

Beyond Single-Source Learning: Layered Instructional Materials and Student Interaction in Islamic Religious Education

Melampaui Satu Sumber Pembelajaran: Bahan Ajar Berlapis dan Interaksi Peserta Didik dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam

^{*1}Moh. Nawafil,²Wedi Samsudi,³Kandiri,⁴Junaidi

¹⁻⁴Universitas Ibrahimy, Indonesia

*e-Mail: nawafil@ibrahimy.ac.id

Abstract: Integrating religious moderation into learning materials is increasingly important for fostering students' moderate religious understanding. However, little is known about how different learning materials are used and how students interact with them. This study explores (1) the use of religious moderation-oriented learning materials and (2) students' interactions with these materials in Islamic Religious Education. Using a qualitative case study at one senior high school in Situbondo, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and documentation, and analyzed with the interactive model of Miles and Huberman. The findings show that materials were used in layers to develop students' moderate religious understanding progressively. The teacher used three types of materials, each with a distinct pedagogical function: government-issued printed textbooks provided conceptual foundations, electronic modules offered more substantive and exploratory content, and handouts focused on key learning points. Students' interactions varied accordingly: reading, searching for concepts, highlighting, and referring back with textbooks; re-accessing, independent reading, and exploration with modules; and rapid reading, keyword searching, and recall with handouts. Theoretically, the study positions religious moderation learning as an interactional process involving students, content, and the affordances of learning materials. Practically, it recommends teacher training in the strategic use of layered materials and stronger institutional support for digital infrastructure. The findings are limited to selected classrooms and materials in one school.

Keywords: Religious Moderation, Layered Learning Materials, Student Interaction, Islamic Religious Education.

Abstrak: Mengintegrasikan moderasi beragama ke dalam bahan ajar semakin penting untuk menumbuhkan pemahaman keagamaan siswa yang moderat. Namun, kajian tentang penggunaan berbagai bahan ajar dan interaksi siswa dengannya di kelas masih terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan (1) mengeksplorasi penggunaan bahan ajar berbasis moderasi beragama dan (2) mengkaji interaksi siswa dengan bahan ajar tersebut dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam. Melalui studi kasus kualitatif di salah satu SMA di Situbondo, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semiterstruktur, observasi kelas, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa bahan ajar digunakan secara berlapis untuk menumbuhkan pemahaman moderat siswa secara bertahap. Guru menggunakan tiga bahan ajar dengan fungsi pedagogis berbeda: buku teks cetak terbitan pemerintah sebagai landasan konseptual, modul elektronik dengan konten lebih substantif dan

eksploratif, serta handout yang berfokus pada poin utama pembelajaran. Interaksi siswa pun beragam: membaca, mencari konsep, menandai bagian penting, dan merujuk kembali pada buku teks; mengakses ulang, membaca mandiri, dan mengeksplorasi pada modul; serta membaca cepat, mencari kata kunci, dan mengingat kembali pada handout. Secara teoretis, penelitian ini memosisikan pembelajaran moderasi beragama sebagai proses interaksional yang melibatkan siswa, konten, dan afordansi bahan ajar. Secara praktis, penelitian ini merekomendasikan pelatihan guru dalam penggunaan bahan ajar berlapis serta dukungan institusional bagi infrastruktur pembelajaran digital. Temuan terbatas pada kelas dan bahan ajar terpilih di satu sekolah.

Kata Kunci: Moderasi Beragama, Bahan Ajar Berlapis, Interaksi Siswa, Pendidikan Agama Islam.

Introduction

Learning materials are a fundamental component of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) because they mediate the relationship among curricular objectives, religious knowledge, pedagogical processes, and students' learning experiences. Well-designed materials are not merely sources of information. They are systematic pedagogical structures that guide students from conceptual understanding to reflection, discussion, and the application of Islamic values in everyday life. Contextually grounded and systematically designed IRE materials can foster meaningful learning, enhance student engagement, and strengthen conceptual understanding by connecting religious knowledge with students' lived experiences (Ibrohim et al., 2025; Wulandari et al., 2022). Similarly, problem-based and cognitively structured materials have been reported to promote active participation, classroom discussion, critical thinking, and deeper understanding of Islamic concepts, while reducing the tendency to approach religious education through memorization (Zakiah et al., 2026).

Learning materials should therefore not be conceptualized merely as textbooks or printed resources. The term encompasses a broad range of resources intentionally used to facilitate and support learning. Tomlinson (2012) defines materials as anything that teachers or learners can use to facilitate learning, including books, videos, games, websites, mobile-mediated interactions, whiteboards, diagrams, and other physical or digital resources. This broader conceptualization shows that learning materials function not only as repositories of subject content but also as pedagogical tools that can create diverse, interactive, and meaningful learning experiences. In Islamic education, appropriate learning materials are particularly important because learning outcomes extend beyond cognitive mastery to include the internalization and practical enactment of Islamic teachings, encompassing moral values, religious practices, and socially responsible behavior.

Conversely, inadequate materials or ineffective learning resources can substantially constrain the quality of IRE. This concern is relevant to the persistent challenges surrounding IRE instructional materials, which often prioritize the transmission and memorization of religious content over meaningful knowledge construction and value internalization (Ernawati et al., 2025; Wanto, 2022). Students may also struggle to master IRE content when materials are disconnected from their everyday realities and lived experiences (Ibrohim et al., 2025; Ulya et al., 2024). Innovative, systematic, contextualized, and student-centered materials are therefore essential for transforming IRE from a predominantly content-transmission process into meaningful learning that enables students not only to understand Islamic teachings but also to reflect critically on them and enact them in their daily lives.

This need is particularly pressing given the infiltration of radicalism into educational settings, from secondary schools to higher education institutions, including Islamic universities

(Arifianto, 2019). Several factors have been identified as contributing to the spread of radical ideas in educational contexts, including educators' partial or fragmented understandings of Islam (Suhendi et al., 2020), pedagogical approaches that are insufficiently grounded in local wisdom (Ahmad et al., 2020; Muqit et al., 2024), and instructional materials that emphasize the concept of jihad without adequate and comprehensive contextualization (Rahmatullah, 2017). Religious moderation-oriented learning materials are therefore important for equipping students with the knowledge, dispositions, and interpretive frameworks needed to resist radical ideological influences. Nevertheless, research that specifically examines instructional materials systematically integrating the principles of religious moderation remains limited.

The existing literature has predominantly examined religious moderation through the lenses of social movements, the roles of Islamic organizations, curriculum development, pedagogical strategies, and moderation campaigns in Islamic boarding schools. Consequently, learning materials themselves, as pedagogical instruments for cultivating moderate attitudes in classroom interactions, have received little attention. Kanafi et al. (2021), for example, show how Islamic organizations contribute to the formation of moderate identities through sustained religious guidance and theological development. Burga and Damopolii (2022) conceptualize moderation as the outcome of a gradual, long-term process of value internalization, and Junaidi et al. (2025) identify the hidden curriculum as an effective mechanism for fostering students' moderate dispositions. Although these studies offer important insights into the social and educational processes through which moderation is cultivated, they do not examine how religious moderation-oriented learning materials are used in classroom settings.

Research that focuses specifically on religious moderation-oriented learning materials has also been dominated by development-oriented and quantitative approaches (Dunggio et al., 2024; Fauziah et al., 2024; Minhaji et al., 2025). Qualitative investigations of how such materials are actually used and how students interact with them remain scarce. This gap is significant because the effectiveness of instructional materials cannot be understood solely through their development, validation, or measured learning outcomes. It also depends on how teachers use them and how students interpret, engage with, and respond to them in specific sociocultural contexts.

The novelty of this study lies in three respects. First, it addresses this research gap by examining religious moderation-oriented learning materials as pedagogical instruments in actual classroom use, rather than in terms of their development or measured effectiveness. Second, it examines how students interact with different types of materials, an aspect that has received little qualitative attention. Third, it is set in Situbondo, an area with a history of religious unrest and conflict. In such a post-conflict setting, instructional resources may function not only as pedagogical tools but also as mechanisms for supporting social reconciliation and preventing the reproduction of religious tensions. Investigating their classroom use is therefore relevant to understanding how religious moderation can be translated from an abstract educational principle into an enacted pedagogical practice. Theoretically, this study contributes to a reconceptualization of religious moderation by shifting attention from moderation as a value internalized through educational environments and processes toward moderation as a pedagogical practice shaped by the use of learning materials in classroom interactions. Empirically, it shows how such materials operate in a post-conflict educational context, thereby extending scholarship on religious moderation by incorporating the social-historical context. Practically, the findings inform the development and use of instructional materials that are contextually responsive, historically sensitive to experiences of religious conflict, and oriented toward strengthening tolerance. Accordingly, this study pursues two objectives: (1) to explore

how religious moderation-oriented learning materials are used in IRE; and (2) to explore how students interact with and respond to these materials in classroom settings.

Method

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to examine the use of religious moderation-oriented learning materials and students' interactions with them at one of the senior high schools in Situbondo. A qualitative case study was selected because it enables an in-depth examination of a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context and supports a comprehensive understanding of educational interactions and processes as they occur under natural conditions (Yin, 2018). The study was conducted over three months in early 2026. The participants were five students, one IRE teacher, and the school principal. They were selected through purposive sampling based on their active participation in class and the IRE teacher's recommendations (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Participant observation was conducted over four weeks across three Grade 10 classes. The observations focused on the types of learning materials the teacher used, their characteristics and content coverage, and students' interactions with and responses to religious moderation-oriented materials during classroom activities. This process enabled the researchers to capture pedagogical practices and student engagement as they occurred naturally in the classroom.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the five students, the IRE teacher, and the school principal to obtain their perspectives on the use, functions, content, and perceived relevance of the learning materials. Interviews were recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim. Documentation was carried out systematically throughout the research process, both inside and outside the classroom. Documentary sources included the learning materials, instructional documents, classroom-related records, and other materials that provided complementary evidence on the implementation of religious moderation-oriented learning.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles et al. (2014), which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, while observational field notes and documentary evidence were organized into an integrated dataset. The analysis proceeded through three stages of qualitative coding. First, open coding identified meaningful statements and preliminary concepts related to the use of religious moderation-oriented materials across the interview transcripts, field notes, and documents. Second, axial coding grouped conceptually related codes into broader categories by examining relationships, similarities, and recurring patterns across the dataset. Third, selective coding integrated the categories into overarching themes that captured the central dimensions of the phenomenon, including the types, functions, content coverage, and characteristics of the materials.

During data display, categorized data were organized into narrative descriptions and thematic matrices to help identify recurring patterns, relationships, and emerging themes. Conclusions were then drawn and continuously verified throughout the analysis. Verification relied on triangulation, which systematically compared evidence from interviews, participant observations, and documents, to enhance the credibility, consistency, and trustworthiness of the findings. Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research. Before data collection, participants were informed about the purpose, procedures, and voluntary nature of their participation, and informed consent was obtained from all of them. Participants were assured that their identities and personal information would remain confidential and be used

solely for research purposes. In reporting the findings, pseudonyms or initials were used instead of real names, and potentially identifying information was omitted or anonymized. All data were securely managed and accessed only for research purposes.

Results and Discussion

Layered Use of Instructional Materials in Religious Moderation-Oriented IRE

The findings indicate that the teacher used a range of learning materials to help students understand religious moderation in IRE. Three types of materials were consistently identified across the observations and interviews: government-provided printed textbooks, electronic modules, and handouts. Each material served a distinct pedagogical function and differed in scope, format, and characteristics. Rather than being used independently, the three materials were used complementarily, each playing a particular role at a different stage of classroom instruction.

The government-provided printed textbook was the teacher's primary reference for delivering IRE content that incorporated the principles of religious moderation. Classroom observations showed that the teacher regularly referred to the textbook when explaining key concepts, elaborating subject matter, and identifying values associated with religious moderation.

The textbook served primarily as a curricular and conceptual reference from which the teacher developed further explanations. Rather than relying exclusively on the textbook's presentation, the teacher expanded its content through oral explanations and examples drawn from students' everyday experiences. The textbook was thus used mainly at the initial stage of instruction, particularly when introducing core concepts and identifying the religious moderation values embedded in the lesson. SR, the IRE teacher, confirmed this pattern:

"I use the government-provided textbook as my main reference. From the material in the textbook, I identify the concepts that need to be taught and then explain them further using examples that are closer to students' everyday lives, particularly those related to moderation."

The observations further indicated that the textbook provided a relatively stable conceptual framework for classroom instruction. The teacher used this framework as a starting point before extending the discussion toward contextual examples and situations that students could relate to. The textbook was thus not simply a source of content but also a reference point for organizing the initial presentation of religious moderation concepts.

Electronic modules were used as supplementary materials that extended and complemented the content of the printed textbook. Classroom observations showed that the teacher directed students to access selected sections of the module on digital devices. The module was particularly useful when additional explanations or learning resources were needed beyond the printed textbook.

The classroom use of the electronic module generally followed the initial explanation based on the primary textbook. After introducing the main concepts, the teacher directed students to sections of the module relevant to the topic under discussion. Its use therefore occurred mainly during the core learning activities.

Unlike the printed textbook, access to the electronic module was not restricted to classroom activities. Students were also encouraged to revisit the material independently when they needed clarification or wanted to reinforce their understanding. The electronic format thus offered greater flexibility in when and where students could access the content. The school administration also supported the use of electronic modules. TN, the school principal, explained:

“The use of electronic modules is one of the ways teachers complement the learning materials that are already available. With digital materials, students have an additional learning resource that they can access not only when they are in the classroom.”

These findings suggest that the electronic module occupied a complementary position in the instructional arrangement. Whereas the printed textbook provided the primary conceptual reference, the electronic module expanded students' access to learning content and created opportunities for more flexible and independent engagement with materials on religious moderation.

Handouts were used as supplementary materials to reinforce selected aspects of IRE content related to religious moderation. Unlike the printed textbook and the electronic module, the handouts did not present the subject matter comprehensively. They contained condensed, selectively organized material corresponding to specific topics discussed in class.

Classroom observations showed that the teacher used handouts to emphasize concepts and values considered particularly important for students to understand. Their use was most evident toward the end of the lesson, when the teacher consolidated the main points. The handouts thus narrowed the discussion to essential concepts without requiring the teacher or students to revisit the entire content of the primary materials. Students also found the handouts useful for consolidating their understanding. VR, one of the students interviewed, emphasized the concise and focused nature of the material:

“The handout is very important in learning because the material is more concise and directly related to what we are studying. It makes the material easier to understand because there are not too many sections to read. When we study religious moderation, the important points are usually summarized in the handout, so they are easier to understand and remember.”

The observation data support this perception. The handouts enabled the teacher to highlight key concepts and values of religious moderation at the end of the lesson, while students used the condensed material to review and recall the main points of the discussion. In this respect, the handout served primarily a consolidation function in the overall sequence of instruction.

The three types of materials also differed in the scope and manner in which religious moderation was presented. The government-provided printed textbook tended to present religious moderation at a conceptual level, including principles such as *tawazun* (balance), *i'tidal* (justice), and *tasamuh* (tolerance), as well as national commitment and the rejection of violence. The electronic module offered a broader and more substantive treatment. Its content included the concept of religious moderation, its relevance to social life in diverse communities, tolerance, justice, balance, national commitment, non-violence, and respect for religious and cultural diversity. Compared with the printed textbook, the module gave students more opportunities to encounter religious moderation in relation to broader social and contemporary contexts.

The handouts, by contrast, presented the material in a more condensed format. Their content generally consisted of the definition and significance of religious moderation, its core principles and indicators of moderate behavior, and examples of its application in family, school, community, and digital environments. The handouts thus prioritized the selection and condensation of essential concepts over comprehensive coverage.

Taken together, the findings indicate a complementary pattern in the use of the three materials. The printed textbook established the conceptual and curricular foundation of the lesson; the electronic module extended and enriched this content while allowing flexible, independent access; and the handout consolidated selected concepts and key points at the end

of the learning process. This differentiated use created a sequential instructional arrangement in which the three resources performed distinct but interconnected pedagogical functions.

The findings further indicate that the three materials differed in how religious moderation was represented. This variation suggests that learning materials do more than transmit religious knowledge; they also mediate the contextualization and potential internalization of religious moderation in students' learning experiences. This finding extends the work of [Kanafi et al. \(2021\)](#), who emphasize sustained theological guidance in the formation of moderate religious identities; [Burga and Damopolii \(2022\)](#), who conceptualize moderation as a gradual process of value internalization; and [Junaidi et al. \(2025\)](#), who highlight the role of the hidden curriculum in cultivating students' moderate dispositions. Whereas these studies emphasize the institutional environment, social interaction, and educational processes through which moderation is cultivated, the present findings draw attention to the instructional materials through which moderation is represented and encountered in everyday classroom practice. The formation of religious moderation may therefore occur not only through educational environments and interpersonal interactions but also through the selection, scope, representation, and pedagogical use of learning materials.

This finding also extends previous research by [Dunggio et al. \(2024\)](#) and [Fauziah et al. \(2024\)](#), which has focused predominantly on the development and evaluation of religious moderation-oriented learning materials. Rather than examining materials in terms of their development or measured effectiveness, the present study highlights how available materials are actually mobilized in IRE classrooms. This distinction matters because the pedagogical contribution of a material depends not only on its content or design but also on how teachers position and integrate it in the instructional process.

The finding that the government-provided printed textbook served as a conceptual anchor is consistent with [Mulyana \(2023\)](#), who found that IRE textbooks incorporate moderation-related values, including tolerance, justice, egalitarianism, and non-violence, which correspond to the pillars of religious moderation promoted in Indonesia. Mulyana also underscores the importance of teachers in translating these values into meaningful learning experiences. The present study reinforces this point: the textbook provided the conceptual foundation, while the teacher elaborated its content through contextual explanations and examples. The textbook therefore offered an important conceptual baseline but was not sufficient on its own to establish a fully contextual understanding of religious moderation. Additional resources, such as electronic modules, were used to extend and contextualize the concepts that the textbook introduced.

The use of the electronic module as a supplementary rather than substitutive resource is consistent with [Area-Moreira et al. \(2023\)](#), who show that teachers do not necessarily adopt digital materials as replacements for traditional resources but adapt and combine digital and non-digital materials in classroom practice. Their findings support the complementary pattern identified here, in which the electronic module enriched rather than displaced the printed textbook. The pedagogical value of digital technology therefore appears to depend less on its digital format than on the instructional function the teacher assigns to it. For religious moderation, this complementary use is particularly relevant because electronic materials can provide additional opportunities to expand, contextualize, and revisit moderation-related content. [Minhaji et al. \(2025\)](#) likewise reported positive learning outcomes associated with electronic modules for religious moderation, although the present qualitative findings shift attention from outcome measurement to the ways students access and engage with such materials in classroom practice.

The findings also challenge a technologically deterministic assumption that digitizing learning materials automatically produces more effective learning. [Bando et al. \(2017\)](#), in a

controlled experiment, found no significant differences in mathematics and language achievement when textbooks were replaced by laptops. Their findings reinforce the interpretation emerging from the present study that print and digital materials should not be framed as mutually exclusive alternatives. Their pedagogical value may instead depend on the functions they perform in an integrated instructional design. In the present context, the printed textbook established the conceptual foundation of religious moderation, whereas the electronic module provided opportunities for further access, elaboration, and contextualization. The distinction thus lies not between print and digital media but between the pedagogical roles assigned to different learning resources.

Meanwhile, the use of handouts as concise materials in the final stage of instruction reflects a process of “pedagogical filtering,” that is, the selection and simplification of information so that students can focus on the most critical concepts and values. This pattern aligns with the principles of coherence and signaling in instructional design, which emphasize minimizing non-essential information while highlighting content relevant to learning objectives (Castro-Alonso et al., 2021). Handouts thus serve not merely as summaries but also as tools that direct students’ attention toward the core concepts to be retained. This study contributes by identifying a “layered instructional materials strategy,” namely the gradual and complementary use of teaching materials to link conceptual understanding, contextual enrichment, and the consolidation of learning about religious moderation.

The core findings regarding the use, functions, scope, and characteristics of the three types of learning materials are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Complementary Use, Functions, and Characteristics of Religious Moderation-Oriented Learning Materials.

No	Learning Material	Stage of Use	Primary Function	Content Scope	Key Characteristics
1	Government-provided textbook	Initial stage	Conceptual and curricular reference	Conceptual principles of religious moderation	Structured, comprehensive, curriculum-oriented
2	Electronic module	Core learning stage	Enrichment and flexible access	Broader and more substantive moderation content	Digital, flexible, supplementary
3	Handout	Concluding stage	Consolidation and reinforcement	Selected key concepts and applications	Concise, focused, easily reviewable

Student Interaction with Religious Moderation-Oriented Learning Materials

The findings revealed distinct patterns of student interaction across the three types of learning materials. These variations appeared to be associated with the characteristics and affordances of each material, particularly in how students accessed, processed, and used information. Classroom observations and interviews identified different forms of engagement with the government-provided printed textbook, the electronic module, and the handout.

Government-Provided Printed Textbook

Students interacted with the government-provided printed textbook through four main activities: reading, concept searching, highlighting, and referring back to the text. Classroom observations showed that students opened and read the sections the teacher indicated, searched for particular terms or concepts, and underlined or highlighted information they considered important. They also returned to the textbook when answering questions or completing learning tasks. SR, the IRE teacher, supported this pattern:

"I usually ask students to read the material in the textbook first. If there is a concept they do not understand, they look for the relevant section. When answering questions, they often open the textbook again to check their answers."

The observations further indicated that students did not necessarily read the textbook sequentially or in its entirety. Instead, they searched selectively for terms relevant to their understanding of religious moderation. Some students also used the glossary to clarify unfamiliar terminology. One student explained:

"I usually look for the section that corresponds to the material explained by the teacher. If there is something important, I underline it so that I can find it easily again when studying or answering questions."

Students also referred back to the textbook when they had difficulty recalling previously discussed concepts. BN stated:

"When I forgot the definition or concept, I look at the textbook again. The parts I have already marked are usually easier to find."

Taken together, the observation and interview evidence indicates that students' engagement with the printed textbook was active but selective. Reading provided access to the content, searching helped students locate and clarify specific concepts, highlighting allowed them to identify salient information, and referring back to the text supported recall and task completion. The textbook therefore functioned not only as a medium for presenting instructional content but also as a reference resource that students consulted during and after classroom activities.

Electronic Module

Students' interactions with the electronic module differed from those with the printed textbook. The module allowed more flexible access and enabled students to engage with the material more independently. Three principal activities were identified: re-accessing, independent reading, and exploration. Re-accessing occurred when students reopened the module beyond the teacher's immediate explanation, particularly to review material they had not fully understood or to prepare for upcoming lessons. The IRE teacher explained:

"Students can open the module again at home or before the lesson. They usually access the sections they have not understood or the material that will be discussed."

Classroom observations also showed instances of independent reading. Students did not always wait for the teacher's explicit instructions before accessing the module. Some opened and read selected sections according to their immediate learning needs. RK, one of the students, reported:

"If I have not understood the material, I open the module again and read it by myself. Sometimes I read it before the lesson so that I can understand the teacher's explanation better."

A further pattern was exploration. Students were observed moving between sections of the module rather than reading it strictly from beginning to end. They accessed sections that attracted their attention or seemed relevant to questions raised in classroom discussions. One student described this practice as follows:

"I do not always read it from beginning to end. If there is a section that interests me or something I want to know more about, I open that section and look at the other materials."

The electronic module was therefore associated with more flexible, self-directed, and exploratory engagement. Whereas the printed textbook was used mainly for reading, locating concepts, highlighting, and referring back to information, the electronic module enabled students to revisit content, read independently, and navigate across sections according to their learning needs and interests. This pattern suggests that the digital format gave students greater control over when and how they accessed the content.

Handout

Students' interaction with the handout showed another distinctive pattern. Compared with the printed textbook and the electronic module, students used the handout in a more focused and task-oriented manner, directing their attention to immediately relevant information. Three main activities were identified: rapid reading, keyword searching, and recall. In rapid reading, students generally did not engage with the entire handout in depth. Instead, they scanned selected sections to obtain an overview or locate specific information. This pattern was particularly visible when students had limited time to review the material or were asked to identify particular information. The IRE teacher explained:

"Because the material in the handout is more concise, students usually read it quickly. They do not read it in the same way they read a textbook; instead, they immediately look at the sections they consider important."

Observations also showed that students searched for keywords to locate information relevant to the topic. Their attention was directed toward particular terms and phrases associated with the concepts under discussion. Students also used the handout to support recall. After reading particular sections, they attempted to retain the main points, especially when preparing to answer questions or take part in classroom discussions. VR, one of the students, stated:

"The handout is shorter, so it is easier for me to remember the important points. I usually read it several times so that I can remember them."

Overall, students used the handout in a brief, focused, and information-oriented manner. Unlike the printed textbook, which was associated with reading, concept searching, highlighting, and referring back, and the electronic module, which facilitated re-accessing, independent reading, and exploration, the handout was used mainly to scan information, identify keywords, and retain key points. These patterns indicate that the format, structure, and content density of learning materials shaped how students accessed and engaged with instructional information.

Across the three types of materials, student engagement was differentiated. The government-provided printed textbook supported selective textual engagement and conceptual reference; the electronic module facilitated flexible, independent, and exploratory engagement; and the handout promoted focused information retrieval and recall. Students thus did not interact with all materials in the same way. Their patterns of engagement varied according to the structure, accessibility, and informational characteristics of each material.

This differentiated use suggests that the pedagogical value of learning materials depends not only on their format but also on how teachers position and integrate them in the learning process. The textbook gave students relatively stable and systematic access to the concepts, principles, and normative foundations of religious moderation. This finding is consistent with [Saparudin and Emawati \(2023\)](#), who identify IRE textbooks as important vehicles for conveying moderation values. However, [Rosidin et al. \(2024\)](#) note that moderation content in IRE textbooks may remain textual and partial. The present findings reinforce this limitation: the textbook functioned best as a starting point for conceptual understanding, while contextual elaboration came from other resources and the teacher's explanations.

In contrast, the electronic module enabled students to revisit, read independently, and explore selected content beyond the immediate classroom. This finding is broadly consistent with [Reinhold et al. \(2020\)](#), who highlight variation in students' engagement with e-textbooks. Nevertheless, the present study does not support the assumption that digital materials are inherently superior to print. Previous research shows that e-textbooks do not necessarily produce better cognitive outcomes than printed materials ([Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2013](#)), and the benefits of digital materials may depend substantially on their design and pedagogical use

(Lei et al., 2026). The contribution of the electronic module in this study thus lies primarily in expanding access and opportunities for re-engagement rather than in its digital format itself.

The handout, meanwhile, supported rapid information retrieval and recall. Its concise structure directed students toward key concepts and facilitated review of previously learned material. This pattern is consistent with research suggesting that structured notes can support students' attention and information processing (Biggers & Luo, 2020). However, as Noppe (2007) and Raver and Maydosz (2010) suggest, the benefits of condensed materials are not guaranteed by brevity alone and may depend on how and when students use them. In the present study, the handout therefore functioned primarily as a consolidation layer rather than a substitute for more comprehensive learning resources.

Viewed together, the three patterns indicate that students used the materials complementarily according to their learning needs. The textbook provided systematic conceptual reference, the e-module enabled flexible access and review, and the handout facilitated rapid retrieval and reinforcement. This pattern supports Nkomo et al. (2021), who argue that student engagement should be understood in terms of the purpose and quality of interaction rather than the frequency of use alone.

A notable finding was cross-material referencing, whereby students moved between materials to supplement, clarify, or reinforce information. Learning about religious moderation thus did not depend on a single source but developed through access to multiple sources. The findings suggest a layered learning ecosystem in which different materials perform complementary functions rather than compete for pedagogical dominance. Table 2 summarizes student interaction with religious moderation-oriented learning materials.

Table 2. Patterns of Student Interaction with Religious Moderation-Oriented Learning Materials.

No	Learning material	Observed interaction	Primary interaction pattern	Evidence/illustration
1	Government-provided printed textbook	Reading, concept searching, highlighting, referring	Selective textual engagement and conceptual reference	Textbook sections, glossary, highlighted concepts
2	Electronic module	Re-accessing, independent reading, exploration	Flexible, self-directed, and exploratory engagement	Revisiting sections, independent access, navigation
3	Handout	Rapid reading, keyword searching, recall	Focused information retrieval and recall	Scanning, keywords, key points

Conclusion

This study shows that the use of religious moderation-oriented learning materials in IRE is not uniform but follows a layered instructional strategy in which different materials serve complementary pedagogical functions. Government-issued printed textbooks establish conceptual foundations, electronic modules support substantive content exploration and independent learning, and handouts support focused engagement with key learning points. Students' interactions differ accordingly, ranging from reading, concept searching, highlighting, and referring back with printed textbooks, to re-accessing, independent reading, and exploration with electronic modules, and rapid reading, keyword searching, and recall with handouts. These findings address both research objectives and suggest that the development of students'

moderate religious understanding is shaped not only by the content of learning materials but also by how their pedagogical affordances support different forms of student engagement.

Theoretically, the study contributes to conceptualizing religious moderation education as an interactional process involving students, learning content, and the affordances of instructional materials. Practically, teachers should integrate complementary materials strategically rather than rely on a single source, supported by professional development that strengthens their capacity to design and implement layered learning. Schools and policymakers should also provide adequate digital infrastructure to ensure equitable access to electronic learning resources. This study is limited by its focus on selected IRE classrooms and materials in a single context, which may constrain the transferability of the findings. Future research should examine, through longitudinal, comparative, or mixed-methods approaches, whether and how these interaction patterns influence students' religious attitudes, reflective capacities, and sustained moderate behavior.

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