

RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN TAFSIR NUSANTARA: BALANCING SYARIAT AND HAKIKAT IN AL-QAUL AL-BAYĀN BY SYEKH SULAIMAN AR-RASULIMelisa Rezi¹, Zulkifli², Eka Putra Wirman³, and Abrar⁴¹ Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Indonesia² Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Indonesia³ Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Indonesia⁴ Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Indonesia**Corresponding Author:**

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Received: January 23, 2026

Revised: April 27, 2026

Accepted: May 31, 2026

Online Version: June 30, 2026

Abstract

The discourse on religious moderation in contemporary Islamic studies is generally understood within a socio-political framework or as a form of normative tolerance, thereby paying insufficient attention to the theological and spiritual foundations that sustain it. Within this landscape of previous studies, this research offers a distinctive and novel perspective by positioning religious moderation (wasathiyyah) as a conceptual integration between syariat and hakikat, constructed directly through Qur'anic exegetical narratives within the Tafsir Nusantara tradition. This study aims to examine how Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli (Inyik Canduang) formulates the concept of religious moderation through his interpretation of Juz 30 in Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān, and how this construction reflects the distinctive wasathiyyah orientation of Nusantara scholars. This research employs a qualitative method using a textual study approach (library research), through a thematic analysis of eight surahs in Juz 'Ammā as the primary data source, supported by classical tafsir literature and contemporary studies on religious moderation. The findings show that religious moderation in Inyik Canduang's tafsir is constructed through four main dimensions: moderation in creed, worship, social life, and psycho-spiritual life. Moderation is not understood as a compromise of religious teachings, but as a balance between firmness of faith, inner sincerity, consistency in worship, social concern, and spiritual tranquility. This study contributes to strengthening the discourse on religious moderation in Indonesia by emphasizing the importance of a theological-spiritual foundation rooted in Qur'anic exegesis as the basis for fostering authentic, contextual, and sustainable religious life.

Keywords: Religious Moderation; Wasathiyyah; Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān; Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli; Tafsir Nusantara



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Journal Homepage

<https://ejournal.staialhikmahpariangan.ac.id/Journal/index.php/alhijr>

How to cite:

Rezi, M., Zulkifli, Zulkifli., Wirman, E. P., & Abrar, A. (2025). Religious Moderation in Tafsir Nusantara: Balancing Syariat and Hakikat in Al-Qaul Al-Bayān by Syekh Sulaiman Ar-Rasuli. *Al-Hijr: Journal of Adulearn World*, 5(3), 89–103. <https://doi.org/10.55849/alhijr.v4i1.1420>

Published by:

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Al-Hikmah Pariangan Batusangkar

INTRODUCTION

The discourse on religious moderation (*wasathiyyah*) has become a central issue in contemporary Islamic studies (Fuadi et al., 2024; Hermanto et al., 2026; Hidayati & Muis, 2025; Suhandoko & Ningrum, 2025), particularly when religion is often understood in extreme ways, either in the form of rigid and legalistic *syariat* formalism or in the form of *hakikat* spiritualism detached from legal discipline (Anwar et al., 2024; Arif, 2020; Fuadi et al., 2024; Helmy et al., 2021; Ichsan et al., 2024; Mahfudz & Yuspiani, 2023; Muslih et al., 2024; Rosidin et al., 2024). This tension between the outward dimension (*syariat*) and the inward dimension (*hakikat*) not only affects individual religious practice but also has broader implications for social relations, the ethics of *dakwah*, and the way Muslims understand faith in everyday life (Al-Qurtubi, 1427; Qorbani, 2024; Rahman et al., 2025; Thabary, 1415). In this context, religious moderation should not be understood merely as a socially tolerant attitude, but as a conceptual effort to maintain an integral balance between legal obedience and spiritual depth (Fadil et al., 2024; Furqan & Nasir, 2024; Hamzah, 2022; Hayat et al., 2025; Muis, 2025; Rusmana et al., 2025; Tinambunan et al., 2025). This perspective shows that the main issue of religious moderation lies not solely in interreligious relations, but also in how Islamic teachings are understood holistically through the balance between the dimensions of *syariat* and *hakikat*.

This context makes the study of religious moderation as a dynamic balance between *syariat* and *hakikat* increasingly relevant, particularly within the tradition of Qur'anic tafsir (Ibnu Katsir, 1420). offers a distinctive perspective on religious moderation that is deeply rooted in the Islamic scholarly tradition (Rasuli, 1929). This tafsir functions not only as an explanation of the linguistic and theological meanings of Qur'anic verses, but also as an ethical-spiritual guide that seeks to maintain harmony between firmness in religious law and clarity of inner experience (Rasuli, 1929). Juz 30 was selected as the focus of this study because it contains short surahs that represent fundamental themes of Islam, such as *tauhid*, sincerity in worship, social responsibility, patience in trials, and the honoring of human dignity, all of which constitute the main foundations of the concept of *wasathiyyah* in Islam (Al-Qurtubi, 1427; Ibnu Katsir, 1420).

The interpretation of Juz 30 in *Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an* opens a space for reading religious moderation as a balance between *hakikat* and *syariat*. This perspective is in line with studies that view moderation not only as a social practice, but also as an integration of normative commitment and spiritual depth (Chotimah et al., 2025; Fadil et al., 2024; Hayat et al., 2025; Mahfudz & Yuspiani, 2023; Qorib & Umiarso, 2025; Rusmana et al., 2025; Syarif, 2021). *Syariat* is understood as a normative structure that must be upheld consistently, while *hakikat* functions as the spirit that animates worship through sincerity, empathy, patience, and moral awareness (Prinz, 2004; Witvliet, 2015). Therefore, this study proceeds from the assumption that *al-Qaul al-Bayān* can demonstrate how the integration of *syariat* and *hakikat* is constructed as the foundation of religious moderation (Rasuli, 1929; Shihab, 2002).

Furthermore, this tafsir shows that the value of moderation does not emerge from conceptual abstraction or ideological compromise, but from a reading of the Qur'an that is sensitive to the inner condition of human beings while remaining firm in maintaining the principles of *syariat* (Al-Aghbari, 2024; Rusmana et al., 2025; Syarif, 2021; Yabi et al., 2014). The surahs of Juz 'Amma are interpreted not merely as doctrines of faith, but as moral and spiritual maps that guide human beings so that they do not fall into pseudo-piety, namely worship that is outwardly valid but inwardly empty, or spirituality that appears profound but is detached from legal and social responsibility (Al-Qurtubi, 1427; Kulinich, 2022; Lahna, 2020; Sardar, 2022). It is at this point that Inyiah Canduang's tafsir presents the face of *wasathiyyah* as a straight path that demands integration, rather than dichotomy, between *syariat* and *hakikat*.

Studies on religious moderation (*wasathiyyah*) in recent years have developed along several major directions. Moderation is widely understood as a socio-religious practice aimed at strengthening tolerance, social harmony, and interreligious relations in plural societies (Helmy et al., 2021). Other studies associate it with local culture and national life, especially in relation to how Islamic values interact with local traditions to shape an inclusive form of religiosity (Fuadi et al., 2024; Thohir & Lukluk Atsmara Anjaina, 2022). In the field of education, moderation has been examined through *pesantren*, *madrasah*, and the formation of open and tolerant religious character (Chotimah et al., 2025; Qorib & Umiarso, 2025; Rusmana et al., 2025). Meanwhile, studies linking moderation with the Qur'an and tafsir have begun to emphasize *wasathiyyah* as a Qur'anic principle that teaches balance, justice, and the rejection of extremism (Al-Aghbari, 2024; Ichsan et al., 2024; Shihab, 2002).

Nevertheless, these studies generally still position religious moderation as a social, educational, cultural, or normative religious value. Few studies have traced how moderation is constructed directly through Qur'anic exegetical narratives, particularly within the Tafsir Nusantara tradition. More specifically, no study has yet been found that makes Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli the main basis for formulating the concept of religious moderation through an analysis of its Arabic-Malay narrative. In fact, it is precisely through this exegetical narrative that one can see how the dimensions of *syariat* and *hakikat* are systematically integrated in constructing a holistic concept of religiosity. This gap constitutes the focus of the present study, namely to examine how Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli formulates the concept of religious moderation through the integration of *syariat* and *hakikat* in his interpretation of Juz 30, and how this construction reflects the distinctive *wasathiyyah* orientation of Nusantara ulama, which remains relevant for addressing contemporary religious challenges.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative-descriptive approach (Creswell, 2009) using a library research method that focuses on the textual analysis of Qur'anic tafsir. The primary data source of this study is Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli (Inyik Canduang), with the units of analysis consisting of eight surahs in Juz 30, namely al-Bayyinah, al-Kāfirūn, al-Mā'ūn, al-'Aṣr, al-Balad, aḍ-Ḍuḥā, at-Tīn, and al-Insyirāḥ (Rasuli, 1929). These surahs were selected purposively because they contain exegetical narratives that explicitly represent the concept of religious moderation (Al-Qurtubi, 1427; Shihab, 2002; Thabary, 1415) through the balance between the dimensions of *syariat* (outward-normative) and *hakikat* (inner-spiritual). As part of the research process, direct transcription was carried out on the Arabic-Malay manuscript of Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān in the sections of the verses analyzed, in order to preserve the authenticity of the exegetical language and the accuracy of meaning.

Research Target/Subject

The primary objective of this study is to examine how the concept of religious moderation is explicitly represented through the harmonious balance between the dimensions of *syariat* and *hakikat* within a traditional regional exegesis. The research targets the systematic textual breakdown of eight specific structural units of analysis to reveal localized patterns of balanced thinking. By investigating these targets, the study aims to demonstrate that *wasathiyyah* does not mean compromising foundational creed (*aqidah*), but rather represents a unified set of values that blends external legal adherence with deep internal spirituality and active social responsibility.

The primary data source of this study is *Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān* written by the prominent Minangkabau scholar Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli, also known as Inyiah Canduang (Rasuli, 1929). The specific units of analysis consist of eight selected surahs in Juz 30: Surah al-Bayyinah, Surah al-Kāfirūn, Surah al-Mā’ūn, Surah al-’Aṣr, Surah al-Balad, Surah al-Ḍuḥā, Surah al-Tīn, Surah al-Insyirāḥ. These surahs were selected purposively because they contain exegetical narratives that explicitly represent foundational indicators of religious moderation through the balanced lens of outward-normative and inner-spiritual dimensions.

Research Procedure

The operational workflow was executed across several systematic phases, beginning with locating and securing the authentic Arabic-Malay text of *Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān*. The second phase involved performing direct, meticulous transcription of the selected manuscript sections into modern typography to preserve the exact phonological and semantic value of the original exegetical language. In the third phase, textual extraction was performed on the targeted verses, parsing out the specific commentaries where *syariat* and *hakikat* intersect. The final phase focused on mapping these text extractions against standard parameters of religious moderation and synthesizing the data into a comprehensive thematic structure.

Instruments, and Data Collection Techniques

The primary data collection technique used in this study is documentary library research accompanied by systematic direct textual transcription. The main research instrument is a structured textual collection matrix designed to categorize the translated meanings, linguistic nuances, and localized idioms used by Inyiah Canduang. The data collection focused strictly on the original 1929 manuscript text corresponding to the eight targeted surahs. To ensure data validity and accountability, the collection incorporates source triangulation by juxtaposing Inyiah Canduang’s commentary directly against authoritative classical and contemporary reference works, specifically the standard tafsir text of Ibn Jarir at-Thabari (Thabary, 1415), Al-Qurtubi (Al-Qurtubi, 1427), and M. Quraish Shihab (Shihab, 2002).

Data Analysis Technique

The data were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach through several stages: identifying key verses, classifying themes of religious moderation, and interpreting the Arabic-Malay narratives to reveal patterns of balance between *syariat* and *hakikat*. The analytical framework positions religious moderation as a harmonious integration of firmness in religious law, spiritual depth, and social responsibility. Thus, *wasathiyyah* is not understood as a compromise of creed, but as a unified and holistic set of values. To ensure data validity, this study applies source triangulation by comparing Inyiah Canduang’s interpretation with authoritative classical and contemporary tafsir works, such as the tafsir of (Al-Qurtubi, 1427; Shihab, 2002; Thabary, 1415), so that the resulting analysis is contextual, consistent, and academically accountable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of eight surahs in *Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, this study finds that religious moderation, according to Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli (Inyiah Canduang), is not understood as a compromise of religious teachings or a neutral stance toward religious truth, but rather as a harmonious integration between the dimensions of *syariat* (outward aspects) and *hakikat* (inner aspects). Moderation (*wasathiyyah*) emerges when religion is practiced holistically: firmly grounded in principles, animated by sincerity, and manifested in social responsibility. Conceptually, the findings from the eight surahs form four main pillars of religious moderation in Inyiah Canduang’s *tafsir*.

Moderation in Creed: Firmness in Tauhid Without Extremism

Religious moderation in the dimension of creed is clearly reflected in Surah al-Bayyinah and al-Kāfirūn. Inyik Canduang emphasizes that tauhid is a principle that cannot be compromised. In Surah al-Bayyinah, the upright religion (dīn al-qayyimah) is defined as servitude to Allah with sincerity, manifested through prayer and zakat. Sincerity is positioned as the inner essence (hakikat), while ritual worship serves as the outward expression (syariat). In Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān, Surah al-Bayyinah becomes one of the strongest representations of how Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli (Inyik Canduang) understands religion in a balanced manner between the outward dimension (syariat) and the inward dimension (hakikat). In his interpretation of the first verse, “Lam yakun alladzīna kafarū min ahlil-kitābi wal-musyrikīn munfakkīna ḥattā ta’tiyahumul-bayyinah,” he explains that the People of the Book and the polytheists would not abandon their disbelief until the coming of the bayyinah, namely Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

In the original narrative, it is stated that “tiada akan berhenti mereka itu daripada kufur mereka itu melainkan sudah datang kepada mereka itu bayyinah Muhammad ﷺ.” It is further emphasized that some of them had already known the signs of the Prophet’s messengership from earlier scriptures, yet remained unwilling to believe. This explanation demonstrates a moderate exegetical attitude in assessing the religiosity of others, because Inyik Canduang does not immediately interpret disbelief as merely the absence of knowledge, but rather as a matter of inner disposition and moral choice. This approach reflects epistemological moderation, namely caution in making religious judgments without ignoring the inner context of human beings. Thus, Surah al-Bayyinah shows that religious moderation is not a compromising attitude toward doctrine, but an effort to keep religion upright (al-qayyimah) by harmoniously uniting syariat and hakikat. Inyik Canduang’s tafsir presents Islam as a religion that is firm in principle yet gentle in approach; disciplined in law yet animated by sincerity. This is a form of wasathiyyah that is deeply rooted in the exegetical tradition of Nusantara ulama.

In Surah al-Kāfirūn, moderation in creed appears in the firm rejection of the mixing of worship, while at the same time acknowledging the reality of religious difference through the verse lakum dīnukum wa liya dīn. Inyik Canduang’s interpretation affirms that this verse does not teach relativism, but rather an honest and sincere separation of creed without social hostility. Therefore, religious moderation does not mean weakening tauhid, but preserving its purity in a proportional and civilized manner. Tauhid is firmly maintained at the level of syariat, while the inner attitude remains honest, sincere, and non-aggressive at the level of hakikat. Surah al-Kāfirūn is understood by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli (Inyik Canduang) as an affirmation of religious moderation that balances firmness in syariat and purity in hakikat. This surah was revealed in response to an offer of creedal compromise from the leaders of Quraysh, who proposed the mixing of worship. Surah al-Kāfirūn was revealed as a firm rejection of tauhid syncretism, showing that religious moderation is not identical with creedal compromise, but with the honest and consistent safeguarding of the principles of faith.

The affirmation of creedal boundaries is evident from the first verse, “Qul yā ayyuhal-kāfirūn,” which Inyik Canduang interprets as a command for the Prophet to express his position clearly yet proportionally. In his tafsir, he states, “katakan olehmu ya Muhammad hai mana orang kafir, sekali-kali tidak aku akan menyembah akan apa yang kamu sembah.” This narrative emphasizes the dimension of syariat, namely the clarity of tauhid that must not be compromised, yet it is conveyed through a declaration of faith rather than coercion or violence. The balance between syariat and hakikat is further emphasized through the repetition of the subsequent verses as a form of affirmation. Differences in outward practice (syariat) are understood as being rooted in differences in inner belief (hakikat), so religion cannot be formally unified without unity of faith.

The culmination of the concept of wasathiyyah appears in the closing verse, “Lakum dīnukum wa liya dīn.” Inyiah Canduang affirms: “Arti-nya: bagi kamu agama kamu dan bagi aku agama aku. Maknanya” He adds that this verse means “ancaman dan pernyataan berl bagi kafir kamu dan bagi aku ikhlas aku bermula maksud ini ayat tahdid-pertakut sebelum turun suruh dengan perang sabilillah”. This quotation demonstrates a clear balance between syariat as the firm separation of creed and hakikat as sincerity in worship, while also showing that firmness in faith does not have to be expressed through social hostility. Thus, Surah al-Kāfirūn in Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān presents religious moderation as a stance that is firm in the principle of tauhid, yet courteous and proportional in relations with others. This is a character of wasathiyyah that is strongly rooted in the exegetical tradition of Nusantara ulama.

Moderation in Worship: Ritual Animated by Sincerity

The second dimension of religious moderation is reflected in Surah al-Bayyinah, al-Mā’ūn, and al-’Aṣr, which emphasize that worship cannot be regarded as complete if it stops at outward formality. Inyiah Canduang consistently rejects two extremes: ritual worship without sincerity, and spiritual claims without commitment to righteous action. In Surah al-Bayyinah, the concept of moderation that balances syariat and hakikat is most clearly seen in the interpretation of the fifth verse, “Wa mā umirū illā liya’budullāha mukhlisīna lahud-dīna ḥunafā’a wa yuqīmūṣ-ṣalāta wa yu’tūz-zakāh wa dzālika dīnul-qayyimah.” Inyiah Canduang affirms that “tiada disuruh mereka itu melainkan bahwa menyembah mereka itu akan Allah Ta’ālā hal keadaan ikhlas menyatukan ibadat bagi Allah Ta’ālā,... mendirikan sembahyang dan membayarkan zakat.” This statement reveals a balanced structure of religiosity: sincerity is positioned as the inner essence (hakikat), while prayer and zakat function as outward manifestations (syariat).

This tafsir emphasizes that the true religion (dīn al-qayyimah) is not understood merely as outward obedience without inner awareness, nor as inward spirituality without legal commitment. Inyiah Canduang implicitly rejects two extreme tendencies: rigid legalism that loses its spirit, and unrestricted spiritualism detached from the rules of syariat. Furthermore, this tafsir also affirms that the teachings of sincerity, prayer, and zakat had in fact been commanded in the Torah and the Gospel. In the exegetical narrative, it is stated that “Yahudi dan Nasrani tiada disuruh dalam Taurat dan Injil melainkan menyembah Allah dengan ikhlas, sembahyang dan berzakat.” This statement contains a value of moderation in interreligious relations, because Islam is positioned as a continuation and correction of the doctrine of tauhid, rather than as a total rupture from previous revelations. This attitude demonstrates a balance between theological firmness and historical openness, which constitutes a central feature of wasathiyyah in the Tafsir Nusantara tradition.

In the closing verses (QS. al-Bayyinah: 6–8), religious moderation again appears in the balance between faith, righteous action, and inner disposition. Inyiah Canduang interprets believers who perform righteous deeds as the “best of human beings,” while the reward of paradise is granted to those who “fear their Lord.” In his Arabic-Malay tafsir, it is affirmed that “balas mereka itu ialah syurga ‘Adn... dan adalah mereka itu kekal di dalamnya, dan ridha Allah Ta’ālā atas mereka dan ridha mereka itu akan Allah.” Here, it is evident that salvation is not determined merely by formal identity, but by the integration of faith, righteous deeds (syariat), and khashyah, or fear of Allah (hakikat). This balance constitutes the core of religious moderation according to Inyiah Canduang.

In Surah al-Mā’ūn, prayer performed with negligence, ostentation, and without social concern is viewed as a form of denying religion. This tafsir shows that the syariat of worship becomes meaningful only when it is animated by the hakikat of sincerity and empathy. The sharpest critique of immoderate religiosity appears in the verse “Fa wailul lil-muṣallīn alladzīna hum ‘an ṣalātihim sāhūn.” Inyiah Canduang interprets this warning as being directed at those who pray but are heedless. In his Arabic-Malay tafsir, it is emphasized that “bagi orang

yang sembahyang mereka itu, yang mana mereka itu daripada sembahyang lupa, dengan mensia-siakan waktu dan yang seumpamanya.” This is reinforced by his interpretation of the verse “alladzīna hum yurā’ūn wa yamna’ūnal-mā’ūn,” which describes people who perform acts of worship for show, namely “sembahyang mereka itu pada zahir dan meninggalkan mereka itu pada batin ketika sunyi.” This tafsir affirms that religious moderation requires the integration of syariat as the performance of worship and hakikat as sincerity and concern for others, while rejecting pseudo-piety that appears only on the surface.

Surah al-’Aṣr is understood by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli (Inyiak Canduang) as a foundation of religious moderation that emphasizes the balance between faith, righteous action, truth, and patience. In the verse “Innal-insāna lafi khusr,” Inyiak Canduang explains that all human beings are in loss, except those who fulfill the four main elements of religion. In the Arabic-Malay exegetical narrative, it is affirmed that human beings are in loss except “mereka yang iman, mengerjakan akan amalan yang saleh, dan berpitaruh dengan yang sebenarnya serta berpitaruh dengan sabar.” Thus, salvation is not determined by only one aspect of religiosity, but by the harmony between inward and outward dimensions. Religious moderation is clearly seen in the interpretation of the verse “illalladzīna āmanū wa ‘amiluṣ-ṣāliḥāt.” Inyiak Canduang understands faith as an inner conviction that must be proven through righteous deeds. In his Arabic-Malay tafsir, faith is not understood as mere verbal acknowledgment, but must be brought forth through action, so that the hakikat of faith requires the manifestation of syariat in deeds. This tafsir rejects two extremes: inward faith without concrete action, and outward action without a sincere foundation of faith. This balance constitutes the essence of wasathiyyah in religious life.

The dimension of moderation becomes even stronger in the interpretation of “wa tawāṣaw bil-ḥaqq wa tawāṣaw biṣ-ṣabr.” Inyiak Canduang explains that enjoining one another to truth and patience includes “sabar atas mengerjakan taat, sabar daripada maksiat, dan sabar atas bala cobaan daripada Allah Ta’ālā.” This emphasis shows that the communication of truth must not be separated from patience, so religion should not be conveyed harshly, hastily, or coercively. At this point, religious moderation appears as an ethics of dakwah and social life: truth is upheld (syariat), but conveyed with patience and wisdom (hakikat). Thus, Surah al-’Aṣr in Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān presents wasathiyyah as the integration of faith as inner conviction, righteous deeds as the practice of syariat, truth as a value orientation, and patience as an inner disposition. Religious moderation, according to Inyiak Canduang, is not a reduction of religious demands, but the perfection of religiosity through the balance between internal and external, individual and social dimensions.

Social Moderation: Steadfast Faith That Bears Fruit in Humanity

Religious moderation in the social dimension is strongly reflected in Surah al-Mā’ūn, al-Balad, and aḍ-Ḍuḥā. Inyiak Canduang emphasizes that authentic religiosity always gives rise to concern for others, particularly vulnerable groups such as orphans and the poor. Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli (Inyiak Canduang) understands Surah al-Mā’ūn as a fundamental critique of imbalanced religiosity that stops at outward formality. In the opening verse, “A-ra’aita alladzī yukadzdzibu bid-dīn,” Inyiak Canduang affirms that denying religion is not limited to verbal rejection, but is also reflected in one’s way of life and social behavior. In his exegetical narrative, the verse refers to a person who “mendustakan dengan balasan amalan pada hari kiamat, maka zahir pada perangnya tiadalah ia berbuat kebajikan,” so that religion is understood as a unity between inner conviction and the realization of concrete deeds. This tafsir firmly rejects an understanding of faith that stops at formal acknowledgment without ethical implications.

The dimension of moderation is further emphasized in the interpretation of the verses “Fa dzālika alladzī yadu’ul-yaṭīm” and “wa lā yaḥuḍḍu ‘alā ṭa’āmil-miskīn.” Inyiak Canduang explains that those who deny religion are people who harshly repel orphans and do not

encourage feeding the poor. In the Arabic-Malay wording of the tafsir, such a person is described as one who “tiada iyanya memberi makan dan tiada pula menyuruh memberi makan akan miskin, inilah kesada-sadahan orang yang bakhil dan kikir.” This quotation shows that hardness of heart and miserliness are the roots of corrupted religiosity. This tafsir affirms that syariat cannot be separated from the hakikat of empathy and compassion; sound worship must give birth to social concern. Thus, religious moderation is understood as a rejection of ritual extremism that neglects the human dimension.

In Surah al-Balad, the path to salvation is described as ‘aqabah, namely a difficult path of social sacrifice: liberating, feeding, and helping others. Moderation here is not a passive or neutral attitude, but moral courage to take the difficult path for the sake of human values. Inyiah Canduang explains that ‘aqabah is a difficult path to pass through, “...yang melampaui aqabah memerdekakan budak atau memberi makan pada hari kelaparan akan anak yatim yang mempunyai kerabat atau miskin yang mempunyai tanah...” In his tafsir, it is emphasized that passing through ‘aqabah means sacrificing personal interest for the sake of humanity. This tafsir presents a balance between syariat as concrete action in the form of liberation, charity, and social assistance, and hakikat as sincerity and moral courage. Religious moderation in this context is not understood as neutrality or passivity, but as the courage to take the difficult path for the sake of human values.

Based on the narrative constructed in the text, Surah al-Balad is understood by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli (Inyiah Canduang) as an affirmation that upright religiosity always moves within the reality of human struggle, not along a false path of ease. In the verse “Laqad khalaqnā al-insāna fī kabad,” Inyiah Canduang interprets human beings as being created in a state of “...kepayahan dunia dan akhirat yang bermacam-macam seperti segala perasaan dan kesakitan dan keduakaan ...” His Arabic-Malay exegetical narrative affirms that the world is not a place for pleasure without responsibility, but an arena of trial that demands inner awareness and firmness in action. This tafsir shows that religious moderation begins from a realistic attitude: religion does not promise instant ease, but provides direction so that human beings do not fall into the extremes of indulgence or despair.

The balance between syariat and hakikat reaches its culmination in the verse “Ṭsumma kāna mina alladzīna āmanū wa tawāṣaw biṣ-ṣabr wa tawāṣaw bil-marḥamah.” Inyiah Canduang affirms that after performing social deeds, a person must belong to those who believe and who advise one another in patience and compassion. In the Arabic-Malay tafsir, it is stated that patience includes “sabar atas taat dan jauh daripada maksiat dan pitaruh memppitaruhi pula mereka itu dengan kasih kepada makhluk.” This tafsir shows that religious moderation is not only a balance between faith and action, but also between firmness of principle and gentleness of attitude. Thus, Surah al-Balad in Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān presents wasathiyyah as a form of religiosity that is firm in its commitment to faith, active in social deeds, and gentle in human relations.

Surah aḍ-Ḍuḥā completes this dimension through the foundation of the Prophet’s own inner empathy, as he himself had experienced being an orphan and being in need. Social concern therefore arises from the awareness of hakikat, not merely from formal obligation. Upright faith gives birth to concern for others; social syariat is rooted in inner empathy and rahmah. This surah was revealed when revelation had temporarily ceased and the polytheists accused Prophet Muhammad ﷺ of having been abandoned and despised by his Lord. This accusation is refuted through the verse “Mā wadda’aka rabbuka wa mā qalā,” which in the Arabic-Malay tafsir is affirmed as “...tidak meninggalkan akan engkau ya Muhammad Tuhan engkau dan tidak pula marah Tuhan engkau kepada engkau...” This interpretation shows theological moderation in understanding the relationship between human beings and God: the delay of revelation and the difficulties of life are not understood in an extreme manner as signs of divine wrath, but as part of a spiritual trial that demands firmness of faith and tranquility of

hakikat. Thus, faith is not directed toward despair or excessive fear, but toward a balance between hope and patience.

The balance between syariat and hakikat becomes even clearer in the interpretation of the verses “Wa lal-ākhiratu khairul laka minal-ūlā” and “Wa lasawfa yu’ṭika rabbuka fa tardā,” which Inyik Canduang understands as meaning that “... bermula pemberian akhirat lebih baik bagi engkau daripada pemberian dunia... supaya akan memberi akan engkau Tuhan engkau kemudian suka dan ridho engkau...” This tafsir affirms moderation in religious orientation: Islam does not negate worldly life, but places it proportionally under the orientation of the hereafter. This moderation is then realized practically through the ethical verses “Fa ammā al-yatīma falā taqhar” and “Wa ammā as-sā’ila falā tanhar,” which in his tafsir are affirmed as commands that “... akan anak yatim jangan engkau mengerasi atau menghinakan... dan jangan menghardik orang yang meminta karena engkau miskin pula dahulunya...” Here, the syariat of social ethics, namely the protection of orphans and the poor, is integrated with the hakikat of empathy born from the Prophet’s own inner experience. The closing verse, “Wa ammā bini’mati rabbika fa ḥaddith,” is interpreted as the command “... berkhabar dengan nikmat Allah Ta’ālā ialah tersuruh tetapi atas jalan iqrar jangan atas jalan riya’...” which affirms the balance between outward gratitude and inward sincerity.

Psycho-Spiritual Moderation: Inner Tranquility and Consistency in Deeds

The final dimension is reflected in Surah al-Insyirāḥ and at-Tīn, which emphasize the importance of balance between inner tranquility and consistency in righteous deeds. Inyik Canduang begins his understanding of religiosity with the expansion of the breast, the lifting of inner burdens, and the ordering of the soul through faith and knowledge. However, this tranquility does not lead to passivity; rather, human beings are commanded to continue worshipping, praying, and placing their hope solely in Allah. Surah al-Insyirāḥ is interpreted by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli (Inyik Canduang) as a depiction of religious moderation that balances inner tranquility (hakikat) and firmness in action (syariat) in facing the pressures of life and dakwah. In the verse “Alam nashraḥ laka ṣadrak”, Inyik Canduang explains that Allah “mempergikan daripada dada Nabi SAW akan segala yang membimbangkan daripada mendapat ma’rifat yang sebenarnya, dan melapangkan Allah Ta’ālā akan hatinya dengan iman dan ilmu dan hikmah.” This tafsir shows that the way out of hardship does not begin merely with outward action, but with inner spaciousness and clarity of heart. In this view, religion first appears as a process of spiritual ordering before becoming a demand for action.

Furthermore, in the verse “Wa waḍa’nā ‘anka wizrak”, Inyik Canduang interprets the lifting of the Prophet’s burden as liberation from anxiety and spiritual constriction during the period of jahiliyah. Thus, religion does not deny the reality of human psychological burdens, but soothes them through faith. Here, spiritual moderation becomes visible: Islam does not burden the soul with rigid demands, but builds the foundation of inner tranquility as the basis of firmness in faith. The dimension of wasathiyyah becomes even stronger in the interpretation of the verse “Fa inna ma’al-’usri yusrā, inna ma’al-’usri yusrā”, which Inyik Canduang explains as “bahwasanya serta kesukaran ada kemurahan, menolong Allah Ta’ālā akan dua perkataan ta’kīd menguatkan,” as a divine promise amid the pressure of the polytheists. Hardship is not understood as a sign of failed faith, but as a trial that demands inner patience (hakikat) without stopping struggle and worship (syariat).

This balance is reaffirmed in the verse “Fa idzā faraghta fanshab”, which is interpreted as a command that “apabila selesai engkau daripada sembahyang fardu, maka berpayah-payahlah pada mendoa kepada Tuhan engkau,” there by rejecting passivity or the feeling of being sufficient with formal worship alone. Meanwhile, the verse “Wa ilā rabbika farghab” is understood as a command to center one’s hope solely on Allah, as expressed in the Arabic-Malay tafsir: “berhina dirilah engkau kepada Tuhan serta berahi kepada Syurganya dan takut daripada nerakanya.” This expression affirms that inward tauhid—humility, orientation toward

the hereafter, and fear of Allah—becomes the spirit that animates all outward deeds. Thus, Surah al-Insyirāh in Inyiah Canduang's tafsir represents religious moderation as the harmonious integration of inner tranquility, continuity in worship, and purity of tauhid, so that syariat and hakikat are not placed in opposition, but mutually reinforce one another in religious life.

Surah at-Tīn is interpreted by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli (Inyiah Canduang) as an affirmation of religious moderation that begins from the honoring of human dignity and the balance between outward and inward potential. In the verse “Laqad khalaqnā al-insāna fī aḥsani taqwīm”, Inyiah Canduang explains that “Sungguhnyalah telah menjadikan kami akan manusia pada sebaik-baik pendirian –maksud ayat ini menerangkana bahasa kejadian manusia itu yang sebaik-baik pendirian dan sebaik-baikrupa ke atas kepala ke bawah kaki dan mengambil makanan dengan tangan sendiri lagi dihiasi dengan ilmu dan akal dan lain-lain...,” namely that human beings are created in a perfect form, equipped with reason, knowledge, and dignity that distinguish them from other creatures. His exegetical narrative affirms that this perfection indicates the human potential to live religion in a balanced manner, not merely through outward submission, but also through inward awareness. Here, the hakikat of humanity becomes an important foundation for the meaningful practice of syariat.

However, this balance is tested in the following verse, “Tumma radadnāhu asfala sāfilīn.” Inyiah Canduang interprets that human beings may be returned to a lowly state, whether through physical weakness in old age or through moral and intellectual decline. In his tafsir, it is explained that some human beings become “... dha'if2 umur, dengan lemah badan, kurang akal dan lain-lain...,” except those who are protected by faith. This tafsir shows that human dignity is not automatic, but depends on how human beings maintain the balance between outward and inward potential in religious life. The affirmation of moderation is clearly seen in the verse “Illalladzīna āmanū wa ‘amiluṣ-ṣāliḥāt.” Inyiah Canduang explains that believers who perform righteous deeds are not returned to degradation; even in old age, they continue to be granted distinction through intellect, knowledge, and the value of their deeds. In his tafsir, it is stated that “mukmin yang saleh tidak kembali kepada sedhaif2 umur, hanya bertambah tua bertambah pula akalnya dan ilmunya dan disuratkan pula pahala amalan seperti mulanya sekalipun amalannya sudah kurang.”

The narrative above affirms the balance between syariat and hakikat: faith as inward awareness must be manifested in righteous deeds as outward practice, and both become guardians of human dignity. This is further emphasized in the interpretation of the closing verse, “Alaysa Allāhu bi-aḥkamīl-ḥākimīn,” which Inyiah Canduang interprets as an affirmation of Allah's justice as the supreme judge on the Day of Resurrection. In his exegetical narrative, it is emphasized that Allah is the most just in distinguishing between those who deny religion and those who believe. This tafsir places ultimate accountability as the ethical horizon of religiosity, so that human beings are required to maintain the balance of their lives from this world. Thus, Surah at-Tīn in Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān represents wasathiyyah as a form of religiosity that honors human beings, maintains the balance between outward potential (syariat) and inward awareness (hakikat), and rejects extremism that degrades human dignity or ignores moral responsibility.

The findings of this study indicate that religious moderation in *Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān* by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli is constructed as an integral balance between *syariat* and *hakikat*, which operates simultaneously within the domains of creed, worship, social life, and psycho-spiritual life. Moderation is not understood as a compromising or neutral attitude toward theological truth, but as a holistic form of religiosity that is firm in the principles of faith, animated by sincerity, and manifested in social responsibility and inner tranquility. The four dimensions of moderation identified in this study show that extremism emerges when one dimension is excessively emphasized and disconnected from the others. Thus, Inyiah Canduang's *tafsir* presents *wasathiyyah* as an integrative process rooted in a reading of the

Qur'an that is sensitive to the inner condition of human beings while remaining consistent in maintaining the normative discipline of *syariat* (Ibnu Katsir, 1420; Qurtubi, 1427; Rasuli, 1929; Shihab, 2002).

Unlike some previous studies that primarily interpret religious moderation as a socio-political attitude expressed through tolerance, harmony, and social cohesion, this study shows that the main foundation of moderation lies in the internal integration between inward faith and outward action. A number of earlier studies tend to situate *wasathiyyah* within the contexts of public policy, education, or interreligious relations, leaving its spiritual and theological dimensions insufficiently explored (Fuadi et al., 2024; Helmy et al., 2021; Rusmana et al., 2025). The findings of this study complement and, at the same time, correct this tendency by showing that a socially moderate attitude cannot be sustained without a foundational balance between *syariat* and *hakikat* within the individual. Inyiaq Canduang's *tafsir* demonstrates that social moderation is the logical consequence of a religiosity that has matured theologically and spiritually, rather than merely an adaptive strategy in response to plurality (Mahfudz & Yuspiani, 2023; Qorib & Umiarso, 2025; Syarif, 2021).

In addition, the findings of this study differ from studies that position religious moderation as a middle path between legalism and spiritualism in an abstract or normative framework. Several previous studies have discussed the balance between *syariat* and *hakikat* conceptually, but have not traced how this balance is constructed directly through the exegetical narratives of Qur'anic verses (Fadil et al., 2024; Hamzah, 2022; Hayat et al., 2025). This study shows that in *al-Qaul al-Bayān*, such integration does not appear as a theory detached from the text, but as a direct result of the interpretation of verses in Juz 'Amma. Therefore, religious moderation is not positioned as an external idea imposed upon the Qur'an, but as an intrinsic value that emerges from the reading of the revealed text itself (al-Tabari, 1415; Qurtubi, 1427; Rasuli, 1929).

On the other hand, the findings of this study are consistent with studies that emphasize the importance of balance between the normative and ethical dimensions of Islam. A number of previous studies have highlighted that religious extremism often stems from the separation between legal obedience and moral sensitivity (Muis, 2025; Shihab, 2002; Tinambunan et al., 2025). The findings of this study strengthen this argument by providing concrete examples of how such separation is criticized within *Tafsir Nusantara*. However, this study goes further by mapping this balance into four interrelated dimensions of moderation. Thus, moderation is not merely understood as a general ethical attitude, but as a systemic and multilayered structure of religiosity, as reflected in Inyiaq Canduang's interpretation of Juz 'Amma (Ibnu Katsir, 1420; Qurtubi, 1427; Rasuli, 1929).

Another similarity with previous research lies in the affirmation that spirituality detached from social responsibility may give rise to pseudo-piety. Several studies have criticized the tendency of individualistic spiritualism to neglect the dimensions of humanity and social justice (Kulinich, 2022; Lahna, 2020; Sardar, 2022). The findings of this study are in line with this critique, but enrich the discourse by showing that such criticism has long been present in the *Tafsir Nusantara* tradition. Through his interpretation of surahs such as al-Mā'ūn, al-Balad, and ad-Ḍuḥā, Inyiaq Canduang emphasizes that sound worship must bear fruit in empathy, solidarity with vulnerable groups, and moral courage. Thus, religious moderation is understood not only as spiritual balance, but also as an ethical commitment rooted in revelation (Qorbani, 2024; Rasuli, 1929; Shihab, 2002).

Overall, this study makes an important contribution to Qur'anic exegetical studies and the discourse on religious moderation in Indonesia. First, this study enriches the study of *Tafsir Nusantara* by showing that the works of local scholars such as Inyiaq Canduang contain a mature and conceptually relevant framework of *wasathiyyah*. Second, this study offers a model of religious moderation rooted in the integration of *syariat* and *hakikat*, which may serve as a deeper theological reference for contemporary moderation discourse. Third, its practical

implication shows that strengthening religious moderation in Indonesia needs to begin with the cultivation of internal religiosity, namely faith, worship, and spirituality, before being directed toward the social and policy domains. Thus, *Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān* is not only historically valuable, but also strategic in formulating an authentic, contextual, and sustainable model of religious moderation.

CONCLUSION

Religious moderation in *Tafsir al-Qaul al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān* does not appear as an attitude that weakens religious principles, but as a way of being religious that maintains a balance between firmness in syariat and depth in hakikat. Through the interpretation of Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli, religion is understood not only as outward obedience to law, but also as a process of inner cultivation that gives rise to sincerity, patience, empathy, and social responsibility. Therefore, wasathiyyah in this tafsir can be understood as a holistic form of religiosity: firm in tauhid, animated through worship, sensitive to humanity, and calm in facing the trials of life. This study affirms that *Tafsir Nusantara* makes an important contribution to enriching the discourse on contemporary religious moderation, as it offers theological and ethical foundations rooted in local tradition while remaining faithful to Qur’anic values. Accordingly, *al-Qaul al-Bayān* is not only significant as part of the intellectual legacy of Minangkabau ulama, but also relevant as a theological and ethical reference that helps reread religious moderation as a balanced, humane, and Qur’an-rooted form of religiosity.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

Author 4: Formal analysis; Methodology; Writing - original draft.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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