IMPLEMENTATION OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION VALUES IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS HIGHER EDUCATION IN GARUT, WEST JAVA

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the implementation of religious moderation values in Islamic religious higher education in Garut, West Java. The primary focus of the research includes the integration of religious moderation values in the curriculum, the role of lecturers and education staff, student perceptions, as well as obstacles and challenges in implementing these values. Through a qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis at several institutions, including STAI Musadaddiyah, STAI Muhammadiyah Garut, and STAI Siliwangi Garut. The results show that religious moderation is integrated through an Aswaja-based curriculum approach and *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, with lecturers and education personnel playing the role of facilitators in building tolerant and inclusive student characters. The main obstacles come from the influence of conservative ideologies, limited religious understanding among students, and challenges from social media. Strategies to overcome these obstacles include strengthening the curriculum, digital literacy training, and collaboration with external institutions. The findings are expected to make a positive contribution to the formation of a moderate generation that can apply the values of tolerance and inclusiveness in religious and social life.

Keywords: Islamic Higher Education, Religious Moderation, Values

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Introduction

ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS HIGHER EDUCATION (*Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam*/PTKI) has a central role in shaping the intellect, morality, and spirituality of students who will contribute to the

formation of an inclusive and tolerant society.[1] In Garut Regency, West Java, Islamic religious universities function as centers of Islamic character building and guardians of Islamic traditions amid diversity. As an institution that not only teaches religious knowledge but also guides its students to become individuals with integrity and social awareness, PTKI is expected to promote the values of religious moderation.

Religious moderation, as an approach that appreciates differences and encourages tolerance, is relevant in overcoming the challenges of intolerance and radicalism that often arise in society.[2] This concept aims to foster a life attitude that prioritizes social harmony and recognizes diversity. Universities play a strategic role in internalizing these values through curriculum, academic policies, and social activities that promote interfaith and cultural dialogue.[3]

Religious moderation serves not only as a practical approach but also as a theoretical lens to understand how societies can respond to the growing threats of intolerance and radicalism. As a theoretical perspective, religious moderation emphasizes the importance of balance, justice, and tolerance in religious expression, rejecting both extreme liberalism and rigid fundamentalism. It promotes a middle path (*wasatiyyah*) that upholds pluralism, dialogue, and peaceful coexistence. This framework is essential in fostering an inclusive mindset that values social harmony and the recognition of diversity. In this context, universities function as critical agents of change by embedding the values of moderation into curricula, shaping academic policies, and facilitating interfaith and cultural dialogues through campus-based programs. Thus, religious moderation not

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[1] Benny Afwadzi and Miski Miski, "Religious Moderation in Indonesian Higher Educations: Literature Review," *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam* 22, no. 2 (December 2021): 203–31, https://doi.org/10.18860/ua.v22i2.13446.

[2] Rahma Khoirunnnissa, "Urgensi Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama Sebagai Upaya Menangkal Radikalisme Di Kalangan Mahasiswa," *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 2 (2022).

[3] Hapsi Alawi and Muhammad Anas Ma'arif, "Analisis Kebijakan Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam Tinjauan Mendalam Terhadap Implikasi Dan Tantangan," *JRTIE: Journal of Research and Thought on Islamic Education* 4, no. 2 (2021): 214–30.

only guides individual attitudes but also informs institutional strategies in building a more tolerant and cohesive society.

Religious moderation is not only a practical solution but also serves as a theoretical framework in addressing contemporary issues of intolerance and radicalism. As a concept, it emphasizes the values of balance, tolerance, justice, and non-violence in religious life. According to Azyumardi Azra, religious moderation is rooted in the Islamic principle of *wasatiyyah*—a middle path that avoids extremism and promotes peaceful coexistence. He argues that moderation is essential for maintaining national unity in a pluralistic society. Similarly, Muhammad Abduh and Al-Ghazali have historically emphasized the importance of reason (*'aql*) and ethical balance in interpreting religious texts to avoid rigid literalism or excessive liberalism.

From a sociological perspective, Clifford Geertz highlights how religion shapes cultural patterns and identity, suggesting that moderation allows for a more adaptive and dialogic religious experience. Meanwhile, Jalaluddin Rakhmat emphasizes that religious moderation must be grounded in empathy and critical thinking, especially in the context of education.

In this regard, universities serve as strategic institutions for internalizing and transmitting the values of religious moderation. Through curriculum development, inclusive academic policies, and student-centered activities that foster interfaith and intercultural dialogue, campuses can become laboratories of tolerance. The academic environment enables the integration of these theoretical foundations into practical efforts to shape attitudes and behaviors that are open, inclusive, and respectful of diversity.

In Garut, the role of PTKI in implementing religious moderation is becoming increasingly important, especially considering the region's historical background and diverse ideological influences.[4] Higher education institutions in the

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[4] On the recent studies on different aspects of Islamic higher education institutions, see, for example, Tabrani ZA et al., "Pancasila as the Core Value for Character Building in Islamic Higher Education Institutions," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 12, no. 2 (May 2024): 2, https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v12i2.1212; Mustafa A. Rahman, "The Discursive Construction of Strategies for

regency, such as STAI Musadaddiyah, STAI Muhammadiyah, and STAI Siliwangi, possess significant potential for teaching and applying the concept of religious moderation. Accordingly, this study aims to provide a comprehensive view of how these colleges foster a moderate and tolerant generation by addressing a single guiding question: how are the values of religious moderation understood, internalized, and practiced within PTKI in Garut?

This research uses a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of religious moderation values in the Islamic religious higher education. This approach was chosen because it provides flexibility in exploring various aspects related to religious moderation that are complex and contextual, and allows researchers to capture the meaning and patterns of experience and practice in the field. This research was conducted in several Islamic religious higher education institutions, namely STAI Musadaddiyah, STAI Muhammadiyah, and STAI Siliwangi. The selection of this location is based on the important role of religious universities in shaping the character and religious attitudes of students, as well as in supporting the values of religious moderation. The subjects in this study are lecturers, students, and institutional leaders who play an active role in the implementation of religious moderation values on campus. Lecturers are considered key informants related to the curriculum and teaching methods applied; students are the primary recipients of these values, and institutional leaders are policymakers.

In-depth interviews were conducted with 24 lecturers, 315 students, and eight institutional leaders to gain in-depth insights related to their perceptions, experiences, and practices in implementing the value of religious moderation. Participatory observations of researchers taking part in daily activities on campus, such as lectures and religious events, to directly observe the implementation of the value of religious moderation in interactions and academic activities. Documents such as

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Implementing Anti-Corruption Education at State Islamic Higher Educational Institutions," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 10, no. 3 (September 2022): 555–78, https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v10i3.737.

curriculum, institutional policies, and religious programs were analyzed to gain an understanding of how the value of religious moderation is integrated into the academic structure. Data were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, which includes the stages of data collection, compilation, coding, and conclusion. Data triangulation was used to ensure the validity and reliability of the research results through checking information from various sources. With this method, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the implementation of religious moderation values in Islamic religious higher education.

Implementation of Religious Moderation Value in Islamic Higher Education Curriculum

The implementation of religious moderation values in Islamic religious higher education is an important part of building the character of students to have broad, inclusive, and tolerant insights[5]. Some religious higher education institutions, such as STAI Musadaddiyah, STAI Muhammadiyah Garut, and STAI Siliwangi Garut, show significant efforts in implementing these moderation values through curriculum integration and special teaching strategies.

STAI Musadaddiyah began its steps by integrating the value of moderation into core courses such as Islamic studies methodology, kalam science, and Qur'anic studies. The introduction of moderation values extends beyond teaching material to encompass the *Aswaja* (*Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah*) approach. This approach is formulated as an initial foundation for students to be able to think moderately and appreciate differences early on in the learning process. This approach helps students avoid extremism and have a balanced perspective in understanding religious issues.

At STAI Muhammadiyah Garut, the value of religious moderation is implemented in various courses such as PPKN, Al-Islam, and *Kemuhammadiyahan*, as well as behavioral studies and

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[5] Hasni Noor Antasari, "Pendidikan Agama Islam Pada Mahasiswa Perguruan Tinggi Umum Di Banjarmasin," *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 17, no. 2 (2023): 45–55.

organizational culture. The curriculum is structured to explicitly instill the values of religious moderation through discussions that involve students in understanding the importance of tolerance and inclusiveness. One practical approach is the Campus Academic Introduction Program (PBAK), which provides new students with a basic understanding of moderation, laying a strong foundation for developing a tolerant and open attitude towards differences.

STAI Siliwangi Garut instills moderation values by incorporating principles such as tolerance, inclusiveness, and *wasathiyah* attitudes in Islamic studies courses. The curriculum here is designed to teach that Islam is a religion that carries the value of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, which means bringing mercy and goodness to all of nature. This approach aims for students to have a deep understanding of the importance of respecting differences, avoiding extremism, and having sensitivity to diversity. Interfaith and cultural discussions are also included to strengthen the understanding of moderation and encourage students to think critically, so that they can reject ideologies that are not in line with humanitarian and Islamic values.

The implementation of religious moderation values in Islamic higher education is a strategic step in building students who have broad insights, are inclusive, and tolerant of diversity. In the context of Garut Regency, several institutions such as STAI Musadaddiyah, STAI Muhammadiyah Garut, and STAI Siliwangi Garut have shown a commitment to integrating the values of religious moderation into their curriculum. This implementation addresses the challenges of an increasingly complex era, particularly the phenomenon of social polarization, which necessitates the role of higher education institutions, mainly Islamic higher education institutions, in instilling national values and religious moderation.

To strengthen the character of students with the values of religious moderation, institutional policies become the primary foundation[6] . At STAI Musadaddiyah, for example, policies that

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[6] Hilda Ainissyifa et al., "Profile Of Moderate Attitudes Of University Students In East Priangan," *International Journal Of Teaching and Learning (INJOTEL)* 2, no. 3 (2024): 888–900.

support religious moderation are not only contained in the vision and mission of the institution but are also seen in the application of an inclusive curriculum. This is realized in several courses that contain moderate Islamic content, such as the Personality Development Course, which focuses on discussing Islam as a religion of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, a religion that brings mercy to all nature.

On the other hand, STAI Muhammadiyah Garut emphasizes the importance of equipping students with a moderate understanding of the differences in madhabs and thoughts in Islam. This institutional policy is realized through course materials that involve cross-*mazhab* studies, which explain the diversity of scholarly views fairly and without causing hatred or a sense of superiority over a particular school.

The teaching methods used also determine the success of applying religious moderation values. Teaching methods in Islamic religious higher education in Garut, such as at STAI Siliwangi, involve a dialogical approach that allows students to ask questions, speak actively, and share views. Through this method, students are expected to understand and internalize the values of moderation in Islam, both theoretically and practically.

The Role of Lecturers and Education Personnel in Implementing and Promoting the Value of Religious Moderation

Indonesia, as a country with a highly pluralistic society, in terms of ethnicity, culture, and religion, faces complex challenges in maintaining unity. This diversity enriches the nation's identity, but also has the potential to cause conflict if not managed properly. One of the issues that often arises is the difference in views on religious practice, which sometimes causes friction in society. Thus, the concept of religious moderation is needed, which aims to maintain balance in religious life and prevent extremism.[7]

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[7] Benny Afwadzi and Miski Miski, "RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN INDONESIAN HIGHER EDUCATIONS: Literature Review," *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam* 22, no. 2 (2021): 203–31, https://doi.org/10.18860/ua.v22i2.13446.

Religious moderation is a religious attitude and view that prioritizes a middle or moderate attitude, avoiding extremism and radicalism, both in the form of secular radicalism and religious radicalism. Religious moderation encompasses not only the teaching of tolerance between religious communities but also the ability to accept differences within a single religious belief. In this case, universities have an important role as educational institutions that aim to shape the character and mindset of students. Universities act not only as a place to gain knowledge, but also as a place to build a deep understanding of the importance of moderation, tolerance, and openness in diversity. Students educated in the values of religious moderation are expected to become agents of change in society, fostering a more open, tolerant, and peaceful understanding of differences in religion and belief.[8]

This is where the role of lecturers and education personnel becomes crucial. Lecturers and education personnel are not only tasked with delivering academic material, but also as role models who can influence student attitudes and behavior. In Islamic universities such as STAI AL Musaddadiyah, STAI Siliwangi, and STAI Muhammadiyah in Garut Regency, the application and promotion of religious moderation values are more significant. This is because these campuses have students who are predominantly Muslim and have various cultural backgrounds, economies, and diverse religious views. In Indonesia, where society is diverse, campuses play a strategic role in educating students to coexist with others from different religious backgrounds.[9]

STAI Al Musaddadiyah, STAI Siliwangi, and STAI Muhammadiyah in Garut Regency are examples of higher

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[8] Rini Rahman, Murniyetti Murniyetti, and Waway Qodratulloh S, "Pengembangan Nilai Moderasi Beragama Dalam Materi Akidah Pada Perkuliahan Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Universitas Negeri Padang," *Humanika* 23, no. 2 (2023): 211–16, https://doi.org/10.21831/hum.v23i2.65538.

[9] Afifah Mayaningsih, "Peran Dosen Dalam Upaya Penguatan Nilai-Nilai Moderasi Beragama Melalui Konsep Islam Wasathiyah," *Revorma: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemikiran* 3, no. 2 (2023): 25–32, https://doi.org/10.62825/revorma.v3i2.86.

education institutions that focus on Islamic education. These campuses have the potential to be ideal places to implement religious moderation. With the guidance of lecturers and education personnel who understand the importance of moderation, students can be more open and inclusive in viewing differences, not only in the interfaith context, but also in understanding the various views that exist within Islam itself.

By providing space for students to discuss openly and understand each other, lecturers and education personnel can build a campus climate that upholds moderation. This can be achieved through participatory learning approaches, seminars, interfaith dialogues, and opportunities for students to engage in activities with diverse communities.

The case studies in these three universities are particularly relevant to the study of religious moderation due to their unique context in Garut Regency. This district is famous for its socio-cultural diversity, as well as the influence of various Islamic organizations that have different views. In this quite heterogeneous environment, the role of universities is crucial in instilling the values of religious moderation in students.

This research is expected to provide a clear picture of the good practices that have been carried out by the three campuses, as well as a material reflection for other universities in implementing and promoting the value of religious moderation. Thus, this research can make a real contribution in shaping a young generation that is moderate, tolerant, and ready to coexist with differences in a pluralistic society.

An informant from STAI Al-Musadaddiyah, Mr. S explained in an interview conducted on October 16, 2024 :

> "Lecturers have a central role in implementing the value of religious moderation by becoming facilitators in class discussions and student character building. STAI Musadaddiyah does not have rules that restrict students' views, but lecturers direct them to think openly and tolerantly. For example, in dealing with the issue of wearing the veil, lecturers educate students without forcing, but by explaining the social implications of the choice. In addition, the curriculum at STAI Musadaddiyah is built on inclusive principles, with lecturers reminding students to avoid views that are too exclusive or radical".

The chairman of STAI Al-Musaddadiyah Garut explained:

> "Lecturers at STAI Muhammadiyah Garut play an active role in implementing the values of religious moderation by holding discussions in class to introduce this concept to students. The code of ethics for lecturers, students, and education personnel, as well as the Muhammadiyah central leadership guidelines, help in aligning the attitudes and behavior of the entire academic community with the values of religious moderation. This supports the creation of an educational environment that promotes understanding, tolerance, and respect for differences on campus."

An informant from STAI Siliwangi, Mrs. C, explained in an interview conducted on October 17, 2024 :

> "Lecturers play an important role as facilitators in integrating moderation values into learning. In addition, they are also specially trained to explore the concept of religious moderation, so that they can provide the right understanding to students. Some lecturers are active in the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB), which strengthens their role in promoting the values of tolerance and inclusiveness on campus and in the wider community. This experience helps lecturers to teach students in a way that emphasizes diversity of views".

The conclusion regarding the significant influence of lecturers as teachers, mentors, and role models in shaping students' perspectives on moderate religious values is not solely drawn from the interviews with a limited number of informants. Instead, it is supported by a combination of data obtained through questionnaire distribution involving 315 students, as well as in-depth interviews with lecturers, institutional leaders, and education personnel. This mixed-method approach ensures that the findings reflect broader tendencies within the academic community, not just isolated individual perspectives.

Student Perception of the Value of Religious Moderation

Students' understanding of the concept of religious moderation

Students' understanding of the concept of religious moderation may vary depending on their educational background, experiences, and environmental influences. This variation is supported by the results of a questionnaire distributed to 315 student informants, which showed that 55% strongly agreed, 44% agreed, and only 1% responded neutrally to the statement that students' understanding of religious moderation is influenced by

factors such as education, personal experience, and surrounding environment. These findings indicate a broad recognition among students that contextual and individual elements shape their views on moderation. However, in general, the following are some of the main points that illustrate how students understand the concept of religious moderation:[10]

a. Religious Moderation as a Middle and Balanced Attitude

Students generally understand religious moderation as an attitude that is in the middle, not extreme towards excessive liberalism or narrow fanaticism. For them, religious moderation means practicing religious beliefs in a balanced and inclusive way, so as not to harm or judge others. It avoids religious extremism and promotes harmonious living among religious communities.

b. Tolerance and Respect for Differences

Many students see religious moderation as the basis for peaceful and harmonious coexistence with those of different faiths. They understand that religious moderation emphasizes the importance of respecting differences, both religious differences and views within the same religion. [11]

c. The Importance of a Critical Attitude in Understanding Religion

Religious moderation for students also means having a critical attitude and not being easily influenced by understandings or teachings that lead to radicalism. They recognize that not all information received, particularly from social media or the environment, aligns with the principles of religious moderation. Therefore, moderation also involves a deeper and more critical

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[10] Hasan Baharun et al., "Knowledge Sharing Management: Strategy for Improving the Quality of Human Resources," *AL-TANZIM: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 1 (2021): 129–39, https://doi.org/10.33650/al-tanzim.v5i1.1831.

[11] Sasmi Selvia, Munawar Rahmat, and Saepul Anwar, "Tingkat Pemahaman Moderasi Beragama Mahasiswa Di Perguruan Tinggi Umum Dan Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri," *Intizar* 28, no. 1 (2022): 1–9, https://doi.org/10.19109/intizar.v28i1.11667.

understanding of religion so as not to be trapped in teachings or understandings that lead to violence or fanaticism.[12]

Students' attitudes and perceptions towards the implementation of moderate values

Students' perceptions of the value of religious moderation in Islamic Religious Universities can be analyzed through four primary indicators: national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and adaptation to local culture. Each of these indicators illustrates how students perceive and internalize the values of moderation in their campus life and the wider social environment. This categorization is reinforced by the results of a questionnaire distributed to 315 students, in which 55% of respondents strongly agreed, 31% agreed, and 10% responded neutrally to the statement that these four indicators reflect their understanding and experience of religious moderation on campus. These findings confirm that the majority of students acknowledge the relevance of these dimensions in shaping a moderate and inclusive religious attitude. The following is an explanation of each indicator:

a. National Commitment

In Islamic religious universities, students who have a positive perception of religious moderation generally show a high commitment to nationalism. They understand that maintaining the integrity of the country is part of moderate religious values. This perception is reflected in the completion of the research instrument which states that students are proud to be Indonesian citizens, recognize Pancasila as an ideology, support activities in national unity and integrity, respect ethnic and racial differences, support cross-ethnic and religious social activities, recognize the sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia, respect state symbols, state symbols, and the national

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[12] M. Anzaikhan, Fitri Idani, and Muliani Muliani, "Moderasi Beragama Sebagai Pemersatu Bangsa Serta Perannya Dalam Perguruan Tinggi," *Abrahamic Religions: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 3, no. 1 (2023): 17, https://doi.org/10.22373/arj.v3i1.16088.

anthem Indonesia Raya, obey and comply with Indonesian government policies.

b. Tolerance

Students' perceptions of religious moderation in the tolerance indicator can be seen from students' statements who agree to respect differences in religious beliefs, not limiting relationships with friends of different beliefs, respecting worship activities, respecting the opinions of others who have different views, making friends with adherents of other beliefs, believing that diversity in Indonesia gives positive colors to society, and respecting differences among fellow students, both in terms of beliefs, mazhab, and cultural backgrounds. In Islamic Religious Universities, students with moderate perceptions are usually able to interact and discuss with other students without seeing differences as a threat. They have an understanding that Islam teaches mutual respect and that diversity in views is natural and enriches religious understanding. This inclusive attitude shows acceptance of plurality and encourages a harmonious campus atmosphere.

c. Anti-Violence

Students who have a good perception of the value of religious moderation tend to reject all forms of violence in the name of religion, believe that every religion teaches the value of love and peace, reject the practice of suicide bombing in the name of religion, reject an act of violence in defense of religious beliefs, do not commit acts that can disturb peace in carrying out religious activities, avoid violence and prioritize deliberation in dealing with interfaith conflicts. In the environment of Islamic Religious Universities, this perception is reflected in the attitude of avoiding provocative actions, hate speech, or imposing certain views on others. They are more supportive of dialogical approaches, deliberation, and peaceful problem-solving. Students with a strong perception of non-violence are usually also sensitive to the dangers of radicalism and extremism. They can identify and reject actions that are contrary to peaceful Islamic values.

d. Adaptive to Local Culture

In the context of Islamic religious-based universities, students with good religious moderation perceptions generally show an adaptive attitude towards local culture. They understand that local culture can go hand in hand with Islamic teachings as long as it does not conflict with the principles of This attitude shows that students show respect for cultural traditions as long as they do not conflict with religious teachings, appreciate religious activities that have nuances of local cultural traditions, maintain and maintain local cultural traditions that do not conflict with the value of religious harmony, respect the culture of other tribes, utilizing local wisdom traditions for standard progress, supporting local wisdom-based tourist destinations, supporting intercultural and interreligious dialogue for standard progress, and supporting religious values that are integrated in local culture without eliminating the spiritual essence of the ability to appreciate local wisdom, traditions, and cultural practices that become the identity of the surrounding community, thus playing a role in creating a harmonious campus atmosphere with the environment. A positive perception of the value of cultural adaptation also encourages students to contribute to preserving culture and integrating it with religious values.

Overall, students' perceptions of the value of religious moderation through these four indicators show how they understand and practice Islamic teachings that are inclusive, peaceful, and adaptive to Indonesia's social and cultural realities. Islamic Religious Universities are expected to facilitate the strengthening of this perception of religious moderation through their curriculum, organizational activities, and student interactions, thereby preparing students to become agents of moderation who positively influence society.

The influence of religious moderation values on students' religious attitudes

The value of religious moderation has a significant influence on students' religious attitudes. When students internalize the values of moderation, they tend to demonstrate more inclusive, tolerant, and peaceful religious behaviors in their daily lives. This

is supported by the results of a questionnaire administered to 315 student respondents, in which 60% strongly agreed, 39% agreed, and only 1% responded neutrally to the statement that religious moderation positively shapes their religious attitudes. These results indicate a strong correlation between the internalization of moderation values and the formation of constructive and harmonious religious dispositions among students. The following are some of the main influences of the value of religious moderation on students' religious attitudes:

a. Encouraging Tolerance of Differences

The value of religious moderation teaches students to respect differences, both between religions and within one religion. Students who internalize this value tend to be more open and tolerant of religious beliefs or practices that are different from their own. They can respect differences of opinion and do not impose their religious views on others, thus creating a harmonious environment on campus and in the community.[13]

b. Encouraging a Critical Attitude towards Religious Information

The value of religious moderation also affects students' religious attitudes by encouraging them to be critical of the information or religious teachings they receive, especially in today's digital era[14] . Students who understand moderation tend not to accept information that is provocative or leads to extremism. They will be more selective and look for moderate and credible sources of information, thus avoiding the influence of radicalism or deviant teachings.[15]

c. Encouraging Adaptive Attitudes to Local Culture

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[13] Andi Saefulloh Anwar et al., "Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Moderasi Beragama Abad 21 Melalui Media Sosial," *JIIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* 5, no. 8 (2022): 3044–52, https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v5i8.795.

[14] Wildani Hefni, "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Ruang Digital: Studi Pengarusutamaan Moderasi Beragama Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri," *Jurnal Bimas Islam* 13, no. 1 (2020): 1–22, https://doi.org/10.37302/jbi.v13i1.182.

[15] Fira Aulia Aulia and Fathul Arifin, "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Ruang Digital : Studi Harmonisasi Moderasi Beragama Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri," *MODERATIO: Jurnal Moderasi Beragama* 3, no. 2 (2023): 205, https://doi.org/10.32332/moderatio.v3i2.8105.

Religious moderation teaches students to respect local culture as long as it does not conflict with the principles of their religion. This value encourages students to be adaptive to local wisdom and not necessarily reject traditions that are different from their beliefs. This attitude makes it easier for them to interact with people who have different traditions and habits, and helps maintain harmony between religion and culture.[16]

Factors that influence student perceptions of religious moderation

Students' perceptions of religious moderation are influenced by a variety of factors, including their educational environment, social experiences, family influences, and the development of media and information. This statement is supported by the results of a questionnaire involving 315 student respondents, where 59% strongly agreed, 37% agreed, and 4% responded neutrally to the idea that these factors play a significant role in shaping their understanding and attitudes toward religious moderation. These findings highlight the multifaceted nature of student perceptions and the importance of addressing these influences in efforts to strengthen moderation values. Here are some of the main factors that influence their perceptions:

1. Educational Environment and Campus Curriculum

   The curriculum and educational environment in higher education, especially in Islamic Religious Universities, play an important role in shaping students' perceptions of religious moderation. If the values of religious moderation are taught through an inclusive curriculum and critical learning, students will more easily internalize moderate views.

2. Influence of Lecturers and Academic Coaching

   Lecturers who act as educators and mentors also have a significant influence on student perceptions. Lecturers who support open dialogue, respect differences, and apply a moderate approach in delivering religious material can help

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[16] A Fauzan, E Pane, and S Kartika, "Prinsip Moderat Da;Am Penjaminan Mutu Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaa Islam Swasta (PTKIS)(Studi PTKIS Di Provinsi Lampung):(Studi PTKIS Di …," *Jurnal Penjaminan Mutu* 9, no. 2 (2023): 164.

students develop a moderate understanding. Intense interaction and in-depth academic guidance from lecturers will strengthen students' attitudes towards religious moderation values.

3. Influence of Media and Information Technology

Media, especially social media, also play a significant role in shaping students' perceptions of religious moderation. Broad access to information allows students to be exposed to various perspectives, including moderate values, but can also introduce extreme views if not filtered properly. Balanced and educative information from mainstream media and social media can strengthen students' moderate perceptions, while exposure to radical or extreme content can have a negative influence.[17]

Overall, students' perceptions of religious moderation are formed from the interaction of various internal and external factors. The educational environment, the influence of lecturers, social interactions, family, media, and campus policies are interrelated components that influence how students perceive and apply moderation values in their daily lives.[18]

Challenges in Implementing the Value of Religious Moderation and Strategies to Overcome It

Universities play a crucial role in promoting and instilling the values of religious moderation among the younger generation. As centers of education and character development, universities are responsible for producing graduates who not only excel academically but also have a deep understanding of the importance of tolerance and diversity. However, universities face various obstacles, such as ideological polarization among students and limitations in implementing curricula that support religious moderation. These challenges are often compounded by external influences, including the spread of intolerant content through

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[17] Haiyin Lana Lazulfa and Andhita Risko Faristiana, "Strategi Mainstreaming Moderasi Beragama Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Melalui Media Sosial," *Dewantara : Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial Humaniora* 2, no. 1 (2023): 16–33, https://doi.org/10.30640/dewantara.v2i1.606.

[18] Odang Muhyidin, Karman, *Literasi Digital Dan Konten Moderasi Di Media Sosial. Jurnal Teknologi Informasi Dan Sosial Budaya*, 13, no. 1 (2024), https://doi.org/10.33477/jsi.v13i1.6957.

social media and an environment that is less supportive of inclusivity[19]. However, strategies such as the integration of moderation materials into the curriculum, intensive training for lecturers to understand and convey moderation values, as well as the promotion of positive content and interfaith dialogue, can help overcome these challenges. Based on the results of interviews regarding Obstacles and Challenges in the Implementation of Religious Moderation Values, as well as Strategies to Overcome them in Islamic religious colleges (PTKIS) at STAI Siliwangi Garut, STAI Muhammadiyah Garut, and STAI Musadaddiyah, the results are as follows:

The results of interviews at STAI Siliwangi Garut regarding Obstacles and Challenges in Implementing the Value of religious moderation highlight the use of social media. This challenge encompasses the spread of inaccurate information or hoaxes, a lack of digital literacy among students, and cyberbullying, all of which can trigger conflict. To address this issue, STAI Siliwangi provides digital literacy training, creates positive content about moderation, and oversees campus social media activities. These steps are taken to create a healthy social media environment that supports moderation values. To overcome these challenges, STAI Siliwangi has implemented several strategies. One of them is holding digital literacy training for students to improve their ability to sort and understand information circulating on social media. This training aims to enable students to recognize hoax news and avoid spreading content that can damage harmony.

In addition, the campus develops and promotes positive content that supports the values of religious moderation. This content includes articles, videos, and infographics that teach the importance of tolerance, interfaith dialogue, and inclusiveness. With positive content, students are expected to be more actively involved in spreading messages that support social harmony. Another strategic step is the supervision of campus social media

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[19] Shaleh Shaleh et al., "Model Pengawasan Internal Dan Pemberdayaan Untuk Mendorong Penguatan Moderasi Beragama Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Negeri," *EDUKASI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan* 21, no. 2 (2023): 243–54, https://doi.org/10.32729/edukasi.v21i2.1685.

activities. The supervision team is tasked with monitoring interactions on campus digital platforms to ensure that online discussions and activities run well and adhere to the principle of moderation. This supervision also aims to respond quickly if there is potential for conflict or the spread of misinformation. By implementing digital literacy training, positive content development, and social media supervision, STAI Siliwangi hopes to create a healthier environment on social media and support the strengthening of religious moderation values among students. These steps are concrete examples of higher education's efforts to address the challenges of the digital era and promote harmonious living.

The results of interviews at STAI Muhammadiyah Garut reveal that the main challenge in applying religious moderation values is the students' limited understanding of the concept of moderation, mainly due to the influence of their culture or environment. To overcome this obstacle, the campus tries to provide examples of good coexistence between various groups. In addition, humanist discussions between lecturers and students are held on and off campus. STAI Muhammadiyah Garut also plans ongoing cooperation with parties that correlate with religious moderation to support the implementation of this value among students and lecturers.

To address this challenge, the campus employs a strategy that provides real examples of harmonious coexistence among groups with diverse backgrounds. This approach is intended so that students can see firsthand how religious moderation is applied in everyday life. In addition, STAI Muhammadiyah Garut held humanist discussions between lecturers and students, both on and off campus. This kind of discussion aims to build a deeper understanding and appreciate different views constructively. This activity also plays a role in strengthening the relationship between lecturers and students, so that the values of moderation can be understood and applied more personally and directly. As part of a long-term strategy, STAI Muhammadiyah Garut plans ongoing cooperation with external parties who have visions and practices that are in line with religious moderation. This cooperation may include religious institutions, academics, and organizations

committed to the principles of tolerance and harmony. These steps are expected to enrich the insights of students and lecturers, support the process of internalizing the value of religious moderation, and create an inclusive and respectful academic environment.

The main obstacle and challenge faced by STAI Musadaddiyah is the influence of ideological doctrines outside the campus that can influence students. For example, some students carry certain ideological views that are at odds with the campus's moderate approach. Another challenge arises from the limited religious understanding of some students and lecturers, which makes them vulnerable to the influence of radical doctrines. To overcome these obstacles, the campus maintains open discussions and encourages deep understanding through an open approach. The future strategy is to maintain and enrich programs that involve moderate external parties, so that students and lecturers are increasingly exposed to balanced and open views.

To address the primary challenge facing STAI Musadaddiyah, the campus introduced several key strategies to mitigate the impact of external ideological influences on students. First, STAI Musadaddiyah strives to maintain open discussions and create an environment that supports open dialogue. Such discussions allow students to share their views and healthily exchange ideas, while strengthening moderate and inclusive understandings. The Aswaja (Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah) approach is used as the basis for educating students and lecturers to have a deep, balanced, and open understanding of religion. Through consistent teaching and active participation in Aswaja-based activities, students and lecturers are trained to recognize and reject radical doctrines that contradict the principle of moderation.

In addition, the campus's long-term strategy is to enrich programs that involve moderate external parties. By inviting resource persons from religious and academic institutions that have a reputation for moderation, students and lecturers are increasingly exposed to balanced views. These activities include not only seminars and workshops, but also exchanges of study programs and cooperation with religious organizations that share the same vision. These steps are expected to strengthen moderate

religious understanding and create a more inclusive and tolerant academic environment at STAI Musadaddiyah.

The implementation of religious moderation values in higher education plays a vital role in shaping a tolerant and open-minded young generation. However, the implementation of these values is inseparable from various obstacles and challenges faced by higher education institutions. One of the main challenges is the diversity of understanding and background of students, which can lead to different views and interpretations of the concept of religious moderation[20] . Islamic religious universities also face ideological polarization, where there are groups with conservative or radical understandings that can hinder efforts to spread moderate values[21] . The influence of social media also exacerbates the situation by spreading biased information or hoaxes, which reinforce stereotypes and views that are contrary to the principles of moderation[22] . Curriculum limitations that have not fully integrated material on religious moderation and the lack of deep understanding on the part of some lecturers and students add to the complexity of this challenge[23] . Therefore, Islamic religious universities need to adopt comprehensive strategies, such as curriculum revision, lecturer training, promotion of positive content, and cooperation with external parties to create an academic environment that supports moderation and tolerance.[24]

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[20] M Mukhibat, Ainul Nurhidayati Istiqomah, and Nurul Hidayah, "Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama Di Indonesia (Wacana Dan Kebijakan)," *Southeast Asian Journal of Islamic Education Management* 4, no. 1 (August 2023): 73–88, https://doi.org/10.21154/sajiem.v4i1.133.

[21] Agustin Sri Ningsih, Jumiarti Hurairah, and Muji Rahayu, *AL-ABSHOR: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Peran Pendidikan Islam Dalam Melawan Radikalisme Melalui Moderasi Beragama*, 1, no. 3 (2024): 107–16.

[22] Akbar Rizquni Mubarok and Sunarto Sunarto, "Moderasi Beragama Di Era Digital: Tantangan Dan Peluang," *Journal of Islamic Communication Studies (JICoS)* 2, no. 1 (2024): 1–11.

[23] Gerald Theodorus L. Toruan and Nina Ruslinawaty, *Educating Communities Through Media Literacy in Preventing the Spread of Radicalism Content on the Internet*, 439, no. Ticash 2019 (2020): 210–13, https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200515.035.

[24] Ahmad Ruslan et al., "Implementasi Kampus Islami Ramah Ham Dengan Menerapkan Nilai-Nilai Toleransi Dan Solidaritas Di Dunia Pendidikan," *Ar-*

Ideological polarization is also a significant challenge[25]. In the campus environment, differences in views between moderate groups and more conservative or even radical groups can lead to tensions. This polarization can affect campus dynamics and inhibit healthy dialogue about the importance of religious moderation[26]. This condition is often exacerbated by the influence of external ideologies that enter the campus through informal activities or online interactions[27]. The influence of social media has also become a serious challenge in efforts to implement the value of moderation. Inaccurate information or hoaxes circulating on social media can strengthen extreme views and cause prejudice among students[28]. The low level of digital literacy among students makes them more vulnerable to the negative influence of misleading content[29]. In addition, the limited curriculum that has not fully integrated education on religious moderation is another obstacle. Many Islamic religious universities do not have programs that explicitly teach the principles of moderation, tolerance, and interfaith dialogue[30]. The limited understanding of some lecturers and teaching staff also exacerbates the situation, as they may lack the knowledge and skills to convey the teachings of moderation to

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Risalah Media Keislaman Pendidikan Dan Hukum Islam 20, no. 1 (2022): 073, https://doi.org/10.69552/ar-risalah.v20i1.1329.

[25] Ines Lee and Eileen Tipoe, "Education and Ideological Polarisation: Cross-Country Evidence and Recommendations for Higher Education," *British Educational Research Journal*, ahead of print, 2024, https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.4081.

[26] Uswatun Hasanah and Asghar Abbas, "Optimizing Religious Moderation through Progressive Islamic Education: A Philosophical Study," *Tafahus: Jurnal Pengkajian Islam* 3, no. 1 (2023): 98–115, https://doi.org/10.58573/tafahus.v3i1.65.

[27] Wahyu Ihsan, "Pengaruh Afiliasi Organisasi Terhadap Ideologi Perguruan Tinggi Iain Ponorogo," *Prosiding Muktamar Pemikiran Mahasiswa Nasional I* 1, no. 1 (2022): 104–15.

[28] Hamam Burhanuddin and Fahmi Khumaini, "Memperkuat Paham Moderasi Beragama Dalam Menangkal Narasi Kebencian Di Media Sosial," *Ta'allum: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2021): 388–416, https://doi.org/10.21274/taalum.2021.9.2.388-416.

[29] Rudi Ahmad Suryadi, "Implementasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Taklim : Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 20, no. 1 (2022): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.17509/tk.v20i1.43544.

[30] Mukhibat, Nurhidayati Istiqomah, and Hidayah, "Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama Di Indonesia (Wacana Dan Kebijakan)."

students effectively[31] . To overcome these challenges, universities should implement comprehensive strategies, including curriculum development that integrates religious moderation education, digital literacy training for students, enhancing lecturers' competence in teaching moderation concepts, and fostering open dialogue on campus. These efforts are important to shape an academic environment that supports the values of moderation, tolerance, and harmonious living in society.[32]

To overcome the obstacles and challenges in implementing the value of religious moderation in Islamic religious universities, one of the main strategies is to integrate moderation material into the education curriculum[33] . This is important so that students gain a comprehensive understanding of the importance of moderation, tolerance, and interfaith dialogue. With a customized curriculum, students can learn these principles in a structured and in-depth manner. In addition, specialized training for lecturers to improve their competence in teaching the concept of religious moderation is also an essential step[34] . Lecturers who understand the values of moderation act as agents of change in the academic environment, guiding students to be open-minded and tolerant.[35]

In addition to formal learning, universities can strengthen the implementation of moderation values through inclusive discussions and forums. Seminars, workshops, and debates among students involving external resource persons from moderate circles can open up insights and encourage constructive dialogue[36]

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[31] Dzikrul Hakim Tafuzi Mu'iz and Uril Bahruddin, "Formulasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pemikiran Yusuf Al-Qardhawi Sebagai Basis Mewujudkan Masyarakat Madani," *Al-Mubin; Islamic Scientific Journal* 6, no. 1 (2023): 47–57, https://doi.org/10.51192/almubin.v6i01.513.

[32] Toruan and Ruslinawaty, *Educating Communities Through Media Literacy in Preventing the Spread of Radicalism Content on the Internet*.

[33] Suryadi, "Implementasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam."

[34] Afwadzi and Miski, "RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN INDONESIAN HIGHER EDUCATIONS: Literature Review."

[35] Mayaningsih, "Peran Dosen Dalam Upaya Penguatan Nilai-Nilai Moderasi Beragama Melalui Konsep Islam Wasathiyah."

[36] Toruan and Ruslinawaty, *Educating Communities Through Media Literacy in Preventing the Spread of Radicalism Content on the Internet*.

. These activities help students to understand different views better and strengthen healthy discussion skills. In today's digital era, digital literacy is one of the important aspects that needs to be improved.[37]

Strong institutional support is also crucial in supporting these strategies. In addition, cooperation with external parties such as religious organizations, government agencies, and NGOs that focus on moderation can strengthen campus efforts in promoting these values. With these strategies, Islamic religious colleges can create an inclusive academic environment conducive to learning that values diversity and supports social harmony.[38]

Conclusion

The implementation of religious moderation values in Islamic religious universities in Garut Regency has been running well through a curriculum that is oriented towards inclusive and tolerant values. Lecturers and education personnel play an important role in promoting moderation values, with results showing positive perceptions from students. However, there are challenges from the influence of conservative ideologies and social media that need to be continuously addressed. Strategies implemented to overcome these obstacles, such as curriculum strengthening and digital literacy training, are expected to strengthen the implementation of moderation values in the future.

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[38] Mubarok and Sunarto, "Moderasi Beragama Di Era Digital: Tantangan Dan Peluang."

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