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TRANSFORMATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE BASED ON *WASATHIYAH*: A STRATEGY FOR INTERNALIZING VALUES OF MODERATION AMONG TEACHING AND EDUCATIONAL STAFF IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi transformasi budaya organisasi berbasis nilai-nilai *Wasathiyah* dalam menginternalisasi sikap inklusif dan toleran pada guru dan tenaga kependidikan di SMPN 3 Parenggean. Kajian ini penting mengingat penelitian mengenai internalisasi nilai moderasi pada sekolah umum yang memiliki tingkat heterogenitas tinggi masih sangat terbatas. Pendekatan penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus deskriptif tunggal. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi partisipan, serta dokumentasi, lalu dianalisis menggunakan model Miles, Huberman, dan Saldana. Keabsahan data diuji melalui triangulasi sumber dan teknik. Hasil penelitian menemukan bahwa transformasi budaya organisasi di SMPN 3 Parenggean dilakukan secara sistematis melalui rekonstruksi tiga lapisan budaya kerja menurut teori Edgar Schein. Pada tingkat artefak, perubahan diwujudkan melalui media komunikasi simbolik berupa poster perdamaian dan penataan tata ruang kerja yang aksesibel. Pada tingkat nilai, internalisasi dilakukan dengan mengintegrasikan prinsip moderasi ke dalam kode etik pegawai dan pembekalan metode pembelajaran diskusi interaktif. Pada tingkat asumsi dasar, transformasi dicapai melalui pembiasaan ekosistem kerja inklusif yang mengeliminasi kelompok eksklusif berbasis kesukuan. Kepemimpinan sekolah yang akomodatif menjadi kunci keberhasilan akulturasi nilai *Wasathiyah* ini melalui penerapan manajemen perubahan Kurt Lewin (*unfreezing, changing, refreezing*) yang terbukti mampu menciptakan ekosistem kerja harmonis di tengah kemajemukan sekolah.

Kata Kunci: Budaya organisasi; Nilai *Wasathiyah*; Inklusivitas; Toleransi; Teori Edgar Schein; Manajemen Perubahan.

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the organizational culture transformation strategy based on Wasathiyah *values in internalizing inclusive and tolerant attitudes among teachers and staff at SMPN 3 Parenggean. This study is significant considering that research on the internalization of moderation values in public schools with a high degree of heterogeneity remains highly limited. A qualitative approach with a single descriptive case study design was employed. Data were collected through interviews, participant observation, and documentation, then analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model. Data validity was tested through source and technique triangulation. The findings revealed that the organizational culture transformation at SMPN 3 Parenggean was carried out systematically by reconstructing three layers of work culture according to Edgar Schein's theory. At the artifact level, visual changes were manifested through symbolic communication media such as peace posters and accessible workspace arrangements. At the espoused values level, internalization was achieved by integrating moderation principles into the employee code of ethics and equipping teachers with interactive discussion-based learning methods. At the basic underlying assumptions level, transformation was attained by habituating an inclusive work ecosystem that gradually eliminated tribe- or group-based exclusive cliques. Accommodative school leadership served as the key to success for this* Wasathiyah *value acculturation through*

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Kurt Lewin's change management (unfreezing, changing, refreezing), which successfully fostered a harmonious work ecosystem amidst the school's diversity.

Keywords: *Organizational Culture,* Wasathiyah *Values, Inclusivity, Tolerance, Edgar Schein's Theory, Change Management***.**

INTRODUCTION

Education serves as a primary pillar for transmitting national values, morality, and social harmony within Indonesia's pluralistic society. As a nation characterized by a high degree of ethnic, cultural, racial, and religious diversity, Indonesia's social stability depends heavily on how educational institutions manage this heterogeneity (Khotijah et al., 2022). Over the last decade, however, the educational sphere has faced serious challenges, including the rise of exclusivism, intolerance, and ideological polarization within academic environments (Masykhur et al., 2019). Educational institutions—which ought to be spaces for cultivating the values of pluralism—have, at times, become exposed to rigid religious ideologies that are unaccommodating toward differences (Mu'ti, 2022). In response to this phenomenon, the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia has mainstreamed the concept of "Religious Moderation" (*Wasathiyah*) as a national strategy to preserve social harmony and the spirit of Indonesian nationhood (Badan Litbang Agama dan Diklat Keagamaan & Indonesia, 2019). The values of *Wasathiyah*—anchored by four key pillars: *tawassuth* (moderate), *tawazun* (balanced), *i'tidal* (just), and *tasamuh* (tolerant)—are not merely theological concepts; rather, they constitute a strategic sociological instrument that must be integrated into the governance of educational institutions to counter radicalism (Abdullah et al., 2022).

Within the school ecosystem, educators (teachers) and educational personnel (administrative staff) serve as key actors and the primary drivers of change in institutional culture (Efendi et al., 2023). Teachers act as learning facilitators who directly shape students' mindsets in the classroom, while educational personnel manage the climate of administrative services and daily social interactions (Mulyasa, 2022). To ensure that the values of *Wasathiyah* (moderation) do not remain merely stagnant, normative-bureaucratic jargon, they must be structurally internalized as an integral part of the school's organizational culture (Sutrisno, 2019). Drawing on the concept proposed by Schein (2010), an organizational culture infused with inclusive, tolerant, and moderate values can foster a collective consciousness, guide how staff members interact, and internally filter out the influence of extremist ideologies (Schein, 2010). Consequently, transforming the work culture within the school environment is an absolute prerequisite for building an academic ecosystem that is safe, healthy, and respectful of differences (Putra et al., 2025).

The urgency of mainstreaming religious moderation within Indonesia's education sector is growing, given the challenges posed by social plurality and the risks of group exclusivism. However, the prevailing body of empirical literature on religious moderation remains constrained by two substantive limitations. First, most existing studies focus on the ecosystem of religious educational institutions—such as State Islamic Higher Education

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Institutions (PTKIN), *madrasahs*, or Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) (Yadi, 2022). Even where research has been conducted in general educational institutions, it has largely been confined to public universities—often through specialized centers like "Religious Moderation Hubs" (*Griya Moderasi Beragama*)—while research at the primary and secondary school levels, under the purview of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, remains extremely scarce. This is particularly concerning, as general schools often exhibit far more complex demographic heterogeneity, rendering them more susceptible to primordial social friction (Zaluchu et al., 2025). Second, research on religious moderation has generally been dominated by formalistic evaluations of student curricula, individual religious behavior, or the "hidden curriculum" within classroom instruction. Such studies frequently overlook the dimension of organizational change management—an approach capable of structurally intervening in the institutional governance of staff (teachers and educational personnel).

This research addresses the identified gap in the literature through a case study at SMPN 3 Parenggean. The scholarly novelty of this article lies in its comprehensive analysis of a *Wasathiyah*-based (moderate) organizational culture transformation strategy within a public educational institution. It dissects this process using the analytical framework of Schein's (2010) model of organizational culture, which encompasses the levels of artifacts, espoused values, and basic assumptions. Unlike the studies by Mu'ti (2022) and Sutrisno (2019)—which position moderation merely as an instrument for strengthening student character—this article uniquely examines how the internal governance of teachers and educational staff is structurally overhauled. A distinct contribution of this research is the provision of an operational blueprint for managing cultural change in a heterogeneous school environment through the reconstruction of physical spaces and internal regulations; this approach has been empirically shown to mitigate workplace polarization without requiring intervention from central government policies.

To avoid the impression of imposing a singular religious perspective upon staff from non-Islamic backgrounds, this study undertakes an epistemological deconstruction of the concept of *Wasathiyah* (moderation). Within the multireligious setting of a public school, this universal Islamic theological value is not applied as a matter of religious doctrine (*aqidah*); rather, it is translated into the language of public management and a shared professional work ethic. The concept of *Tasamuh* (tolerance) is interpreted as social and workplace inclusivity; *I'tidal* (uprightness/fairness) is converted into administrative justice and public service; and *Tawazun* (balance) is operationalized as balanced professionalism. Consequently, staff of all faiths within the school can adopt these principles as universal professional ethical standards. Through the creation of an equitable workplace environment and a fair performance appraisal system, the implementation of these values serves to strengthen the employees' professional commitment as public servants, without in any way interfering with or diminishing the individual religious identity of any person.

Based on the aforementioned background and research gap, this study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the organizational culture transformation strategy—grounded in the principles of *Wasathiyah* (religious moderation)—geared toward internalizing inclusive and

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tolerant attitudes among teaching and educational staff at SMPN 3 Parenggean. The findings are expected to offer a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic educational management within the context of public schools, while also providing a practical contribution in the form of a blueprint draft for policymakers to replicate the habituation of a moderate work culture in other public schools across Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a single descriptive case study design (Creswell & Poth, 2017). This design was selected to comprehensively explore and dissect the contemporary, context-bound system surrounding the transformation of organizational culture based on *Wasathiyah* (moderate) values (Yin, 2018). The characteristics of SMPN 3 Parenggean—a public school that implements values of religious moderation—make it an ideal subject for research within its natural setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The analysis focuses on the actions and leadership policies, as well as the processes of value internalization, involving both teaching and educational staff at the school. Data collection in the field was conducted over a period of six months (from February to July 2026). This duration was allocated to ensure that the researcher reached data saturation, gained a deep understanding of the school's natural patterns of interaction, and avoided the risk of temporary behavioral changes among participants resulting from the researcher's presence.

Informants for this study were selected using a purposive sampling technique, with criteria based on leadership capacity, direct involvement in the cultural change program, and representation of demographic elements (religion/ethnicity/role) within the school (Miles et al., 2014). Furthermore, informants were chosen through a rigorous screening process based on the following criteria: (1) a minimum tenure of two years at the research site to ensure an understanding of the organization's cultural history; (2) direct involvement in the formulation or implementation of the moderation program; and (3) inclusive representation of demographic elements. The study includes eight key informants, consisting of: the School Principal (as the primary agent of cultural change and policymaker); three teachers (representing Islamic religious education teachers, non-Islamic religious education teachers, and general subject teachers); two educational staff members (the Head of Administration and the school caretaker); and two School Committee members (serving as external data sources for triangulation).

Data were collected using three primary techniques to ensure the depth and validity of information in the field (Creswell & Creswell, 2018): interviews, conducted using a semi-structured interview guide to explore the motivations behind the policy, the understanding of *Wasathiyah* (moderation) values, challenges related to staff resistance, and the impact of cultivating specific work cultural habits. These interviews took place face-to-face in the informants' workspaces, with each session lasting between 45 and 90 minutes. Before the interviews began, each informant was provided with a written informed consent form, and the sessions were recorded using a digital recording device. This was complemented by passive participant observation, in which the researcher directly observed daily social

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interactions in the teachers' lounge, the atmosphere of administrative services, the dynamics of official meetings, collective religious activities, and symbolic visualizations (such as posters, banners, and spatial arrangements) within the school (Spradley, 2016). All observations were documented in a field notebook—completed no later than two hours after each observation to ensure the accuracy of the data—along with the analysis of official school documents, including the Medium-Term Work Plan (RKJM), the Annual Work Plan (RKT), the School Activity and Budget Plan (RKAS), the staff code of conduct, teacher training modules, and official decrees (SK) regarding assignments for moderation-related activities.

The data analysis process is conducted in an interactive and continuous manner—beginning before data collection in the field, continuing throughout the process, and extending beyond its completion. This study employs the data analysis model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which consists of three stages: Data Condensation—selecting, simplifying, summarizing, and transforming raw data (from interview transcripts and field notes) into meaningful coded units aligned with the layers of organizational culture (artifacts, espoused values, and basic assumptions) (Schein, 2010). In this context, "artifacts" refer to visible external expressions and physical symbols; "espoused values" encompass the values and regulations formally articulated by the school; and "basic assumptions" represent the unconscious, fundamental beliefs that guide the daily behavior of all school community members. This is followed by Data Display—organizing the condensed information into descriptive narratives, relationship matrices, or flowcharts to facilitate the drawing of conclusions—and finally, Conclusion Drawing, which involves identifying patterns of meaning within the presented data, cross-verifying them against field notes, and ultimately deriving robust conclusions regarding the cultural transformation strategies at the research site (Miles et al., 2014).

To ensure the validity, objectivity, and credibility of the findings in this qualitative study, the researcher employed data validation procedures based on the triangulation strategy proposed by Creswell and Creswell (2018). This included: source triangulation, where the researcher compared the school principal's accounts with the statements of teachers and administrative staff—a process intended to mitigate the principal's subjective bias and provide a more realistic understanding of how the policy is perceived at the operational level; methodological (technique) triangulation, which involved cross-referencing interview data with field notes from behavioral observations and written documentation—for instance, examining whether the "Moderation Decree" (SK Moderasi) is genuinely reflected in the teachers' daily conduct—to identify and rectify any data inconsistencies. In cases where contradictions arose between an informant's statements and the observed reality, the researcher conducted further inquiry to uncover the underlying factors contributing to latent resistance. Finally, member checking was utilized: complete interview transcripts and analytical findings were shared with the eight key informants for their review and confirmation of accuracy, ensuring that the researcher's interpretations were not one-sided. Should an informant provide clarification or suggest that an interpretation is overly extreme,

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the researcher is obligated to revise the narrative description to better align with the informant's original intent and local cultural context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Before analyzing the field findings from a theoretical perspective, it is essential to outline the socio-cultural characteristics surrounding the research site. SMPN 3 Parenggean is a public junior high school located on Jalan Garuda in Karang Sari Village, Parenggean District, East Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan Province—a region originally established through a transmigration program. Unlike homogeneous religious educational institutions such as *madrasahs*, this school features a highly heterogeneous demographic, encompassing various ethnic groups (Dayak, Javanese, Banjar, Sundanese, Bugis, Kupang, and Sasak/Lombok) as well as diverse religious affiliations among its staff—including teachers and administrative personnel—who practice Islam, Protestantism, and Catholicism (SMPN 3 Parenggean Document, 2026). Empirical reality shows that the school's teaching and administrative staff—comprising both civil servants and contract-based employees—exist within a bureaucratic ecosystem where majority and minority religious groups live and work side-by-side in a dynamic manner. This high level of primordial diversity among the staff places the school in a unique position: while it carries the potential for social friction—such as sectarian ego clashes or informal, interfaith polarization—it also possesses significant social capital, provided it is managed adaptively. Consequently, the success of this public school in managing the pluralism of its workforce—achieved through the reconstruction of its organizational culture based on the values of *Wasathiyah* (moderation)—represents a phenomenon of change management that warrants deeper analysis.

The transformation of the school's organizational culture is not merely a matter of fulfilling bureaucratic instructions from the ministry; rather, it represents a social change consciously designed by the school's leadership to contextualize the values of *Wasathiyah* (moderation) within a heterogeneous public educational institution. Drawing on field data gathered through interviews, observations, and documentation, the findings of this study are analyzed using Edgar Schein's (2010) three-layered model of organizational culture: artifacts, espoused values, and basic assumptions.

Level of Artifacts: Physical and Spatial Manifestations of Diversity

The outermost layer of organizational culture consists of artifacts—everything that can be physically seen, heard, or sensed within the school environment (Schein, 2010). At this school, cultural transformation began with the reconstruction of the physical environment, intended to convey a powerful visual message regarding the values of *Tasamuh* (tolerance) and inclusivity to the entire school community (Abdullah et al., 2022). Messages concerning religious moderation were not left confined to written documents; instead, they were visualized through posters on school walls, peace-themed banners, and infographics detailing the four pillars of *Wasathiyah* (religious moderation) displayed in the main corridors.

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Furthermore, this physical openness is reflected in the layout of the workspace. The school intentionally designed the teachers' and administrative staff's offices without partitions based on social groups, organizational affiliations, or religious beliefs (Putra et al., 2025). The principal elaborated on this policy of physical and spatial reconstruction during an in-depth interview, as follows:

"We want anyone—whether a new teacher, staff member, student, or guest—to immediately sense a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere upon entering this school. To be honest, the teachers' lounge used to be informally segmented based on shared religious backgrounds or affiliations with specific organizations. As soon as I took office, I completely overhauled the layout. Teachers' desks are now mixed randomly; there are no longer 'Group A' corners or 'Religion B' corners. We have also provided equitable facilities for worship, ensuring that followers of all faiths feel they share a common home here at the school." (Interview with the Principal, July 3, 2026).

Varying the seating arrangements for teachers has strengthened the sense of kinship among the school community, as revealed in the following interview with an Islamic Religious Education teacher:

"Initially, when the instruction came to reorganize the workspaces—mixing everyone together rather than grouping them by subject or religion—I personally felt a bit awkward. Usually, Islamic religious education teachers would sit together, as we naturally share a common language and perspective. But after a few months, the environment feels much more inclusive. To my right, for instance, sits a Christian teacher. Our informal communication has become very fluid; whereas we once only spoke about official school matters, we now enjoy casual conversations during breaks—sharing insights into our respective cultures while having lunch. In fact, my sense of comfort at work has actually increased, as there is no longer any suspicion between different groups in the teachers' lounge." (Interview with an Islamic Religious Education teacher, July 3, 2026).



Figure 1. Layout of Teachers' Desks in the Teachers' Room

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This inclusive spatial arrangement was observed firsthand by the researchers in the field. The desks of Islamic religious education teachers are positioned alongside those of Christian religious education teachers, fostering daily informal, interfaith communication. This physical transformation has proven effective in reducing primordial social tensions (Efendi et al., 2023). As physical barriers are dismantled, the psychological boundaries between staff members gradually fade. In line with Allport's (1954) Intergroup Contact Theory, equitable spatial interaction—supported by official authority—proves highly effective in eroding intergroup prejudice (Afandi et al., 2021). The visual and spatial artifacts at SMPN 3 Parenggean serve as a constant reminder for the school community to consistently uphold the principle of *Tawassuth* (moderation/the middle path) in their interactions.

Espoused Values: Institutionalization of Regulations and Competencies

The second layer of organizational culture consists of adopted values, which encompass an institution's strategies, goals, official policies, and formal commitments (Schein, 2010). At this school, the value of *Wasathiyah* (moderation) has been formalized into legally binding regulations, alongside professional capacity-building programs for all members of the school community (Mulyasa, 2022). The school management has integrated the value of religious moderation into official normative documents, such as the Code of Ethics for Staff and internal Employee Performance Target (*Sasaran Kinerja Pegawai*—SKP) indicators (Abdullah et al., 2022). Violations of the principle of tolerance—such as hate speech, verbal bullying related to sensitive issues (SARA—ethnicity, religion, race, and societal groups), or discrimination in administrative services—are met with strict disciplinary sanctions. In addition to these regulatory instruments, competency development is conducted periodically through workshops on inclusive curricula for teachers, as well as internal training on *Tasamuh*-based (tolerant) service excellence for educational support staff (Ardiyansyah et al., 2025). A teacher of general subjects shared an account regarding the tangible impact of this training on pedagogical (instructional) practices in the classroom:

*"Through an inclusive curriculum workshop organized by the school, we teachers were trained on how to integrate values of moderation into our classrooms without needing to alter the national curriculum. For instance, when teaching Civics or History, I no longer rely solely on one-way lectures; instead, I employ a dialogical pedagogical approach. Students from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds sit in a circle to discuss case studies of social conflict objectively. This process encourages us teachers to learn how to set aside our egos, listen to other perspectives, and practice fairness (*i'tidal)*—all before modeling these behaviors for our students."* (Interview with GMPU, July 3, 2026).

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Figure 2. An Atmosphere of Kinship During the IHT

This transformation at the level of values does not stop within the circle of teachers; it also influences how administrative staff carry out their daily public service duties. This was stated explicitly by the school's head of administration in the following interview:

"As administrative staff, we previously thought that matters concerning religious moderation were solely the responsibility of religious education teachers or the other ministry (the Ministry of Religious Affairs). However, after the principal provided written guidance and incorporated this into our service standards, we came to understand that providing administrative services to parents—fairly, kindly, and without regard for their social backgrounds—is a tangible manifestation of a moderate work culture. Now, within the administrative office, there is no longer any such thing as delaying tasks based on personal closeness or religious differences." (Interview with the Head of Administration, July 4, 2026).

The integration of these values demonstrates that the school has successfully translated the abstract theological concept of *Wasathiyah* (moderation) into operational, practical, and measurable performance indicators for its staff. This formal policy serves as a legal bridge that mandates behavioral change from the outside.

Basic Assumptions: Shifts in Mindset and Subconscious Habits

The deepest, most abstract, and most critical layer in Schein's (2010) model consists of basic assumptions. These are deeply ingrained, unquestionable beliefs that operate at a subconscious level, shaping how employees perceive, think about, and experience reality within the work environment. Before the organizational culture transformation process began, there was a subconscious assumption among staff that differences in religious views or organizational affiliations among teachers posed a threat to the school's solidarity and harmony. Through routine practices—such as monthly reflection forums, communal lunches for all teachers and staff, and balanced participation in committees for major holidays—this basic assumption was gradually shifted. Diversity is no longer perceived as a potential source of conflict; instead, it is now subconsciously recognized as an inherent asset of the institution—one that should be celebrated. In the following interview, a non-Muslim religious

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education teacher describes how this shift in basic assumptions at the deepest level has influenced their psychological comfort and overall experience working at the school:

"When I was first assigned to SMPN 3 Parenggean, I honestly felt awkward and anxious, as I was a minority among a majority of Muslim colleagues. There was a lingering fear that my voice or opinions might go unheard during official meetings. However, thanks to the inclusive work environment that has been cultivated over the past four years, that sense of feeling threatened has completely vanished. We often engage in heart-to-heart discussions in our workspace, free from any theological judgment. Here, we share a common premise: we are not here to champion the banners of our respective group identities, but rather to fulfill our professional commitment as educators of the nation's children." (Interview with GANI, July 4, 2026).

The effectiveness of reaching and transforming this layer of basic assumptions is what ensures the sustainability of a moderate work culture at this school. Once the values of *Wasathiyah* (moderation) have transformed into basic assumptions, behaviors characterized by tolerance, fairness, balance, and inclusivity emerge spontaneously within daily work routines—without the need for rigid instructions, regulatory coercion, or close, constant supervision by the school principal (Schein, 2010).

DISCUSSION

The transformation of organizational culture at SMPN 3 Parenggean illustrates the process of translating theological *Wasathiyah* (moderate) values into an operational public management framework within a public school setting. Data analysis in this study consistently examines the dynamics of this change through the lens of Schein's (2010) three-layered model of organizational culture, which functions interactively—extending from the most visible external level down to the deepest, subconscious layer. Empirically, the research observes that this shift in work culture did not occur instantaneously; rather, it was initiated through a top-down intervention led by the school principal, who served as the primary agent of change. Through this single-case qualitative study, it becomes evident that restructuring at the outermost layer—the level of artifacts—served as a crucial catalyst, preceding shifts in espoused values and the formation of new basic assumptions among all staff members.

At the level of artifacts, cultural transformation is manifested through physical elements and spatial arrangements that visually convey messages of inclusivity and *tasamuh* (tolerance). Field observations revealed symbolic visual elements—such as peace posters, banners promoting religious moderation, and infographics detailing the four pillars of *wasathiyah* (moderation)—displayed at the school's main entrance to serve as a constant reminder for the entire school community. Beyond mere wall aesthetics, a more fundamental shift in artifacts is reflected in the reconfiguration of the workspace for teachers and administrative staff, where informal partitions based on group affiliation or religion have been removed. According to the school principal, the policy of randomly intermixing teachers'

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desks—without regard for subject specialization or primordial backgrounds—was intentionally implemented to dismantle the polarization among work groups that had developed in the past.

This spatial intervention at the artifact level directly influences daily interaction patterns and is perceived positively by the informants. According to an Islamic religious education teacher, although the rearrangement of workstations initially caused some awkwardness, the process of adapting over several months helped facilitate informal, interfaith communication during breaks. The field observation—where the workstations of Islamic religious education teachers are positioned directly adjacent to those of Christian religious education teachers—empirically validates that physical proximity can reduce the psychological distance between staff members. Theoretically, these findings reinforce Allport's (1954) Intergroup Contact Theory, which posits that intergroup interactions—characterized by equality, intensity, and full support from official authorities—are effective in eroding primordial prejudices and lowering social tension within a workplace environment.

Moving to the second layer—espoused values—the school management has successfully institutionalized the concept of *Wasathiyah* (moderation) into written regulations that are both formally and legally binding (Schein, 2010). The researcher identified official documents, including a Code of Ethics for staff and internal Employee Performance Targets (SKP), into which the school principal has integrated the values of religious moderation. These formal regulations serve as a legal instrument that ensures disciplinary standards, stipulating that any acts of intolerance, discriminatory service, or verbal bullying—particularly those involving sensitive issues related to religion, ethnicity, race, or social groups (SARA)—will be met with strict sanctions. By standardizing these values within the school's regulatory framework, a bureaucratic mechanism is created that compels a shift in staff behavior from the outside; this simultaneously demonstrates that universal religious values can be translated into concrete performance indicators within public administration.

Beyond legal and regulatory channels, these adopted values are internalized through professional capacity-building programs that target teachers' pedagogical competencies and the services provided by educational support staff. According to general subject teachers, participation in an inclusive curriculum workshop has equipped them with practical skills to integrate dialogical pedagogical methods into their classrooms—all without requiring any changes to the national curriculum structure. Meanwhile, this shift in values has also influenced how educational support staff approach their daily public service duties. The Head of Administration notes that written directives on "Service Excellence" rooted in the principle of *tasamuh* (tolerance) have been highly effective in shifting the administrative staff's perspective; they no longer view religious moderation as a matter exclusive to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, but rather as a mandate to provide public services that are fair, welcoming, and impartial.

The deepest and most critical layer addressed during this transformation concerns the "basic assumptions" held by all members of the school community. Prior to the cultural transformation, there existed a latent fear and a subconscious assumption among staff that

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differences in religious affiliation posed a threat to the institution's harmony. However, through consistent, routine practices—such as monthly reflection forums and balanced representation within committees—these assumptions have been shifted. Consequently, diversity is now collectively recognized as an inherent asset of the school. According to teachers of non-Islamic religious education (GANI)—who represent a minority—the long-standing fear that their opinions might be disregarded during official meetings has completely vanished. This inclusive working environment has fostered a new, deeply ingrained assumption among staff: that they work not to advance the interests of a particular group, but out of a professional commitment to educating the nation's children.

The three layers of organizational culture—based on Schein's model—at SMPN 3 Parenggean are effectively interconnected, reinforcing one another to foster a moderate work ethic. Physical changes at the level of artifacts have reduced barriers to social interaction; these changes are further bolstered by regulations and formal training at the level of "espoused values," ultimately succeeding in redefining the subconscious mindsets of staff at the level of "basic assumptions." Nevertheless, the researcher's interpretation suggests that the success observed in this setting is highly contextual. Its long-term sustainability remains to be tested—specifically, whether this cultural shift has truly reached a stage of stabilization ("refreezing") or whether it is merely a product of the heightened attention present during the research process.

The effectiveness of integrating *Wasathiyah* (moderation) values into the daily work ethos is the result of structured change management, based on Kurt Lewin's three-stage model (Lewin, 1951). The "unfreezing" phase is accelerated by fostering a sense of urgency regarding the dangers of intolerance, alongside a radical reconfiguration of physical workspace barriers to dismantle group-based exclusivism (Schein, 2010). This disrupted *status quo* is then transformed during the "changing" phase through a socio-cognitive approach, utilizing workshops on inclusive curricula and training in service excellence. The effectiveness of this transition is theoretically supported by Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), wherein employees naturally adopt new behaviors through "behavioral modeling"—observing the tangible examples set by the school principal and an interfaith coalition of change agents during daily public service activities. Finally, these new behaviors are solidified in the "refreezing" phase through both structural-legalistic mechanisms (incorporation into the Code of Ethics and internal performance appraisal systems) and cultural-habituation processes (such as monthly reflection rituals). Consequently, the values of *tasamuh* (tolerance), *i'tidal* (uprightness/justice), and *tawazun* (balance) become firmly embedded as a permanent standard of professional identity (Mulyasa, 2022).

Epistemologically, the effectiveness of the work culture transformation in this setting offers a significant new theoretical contribution by addressing and reducing biases present in existing literature on Islamic educational management. Previously, a strong academic assumption persisted that mainstreaming the values of *Wasathiyah* (moderation) was inherently relevant and effective only within religious educational institutions under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, due to the theological-doctrinal nature of its

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framing. The findings from this single-case study in a public school provide empirical evidence that these universal Islamic theological values can be conceptually reconstructed and translated into the inclusive language of public management—specifically within public schools overseen by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. By operationalizing abstract values into clinical performance indicators, the school demonstrates that religious moderation can be transformed into an effective organizational governance system, capable of mitigating social polarization and enhancing the professionalism of public service in a heterogeneous environment.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research concludes that a strategy for transforming organizational culture based on *Wasathiyah* (moderate) values within a school setting can be executed effectively and systematically through in-depth interventions across three layers of organizational culture. At the level of physical artifacts, changes are realized by configuring an inclusive workspace—removing barriers between groups—and displaying visual messages of peace throughout the school environment. At the level of espoused values, these values are reinforced through the development of a legally binding Code of Ethics for staff, alongside workshops on dialogical pedagogy designed to foster greater tolerance. At the deepest level—that of basic assumptions—routine habituation programs effectively shift the subconscious mindsets of staff: transforming the perception of diversity as a threat into a collective awareness that pluralism is an institutional asset to be celebrated. From a managerial perspective, the successful structuring of these three cultural layers is driven by an accommodative school leadership style, which integrates Kurt Lewin's three-phase change management model (unfreezing, changing, and refreezing) with John Kotter's model of collective commitment.

The theoretical implications of this study suggest that mainstreaming the value of *Wasathiyah* (moderation) holds conceptual potential for implementation in public schools by translating Islamic theological values into public management principles—such as inclusivity, administrative fairness, and professionalism. However, the generalizability of these findings remains context-dependent, given the limitations inherent in a single-case study design. Meanwhile, the practical implications are evidenced by observable empirical changes, including modifications to the physical environment and updates to the school's internal regulatory documents. Participants perceived these shifts as fostering a conducive working atmosphere and minimizing social friction, thereby providing an initial framework for cultural change strategies in schools located within heterogeneous settings—though the long-term effectiveness of this approach warrants further investigation.

The recommendations from this research are directed toward three key stakeholders: School principals are advised to integrate a digital religious moderation index instrument into periodic performance evaluations to assess the sustainability of this strategy while accounting for the potential "Hawthorne effect." The East Kotawaringin Regency Education Office may use this model as a reference for preliminary comparative studies; however, any replication in other schools must be approached with caution, taking into account micro-contextual

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variations such as staff demographics, local culture, and leadership capacity. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to conduct long-term studies to monitor the consistency of the "refreezing" phase over an extended period, while also broadening the methodology—incorporating quantitative approaches and multi-case comparative studies—and expanding the scope of analysis to include students, thereby strengthening the statistical generalizability of the research findings.

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