation can be intended as a way of behaving in the middle between religious practices that are believed in by oneself and respecting the religious practices of others with different beliefs. Religious moderation is an essential foundation for maintaining harmony between religious communities, creating an inclusive social environment, and promoting peace in community life [22].

4. Conclusion

Multicultural leadership and religious moderation in studying students at school have a significant favorable influence. It shows that applying inclusive leadership principles and respect for cultural differences can encourage students to be more open and tolerant of differences in beliefs, thus creating a more harmonious and supportive environment in a diverse society. The magnitude of the influence can be seen from the results of the simple linear test analysis, which found a determination value of R square of 0.828, which means that multicultural leadership influences religious moderation by 82.8%, and the remaining 17.2% is influenced by other factors not studied. It shows that improving the quality of multicultural leadership at school can be the key to increasing religious moderation among students, creating a more tolerant and respectful community amidst the existing diversity.

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