

Managing Qibla Disagreement through Religious Moderation; A Case Study of *Baitul Aman* Mosque, West Sumatra

Hendri Hendri^{1*}, Hairol Anuar bin Mak Din², Ilham Mustafa³, Basri Na'ali⁴

^{1,3,4} Universitas Islam Negeri Sjech M. Djamil Djambek Bukittinggi, Indonesia

² Universiti Islam Selangor, Malaysia

* Corresponding Author, Email: hendri@uinbukittinggi.ac.id

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Abstract

Differences in qibla direction within a Muslim community demonstrate that religious issues involve not only *fiqh* and measurement accuracy but also social dynamics. This study examines how the congregation of *Baitul Aman* Mosque, Balai-Balai Balimbing, West Sumatra, manages differences in qibla direction through religious moderation. This qualitative study employs a case study design. Data were collected through observation, documentation, and interviews with religious leaders, mosque administrators, and congregants. The data were analyzed descriptively using triangulation of sources. The findings reveal that two qibla orientations continue to be practiced following a remeasurement conducted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. While some congregants follow the newly measured direction, others maintain the previous orientation. Nevertheless, these differences have not developed into significant social conflict. Tolerance, fairness, respect for differences, concern for the common good, and respect for local traditions help both groups worship together. The findings indicate that religious moderation can effectively manage differences in *fiqh* and religious practice within Muslim communities.

Keywords: qibla direction, *fiqh* disagreement, religious moderation, qibla remeasurement, congregational harmony

Perbedaan arah kiblat dalam satu komunitas Muslim menunjukkan bahwa persoalan keagamaan tidak hanya berkaitan dengan aspek fikih dan akurasi pengukuran, tetapi juga dengan dinamika sosial dalam masyarakat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana perbedaan arah kiblat dikelola melalui prinsip moderasi beragama pada jamaah Masjid *Baitul Aman*, Balai-Balai Balimbing, Sumatera Barat. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data diperoleh melalui observasi, dokumentasi, dan wawancara dengan tokoh agama, pengurus masjid, serta jamaah. Data dianalisis secara deskriptif melalui triangulasi sumber. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya dua orientasi arah kiblat yang tetap digunakan setelah dilakukan pengukuran ulang oleh Kementerian Agama. Sebagian jamaah mengikuti arah hasil pengukuran baru, sedangkan sebagian lainnya mempertahankan arah sebelumnya. Meskipun demikian, perbedaan tersebut tidak berkembang menjadi konflik sosial yang signifikan. Toleransi, keadilan, penghormatan terhadap perbedaan, kepentingan bersama, dan penghormatan terhadap tradisi menjadi mekanisme yang memungkinkan kedua kelompok tetap beribadah berdampingan. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa moderasi beragama dapat menjadi pendekatan untuk mengelola perbedaan fikih dalam praktik keagamaan masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: arah kiblat, perbedaan fikih, moderasi beragama, pengukuran ulang kiblat, harmoni jamaah

A. Introduction

Determining the qibla is vital to Muslim practice, but measurement discrepancies can cause disagreements within communities. These differences often occur when new astronomical measurements challenge the traditional mosque orientations.¹ One example is *Baitul Aman* Mosque in Balai-Balai Balimbing, West Sumatra, where the same congregation still observes two qibla orientations. After the Ministry of Religious Affairs remeasured the mosque, some members accepted the new direction, while others stuck with the original orientation. Importantly, this disagreement has not led to social conflict, as both groups continue to pray together in the same mosque.²

Previous studies have examined disagreements over qibla direction in several Indonesian communities. Yaqin (2018), for example, examined social conflict following a change in the qibla direction at the *Nurul Iman* Mosque in Klaten and found differences between congregants who accepted the new measurement and those who maintained the previous direction.³ Other studies have examined deviations in qibla direction and community responses to efforts to correct them. Musthafa (2022), for instance, found varied responses among religious figures and communities to qibla corrections in Semarang mosques.⁴ These studies demonstrate that changes in qibla orientation involve not only astronomical considerations but also social, religious, and community dimensions.

Another area of research has explored qibla determination through the lens of religious moderation. Faiz (2020) suggests that while accurately finding the qibla is crucial, its application should also reflect Muslim communities' social context. Religious moderation promotes tolerance, fairness, balance, and respect for religious differences.⁵ However, most previous studies have focused either on conflicts caused by qibla corrections or on the normative value of moderation. Less explored are situations where multiple qibla orientations coexist within a single congregation without significant conflict. The case of *Baitul Aman* Mosque offers a valuable example of how religious differences are negotiated and maintained through moderation.

This study examines how the *Baitul Aman* Mosque congregation manages disputes over qibla direction and the role of religious moderation in this context. It analyzes the responses of

¹ Ahmad Izzuddin, *Ilmu Falak Praktis* (Semarang: Rizki Putra, 2012), 34–37; Slamet Hambali, *Ilmu Falak 1; Penentuan Awal Waktu Shalat Dan Arah Kiblat Seluruh Dunia* (Semarang: Program Pascasarjan IAIN Walisongo Semarang, 2011), 21–22; Nur Hidayatullah et al., “Facing the Ka’bah from Java in the Eighteenth Century: ‘Abd Al-Šamad Al-Fālimbānī’s Thought on the Qibla and Mosque Orientation in the Malay Archipelago,” *Journal of Islamic Law* 7, no. 1 (February 28, 2026): 222–46, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v7i1.4752>.

² Hendri Hendri, “Prayer Room Qibla Direction At School In Bukittinggi; Qibla Study in Junior High School and Senior High Schools Prayer Room,” *Al-Hilal: Journal of Islamic Astronomy* 1, no. 1 (April 30, 2019): 21–36, <https://doi.org/10.21580/al-hilal.2019.1.1.5189>; Busyro Busyro, Fajrul Wadi, and Hendri Hendri, “Deviasi Arah Kiblat Mushalla Spbu Jalur Lintas Padang-Pekanbaru Dalam Tinjauan Pengukuran Arah Kiblat Kontemporer,” *Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Dan Ekonomi* 18, no. 2 (2019): 281–206.

³ Ahmad Ainul Yaqin, “Konflik Sosial Terhadap Perubahan Arah Kiblat Masjid Nurul Iman Balang Karanglo Klaten Selatan,” *Jurnal SMART (Studi Masyarakat, Religi, Dan Tradisi)* 4, no. 1 (June 28, 2018): 51–62, <https://doi.org/10.18784/smart.v4i1.587>.

⁴ Muhammad Alfian Ali Musthofa, “Ragam Pendapat Tokoh Agama Dan Masyarakat Terhadap Upaya Pelurusan Arah Kiblat Masjid-Masjid Kota Semarang” (Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang, 2022), <https://eprints.walisongo.ac.id/id/eprint/18983/>.

⁵ Abd Karim Faiz, “Moderasi Fiqh Penentuan Arah Kiblat: Akurasi Yang Fleksibel,” *JIL: Journal of Islamic Law* 1, no. 1 (February 27, 2020): 83–99, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v1i1.23>.

religious leaders, mosque administrators, and congregants to both traditional and newly determined qibla orientations. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research aims to understand the social and religious factors shaping their reactions to this disagreement. This article argues that having two qibla orientations at *Baitul Aman* Mosque does not necessarily indicate religious conflict. Instead, it shows how differences in *fiqh* and religious customs can be managed with tolerance, fairness, respect for diversity, a focus on the shared good, and respect for local traditions. Religious moderation is presented not only as an ethical goal but also as a practical approach to maintaining harmony among the community despite disagreements. This case study deepens the understanding of religious moderation by illustrating how it helps address differences arising from variations in religious practices and astronomical calculations.

B. Method

This study uses a qualitative case study design to examine how the congregation of *Baitul Aman* Mosque in Balai-Balai Balimbing, West Sumatra, manages differing qibla directions. The mosque was selected because members continue to follow two qibla orientations despite the Ministry of Religious Affairs' remeasurement. The research examines social and religious reactions to this difference, focusing on how the community maintains worship despite conflicting views. Data collection included field observation, documentation, and semi-structured interviews with 14 participants (two religious leaders, two mosque administrators, and ten congregants) selected based on their roles in managing, measuring, or practicing the qibla. Combining these data sources aimed to reveal both practical actions and underlying perspectives in the congregation's response to the qibla disagreement.

The data were analyzed descriptively using source triangulation, comparing interview responses, observations, and relevant documents to identify consistent patterns in the causes of disagreement, congregants' reactions, and mechanisms for maintaining social harmony. The analysis focused on three interconnected aspects: the emergence of different qibla orientations, the responses of groups supporting the new and previous directions, and the values and practices that facilitated their coexistence. The study paid particular attention to expressions and practices related to tolerance, fairness, respect for differences, concern for the common good, and respect for local traditions, as these are key to understanding religious moderation in this case. Rather than viewing the coexistence of two qibla orientations as a sign of religious conflict, the study examined how the community manages disagreement in everyday religious practice. The findings are interpreted within the context of the local congregation and are not intended to be generalized to other mosques or Muslim communities.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Qibla Direction in *Fiqh* and Astronomical Perspectives

Facing the qibla (*istiqbāl al-qiblah*) is an essential requirement of prayer in Islamic jurisprudence. The obligation is grounded in the Qur'anic injunction to turn toward *al-Masjid al-Haram*, particularly in Qur'an 2:144, 2:149, and 2:150. For Muslims living near the Kaaba and able to see it directly, determining the qibla is relatively straightforward. The issue becomes more

complex for Muslims living far from Mecca, where they cannot see the Kaaba directly and must determine its direction by other means. Thus, the concept of qibla involves not merely the physical act of facing a particular direction but also a jurisprudential question about how closely that direction must align with the Kaaba.⁶

One important distinction in this discussion concerns *'ayn al-Ka'bah* and *jihat al-Ka'bah*. The former refers to facing the physical location of the Kaaba, whereas the latter refers to facing its general direction. This distinction has led to different interpretations among Muslim jurists, particularly for Muslims living at considerable distances from Mecca. Some jurists emphasize the necessity of directing oneself toward the Kaaba itself, while others consider facing its general direction sufficient for those who cannot directly see it. These jurisprudential perspectives indicate that qibla determination has historically allowed some interpretive flexibility, especially when geographical distance and limitations in determining direction are taken into account.⁷

From the perspective of Islamic astronomy, the general direction of the Kaaba can now be identified with increasingly accurate methods. Determining the Qibla is fundamentally an astronomical and geographical issue, involving the relative position of a location and the Kaaba on Earth. Modern techniques use astronomical calculations and geographic coordinates to find the qibla azimuth, while various instruments and technological tools help translate this calculated direction into the physical environment. Research in Indonesia on qibla determination highlights the importance of combining astronomical calculations with suitable instruments and technology. However, the accuracy of the result depends not only on the calculation but also on the proper calibration and use of the instruments.⁸

The shift from approximate (*taqrībī*) to more precise (*tahqīqī*) methods influences how qibla determination is practiced. A mosque previously oriented with simpler techniques might show a different direction when re-evaluated using modern astronomical calculations. This difference doesn't necessarily mean the original method lacked religious validity, as early communities worked with the tools and knowledge they had. Conversely, newer, more accurate astronomical methods offer a solid technical foundation for reassessment. Nizam highlights that variances in qibla direction can stem from using traditional approximate techniques, limited astronomical understanding, and the continuation of local customs.⁹

⁶ Hambali, *Ilmu Falak 1; Penentuan Awal Waktu Shalat Dan Arah Kiblat Seluruh Dunia*, 25–26.

⁷ Ahmad Nizam, Romli SA, and Yazwardi Yazwardi, "Divergence in Qibla Direction Determination; A Fiqh-Based Analysis and Its Societal Implementation," *Nurani: Jurnal Kajian Syari'ah Dan Masyarakat* 25, no. 2 (October 12, 2025): 363–76, <https://doi.org/10.19109/nurani.v25i2.27891>; Siti Marhamah and Mahsun Mahsun, "Al-Hilah Al-Shar'iyyah as a Method in Responding to Prayer Problems in Space," *Al-Ahkam* 31, no. 2 (October 31, 2021): 241–58, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ahkam.2021.31.2.9004>; Muhamad Zainal Mawahib, "Metode Pengukuran Arah Kiblat Dengan Segitiga Siku-Siku Dari Bayangan Bulan" (UIN Walisongo Semarang, 2016), 43–49.

⁸ Abdi Samra Caniago and Gadis Arniyati Athar, "Proof of the Accuracy of Calculation of Trigonometric Formulas for Spherical Triangles with Magnetic Declination Correction at Istiwa A'zamin Determining the Direction of the Qibla," *International Journal on Advanced Science, Education, and Religion (IJoASER)* 7, no. 4 (2024): 166–77; Rahman Helmi and Badrian Badrian, "Evaluation of Rashd Al-Qiblah Method Accuracy: Spherical Plane And Ellipsoid Approaches in Qibla Direction Determination," *Indonesian Journal of Religion and Society* 6, no. 2 (2024): 100–112, <https://doi.org/10.36256/ijrs.v6i2.491>; Nurulhuda Ahmad Zaki and Damia Batrisya Hidayatullah, "Analisis Ketepatan Aplikasi Kiblat Dalam Play Store Dan Apple App Store," *Jurnal Fiqh* 22, no. 1 (June 30, 2025): 1–35, <https://doi.org/10.22452/fiqh.vol22no1.1>.

⁹ Nizam, SA, and Yazwardi, "Divergence in Qibla Direction Determination; A Fiqh-Based Analysis and Its Societal Implementation."

The relationship between jurisprudential flexibility and astronomical precision matters especially when a qibla correction affects an established congregation. Recent discussion of qibla tolerance, including the interpretation of Sheikh Muhammad Yasin al-Fadani, illustrates that classical Islamic jurisprudence contains considerations of practical tolerance in situations where precise alignment is difficult to achieve. At the same time, such flexibility should not be understood as eliminating the importance of accuracy.¹⁰ Rather, the development of astronomical knowledge can be understood as an effort to improve qibla determination while recognizing the jurisprudential and social circumstances in which Muslims practice their worship. This combination of jurisprudential consideration, astronomical accuracy, and social context provides an appropriate foundation for examining the emergence of different qibla orientations at *Baitul Aman Mosque*.

2. Historical Context and the Evolution of Qibla Determination at *Baitul Aman Mosque*

The history of *Baitul Aman Mosque* is closely tied to the historical and religious development of Nagari Balimbing, West Sumatra. According to accounts preserved within the local community, the mosque was established in 1638 and has long served as an important religious center for the surrounding community. Its history is also linked to the local narrative of Angku Keramat, a respected religious figure whose story has been passed down through generations. Although this traditional narrative forms an important part of the mosque's historical identity, this study focuses on the development of its qibla orientation and the subsequent changes in its determination.¹¹

In its early days, the *Baitul Aman Mosque's* qibla direction was determined through a straightforward approach. Community sources indicate that the direction was set by using a compass to find west, then aligning the mosque accordingly. Locals widely accepted this method, and it remained in practice for many years. This prolonged acceptance gave the orientation both practical significance and a deep connection to the congregation's religious traditions and collective memory. As a result, many worshippers viewed the existing qibla as integral to the mosque's religious identity.¹²

A change began to emerge in 2010 when three community figures initiated a reassessment of the mosque's qibla direction: Safani Yusuf Angku Sutan Pakiah, a retired official of the Sawahlunto Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), together with Ustaz Darimi and Ustaz Raja'in. Their measurements showed a discrepancy between the mosque's current orientation and the direction considered the qibla based on the new measurements.¹³ They then communicated the results to the congregation and the wider community of Nagari Balimbing. Thus, the issue was no longer simply a technical question about the mosque's orientation; it became a matter involving an established religious practice the community had followed for decades.

¹⁰ Nur Mahmudi Qiromi, Ahmad Izzuddin, and M. Basthoni, "An Analysis of Qibla Direction Tolerance According to Sheikh Muhammad Yasin Al-Fadani: A Solution to Qibla Deviation," *Astroislamica: Journal of Islamic Astronomy* 5, no. 1 (2026): 49–70, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.47766/astroislamica.v5i1.6223>.

¹¹ Zulfa Edius, "History of Baitul Amal Mosque and Its Qibla Direction," 2025.

¹² Septa Defrianto, "History of Baitul Amal Mosque and Its Qibla Direction," 2025.

¹³ Sy Dt Rajo Mangkuto, "History of Baitul Amal Mosque and Its Qibla Direction," 2024.

The dissemination of the new measurement generated different responses within the community. One response came from traditional leader Sy. Sutan Peto, who questioned the process because traditional leaders and younger community members had not been involved in the measurement. At the same time, some worshippers accepted the new direction because the measurement was conducted by individuals they considered competent, including a retired KUA official and local religious scholars. Others, however, continued to trust the existing orientation and questioned the need to change a direction followed by previous generations.¹⁴ The disagreement subsequently became visible during congregational prayer, with the majority continuing to face the old direction while a smaller group, including the individuals involved in the measurement, faced the newly measured direction.

The disagreement subsequently attracted the attention of several institutions and community actors, including the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Tanah Datar, the KUA of Rambatan Subdistrict, the Nagari administration, and local religious leaders. In 2012, the Ministry of Religious Affairs conducted another qibla measurement at *Baitul Aman* Mosque.¹⁵ After this measurement, the congregation temporarily adopted the direction determined by the Ministry, creating a period when the community appeared to have reached a common orientation. However, according to the mosque administrator, this arrangement lasted for approximately one month. Afterward, some worshippers returned to the original orientation, while others continued to follow the newly measured direction. Consequently, the present situation at *Baitul Aman* Mosque reflects not the complete replacement of one qibla direction by another, but the continued coexistence of two orientations within the same congregation.¹⁶

3. The Emergence of Qibla Disagreement and Community Responses

The emergence of different qibla orientations at *Baitul Aman* Mosque cannot be understood merely as a disagreement over the technical accuracy of qibla measurement. The 2010 remeasurement introduced a new reference for determining the qibla, while the existing orientation had been used for decades. The new measurement therefore challenged not only the mosque's established physical orientation but also a religious practice that had become familiar and socially accepted. The disagreement arose when some members considered the newly measured direction more reliable, whereas others continued to regard the existing direction as valid.

The first group accepted the newly measured direction primarily because the measurement was conducted by individuals they considered competent. The involvement of a retired KUA official and local religious scholars lent the new direction institutional and religious credibility. From this perspective, the remeasurement was understood as an effort to improve qibla determination rather than as a rejection of previous religious practice. The second group, however, maintained the existing direction. Their position was closely tied to their confidence in the qibla orientation practiced by previous generations. Thus, the disagreement centered on different sources of religious authority: one side placed greater confidence in contemporary measurement

¹⁴ Defrianto, "History of Baitul Amal Mosque and Its Qibla Direction."

¹⁵ Khairuddin Khairuddin, "History of Baitul Amal Mosque and Its Qibla Direction," 2025.

¹⁶ Sy Peto Malano, "History of Baitul Amal Mosque and Its Qibla Direction," 2025.

and the measurers' competence, while the other attached greater significance to established practice and the authority of earlier scholars.

The disagreement was also shaped by how the new measurement was introduced. Sy. Sutan Peto, a traditional leader, criticized the measurement because traditional leaders and young people had not been involved in the process. This criticism indicates that acceptance of a new qibla direction was not determined solely by the measurement's technical result. The community also valued the legitimacy of the process itself. The lack of broader participation contributed to the initial meeting's failure to reach an agreement. Consequently, the qibla issue became a matter of negotiation between technical or institutional authority on the one hand and local social and religious authority on the other.

The difference in responses became apparent during congregational prayer. Most worshippers continued to face the existing qibla, while a smaller number, including those who had conducted the measurement, faced the newly measured direction. The disagreement thus became physically visible within a single prayer space. Nevertheless, the available evidence indicates that the disagreement did not escalate into a major or prolonged social conflict. Various actors – including the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Tanah Datar, the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) of Rambatan, Nagari authorities, and religious leaders– were involved in efforts to address the issue. This involvement shows that the qibla disagreement was treated as a communal matter requiring dialogue and accommodation, rather than as a question in which one side had to defeat the other.

Table 1. The pattern of responses

Aspect	Group Supporting New Direction	Group Maintaining Existing Direction
Primary basis	Newly measured qibla direction	Established qibla orientation
Source of confidence	Competence of the measurers, including a retired KUA official and religious scholars	Long-established religious practice and inherited orientation
Response to remeasurement	Accepted the newly measured direction	Continued using the existing direction
Underlying consideration	Reliance on contemporary measurement	Continuity of established practice
Manifestation in prayer	Faced the newly measured direction	Faced the existing direction

The coexistence of these two responses matters because it shows that disagreement over the qibla did not necessarily dissolve congregational relations. Rather, the case demonstrates that different understandings could persist within the same religious community. The 2012 remeasurement by the Ministry of Religious Affairs temporarily brought the congregation together in following the measured direction, but, according to the mosque's head, this lasted only about one month before different orientations re-emerged. Some worshippers continued to face the measured direction, while others followed the existing mosque carpet. This situation provides the empirical basis for the next discussion: how can two different religious orientations persist within one congregation without producing significant division?

4. Coexistence and Negotiation of Different Qibla Orientations

The different responses described in the previous section did not ultimately lead to the separation of the congregation of *Baitul Aman* Mosque. Although some worshippers continued to follow the existing qibla direction and others followed the newly measured direction, both groups continued to participate in the same mosque community. The coexistence of the two orientations indicates that the congregation did not resolve the disagreement by forcing one interpretation to replace the other. Instead, the congregation gradually accommodated the difference within its existing social relations. The mosque thus became a space in which disagreement over a religious practice could persist without necessarily becoming a source of permanent social division.

This accommodation is evident in the way worshippers were permitted to face the qibla according to their own understanding. The available evidence shows that some congregants faced the direction determined by the Ministry of Religious Affairs measurement, while others continued to face the direction indicated by the existing mosque carpet. Rather than requiring all worshippers to adopt a single orientation, the community allowed both practices to continue. Such an arrangement does not necessarily mean that the congregation regarded the two orientations as technically identical. Rather, it reflects a distinction between disagreement over religious judgment and the maintenance of communal relations. The congregation preserved its collective religious space even though its members did not reach complete agreement on the qibla direction.

The process of accommodation was also supported by the involvement of various community and religious authorities. Following the emergence of disagreement, the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Tanah Datar, KUA Rambatan, Nagari authorities, and religious leaders became involved in efforts to address the issue. Their involvement suggests that the disagreement was not left entirely to individual confrontation between the two groups. Instead, it was brought into a broader communal process involving religious, institutional, and local authorities. The subsequent remeasurement conducted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2012 temporarily produced a common practice, as the congregation followed the measured direction for approximately one month. Although the earlier pattern eventually returned, the process illustrates that negotiation and institutional involvement were part of the community's effort to manage the disagreement.

An important feature of this coexistence is the absence of coercion. The congregation did not permanently impose the newly measured direction on those who continued to follow the existing orientation, nor did those maintaining the old direction prevent others from following the new one. This arrangement created space for individual religious conviction while preserving the mosque as a shared place of worship. In this sense, coexistence should not be interpreted simply as the absence of disagreement. Rather, it is a social mechanism that contains and manages disagreement so it does not undermine the broader relationship among congregants. The manuscript identifies equal accommodation, tolerance, and respect for established tradition as important elements in maintaining this condition.

The case of *Baitul Aman* therefore demonstrates that negotiation does not always culminate in consensus. In this case, the disagreement over the qibla direction remained unresolved, as the congregation did not ultimately adopt a single orientation. Nevertheless, a form of practical agreement emerged: members could maintain different understandings while continuing to worship within the same congregation. This is particularly significant because it shifts the meaning

of resolution from eliminating disagreement to preventing disagreement from becoming social division. The experience of *Baitul Aman* consequently provides an empirical basis for examining religious moderation not merely as a normative ideal but as a practical mechanism for managing differences in religious practice.

5. Religious Moderation as a Mechanism for Congregational Harmony

The coexistence of different qibla orientations at *Baitul Aman* Mosque can be understood through religious moderation. In this case, moderation does not mean eliminating differences in religious interpretation or requiring all congregants to accept a single position. Rather, it is shown in the community's ability to maintain religious practice and social relations despite differences in determining the qibla. The congregation allows worshippers to follow the direction they consider religiously justified, while continuing to recognize the mosque as a shared space of worship. Such an attitude reflects a balance between adherence to religious conviction and the preservation of communal harmony.¹⁷ The case therefore suggests that religious moderation can operate as a practical mechanism for managing *fiqh* disagreement rather than merely as a normative discourse.

One important element of this moderation is fairness. The community does not exclude either group simply because its members follow a different qibla orientation. The community accommodates both positions within the same congregational setting. This matters because a disagreement over religious practice can easily become a struggle for legitimacy, in which one group tries to establish its interpretation as the only acceptable position. At *Baitul Aman*, however, the absence of coercion allows different understandings to remain within the same community. Fairness in this context therefore means providing space for religious conviction while preventing that conviction from becoming a basis for excluding others. This finding is consistent with the broader understanding of moderate Islamic legal reasoning, which emphasizes balance, justice, and tolerance in responding to differences.

The second element is tolerance and respect for established tradition. The existing qibla direction had been practiced for generations and had become embedded in the congregation's religious life. Consequently, changing the physical direction of prayer could not be treated simply as a technical correction detached from the community's historical experience. The willingness to allow some congregants to maintain the existing orientation demonstrates recognition that religious practice is also shaped by collective memory and local tradition. This finding resonates with Nizam et al.'s recent study of qibla discrepancies in Palembang, which found that local traditions, Islamic brotherhood (*ukhūwwah Islāmiyyah*), and social order could prevent differences in qibla orientation from developing into communal division. However, the *Baitul Aman* case extends this discussion by showing that accommodation can occur even when different qibla

¹⁷ Ahmad Musonnif et al., "Religious Moderation in Addressing Qibla Direction Deviation; A Case Study of Al-Munawwar Grand Mosque in Tulungagung, Indonesia," *Al-Hilal: Journal of Islamic Astronomy* 8, no. 1 (April 23, 2026): 13–26, <https://doi.org/10.21580/al-hilal.2026.8.1.28690>; Abdul Mufid, *Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Yusuf Al-Qaradawi; Kajian Interdisipliner Tentang Wacana Penyatuan Hari Raya* (Purwokerto: Pena Persada, 2019); Wahyudi Akmaliah, "The Demise of Moderate Islam; New Media, Contestation, and Reclaiming Religious Authorities," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 10, no. 1 (May 29, 2020): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v10i1.1-24>.

orientations are maintained within the same mosque congregation, rather than merely between different mosques.

The case also highlights the importance of dialogue and the social process of religious decision-making. The criticism raised by the traditional leader because traditional leaders and young people were not involved in the initial measurement demonstrates that technical accuracy alone does not automatically guarantee social acceptance. This finding supports Faiz's argument that qibla determination should consider the social context in which *fiqh* is implemented. It also corresponds with Nizam et al.'s finding that qibla recalibration is more readily accepted when scientific information is presented through participatory and communicative approaches. In the context of *Baitul Aman*, moderation therefore involves not only tolerance after disagreement emerges but also recognizing that introducing religious and astronomical change requires engaging the relevant social actors.

The findings of *Baitul Aman* can also be compared with previous studies that documented more confrontational responses to qibla changes. Yaqin's study of the Nurul Iman Mosque in South Klaten, for example, identified social conflict following changes in qibla orientation, with different groups supporting either the new measurement or the existing direction. In that case, the disagreement was accommodated by establishing a new mosque. Similarly, research on qibla correction in Semarang found divided responses, with groups supporting and rejecting correction efforts. In contrast, the *Baitul Aman* case presents a different pattern: the disagreement remains within one mosque, but the congregation does not separate into different places of worship. This case therefore contributes not simply by documenting qibla disagreement, but by showing how disagreement can be accommodated without requiring institutional or spatial separation.

Taken together, these findings indicate that religious moderation at *Baitul Aman* operates through fairness, tolerance, respect for tradition, dialogue, and the prioritization of congregational harmony.¹⁸ The case confirms Faiz's argument that accuracy in qibla determination should be considered together with the social context of its implementation, while also extending previous studies that have tended to focus on deviation, correction, or conflict. More importantly, the *Baitul Aman* experience shows that religious disagreement need not end in consensus. A community may remain in disagreement while still maintaining shared worship and social cohesion. Religious moderation in this context can therefore be understood as the capacity to manage unresolved *fiqh* differences without transforming them into social division. This constitutes the central contribution of the present study to the discussion of qibla determination and religious moderation.

¹⁸ Hadi Pajarianto, Imam Pribadi, and Puspa Sari, "Tolerance Between Religions Through The Role Of Local Wisdom And Religious Moderation," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (January 1, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i4.7043>; Imam Subchi et al., "Religious Moderation in Indonesian Muslims," *Religions* 13, no. 5 (May 17, 2022): 451, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13050451>; Muh Arif Royyani et al., "Religious Dialogue and Astronomy from the Perspective of Indonesian Muslim Scholars," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 7, no. 1 (March 31, 2023): 261, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v7i1.12406>; Choiriyah Muchtar et al., "Religious Moderation In The Framework Of Life," *International Journal of Islamic Education, Research and Multiculturalism (IJIERM)* 4, no. 2 (November 28, 2022): 135–49, <https://doi.org/10.47006/ijierm.v4i2.142>.

D. Conclusion

This study shows that the coexistence of two qibla orientations at *Baitul Aman Mosque* arose from differing understandings of religious authority, established practice, and the legitimacy of remeasuring the qibla. Some congregants accepted the newly measured direction because they trusted the measurer's competence, while others maintained the existing orientation because of their attachment to long-established religious practice. The disagreement was further shaped by the measurement process, particularly the limited involvement of traditional leaders and younger community members. Nevertheless, the disagreement did not lead to lasting congregational separation. Instead, both orientations continued to be accommodated within the same mosque through tolerance, fairness, respect for tradition, dialogue, and the prioritization of congregational harmony. Compared with previous studies that have often examined qibla discrepancies through the lenses of astronomical accuracy, correction, or social conflict, this case demonstrates that an unresolved *fiqh* disagreement need not require consensus or institutional separation. Religious moderation can instead serve as a practical mechanism for managing disagreement while preserving communal relations.

This study has several limitations. *First*, it examines only one mosque, so its findings cannot be generalized to other communities with differing qibla orientations. *Second*, the study focuses primarily on the socio-religious dimensions of the case and does not provide a comprehensive astronomical assessment of competing qibla orientations based on geographical coordinates, calculation methods, and measurement instruments. *Third*, the analysis relies primarily on the perspectives of congregants and actors directly involved in the history and management of the disagreement. Future research could therefore compare similar cases across different regions and integrate astronomical, *fiqh*, and socio-religious analyses to examine how technical recalibration, religious authority, local tradition, and community participation interact to shape responses to qibla changes.

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