



# The Role of Student College in Moderating Religious Science in the Digital Era

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** In the digital era, the rapid spread of religious content through online platforms presents both opportunities and challenges for maintaining religious harmony. The need for moderate, inclusive, and contextual religious understanding has become increasingly urgent, especially among younger generations. **Objective:** This study aims to explore the role of university students in moderating religious knowledge in the digital era. **Method:** This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature review method. Data were collected from various written sources such as books, scientific journals, articles, and relevant online sources. Data were analyzed using the content analysis method, which included data reduction, data presentation, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. **Result:** The results showed that students play a strategic role in moderating religious knowledge through social media engagement, dissemination of positive and educational religious content, formation of online interfaith communities, and collaboration with religious leaders and academics to promote religious moderation. **Conclusion:** University students have significant potential as agents of religious moderation in the digital era, using their digital literacy and social influence to counteract radical narratives and foster inclusive dialogue. **Contribution:** This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the proactive role of the younger generation, particularly university students, in maintaining religious harmony and promoting moderate religious discourse in the digital landscape.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In terms of religion, moderation is defined as a perspective, attitude, and behavior that always takes a position in the middle of the existing extreme options. Conversely, extremism is defined as a perspective, attitude, and behavior that exceeds the limits of moderation in religious understanding and practice (Zulkarnain, 2023). Therefore, moderation is defined as a perspective, attitude, and behavior that always takes a position in the middle of the extreme options. Actually, religious moderation is very important to create tolerance and harmony around the world, both at the local, national, and international levels (Nuriyati et al., 2023). To maintain balance, people should choose moderation by avoiding religious extremism and liberalism.

One of the characteristics of a plural society is religious diversity (Pabbajah et al., 2021). Along with technological advances and digital connectivity, new challenges arise to accept differences in beliefs. As agents of change, students have the task of understanding religious heritage and building relationships between different religious understandings (Casram, 2016). In this context, students understand thoroughly and show an inclusive attitude to dealing with the dynamics of diversity in the midst of widespread digital information flows. Students have the opportunity to create diverse stories that encourage constructive discussions as the vanguard of young intellectuals.

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Students have an important role in community empowerment and religious moderation, especially through community service activities. Kuliah Kerja Nyata is an intra-curricular course that must be taken by every undergraduate student in Indonesia, as an implementation of the General Education Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003. Real Work Lectures combine the application of higher education with the method of providing work experience and learning to students in community empowerment activities and religious moderation. In a study conducted by Harahap et al (2023). Students of the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU) in Pandan Village, Pandan District, Central Tapanuli Regency, community service activities are directed to help resolve conflicts that arise in the community. Students involved in community service not only study on campus but also play an active role in campus organizations and various social activities. They contribute not only to themselves but also to the community, nation, and state. Students have unique potential and strength as the next generation of the nation, and their role cannot be underestimated. Through community service, students can make a real contribution to social life, help solve problems faced by the community, and strengthen the skills and knowledge of the local community.

Community empowerment as an alternative development strategy aims to overcome the problems faced by the community (Harahap et al., 2023). This empowerment process involves several approaches, including: creating an atmosphere that allows the community to develop, strengthening community knowledge and skills, protecting the weak from exploitation, providing support so that the community can fulfill its responsibilities, and maintaining a balance in the distribution of resources. In addition, community service students also play a role in religious moderation by encouraging moderate attitudes toward religion, avoiding extremism, and promoting interfaith tolerance. Students in Pandan Village also contribute to education, health, and the economy. They help improve educational facilities, such as erecting fences and decorations at schools, and provide souvenirs in the form of certificates. In the health sector, they developed a living pharmacy by planting healthy plants and attending the “Rembuk Stunting” seminar. In the economic field, the students conducted a survey of the local community’s professions and contributed to marketing the fishermen’s catch. Thus, the role of students in the Community Service Program is very significant in empowering the community and promoting religious moderation. Through the various activities they undertake, students not only gain valuable learning experience but also make a real positive impact on the local community. This is in line with the goals of higher education in Indonesia, which include community service, research, and education (Himawati et al., 2020).

In addition, students are in a strategic position to build healthy and critical digital literacy in the context of religious diversity (Fuadiah, 2021). By being active users of social media and other digital resources, they can teach people how to sift through and judiciously assess religious information. They can help prevent the spread of harmful information and undermine tolerance of diversity by promoting critical attitudes and reliable sources of information. Students from different religious backgrounds can work together to create a more inclusive society in an increasingly connected world. Students can create spaces for open discussion and understanding of each other by building interfaith solidarity networks. This is what makes the role of students so important in building a peaceful future of religious diversity in today’s computer and internet age. That way, we as students are very important to embrace and moderate religious knowledge in the campus environment. In the campus environment, students are often faced with a variety of views and understandings about religion. Being open to various points of view helps students to deepen their understanding of existing religions. With the spirit of inclusiveness, students collaborate to create an open space for dialogue and respect for diversity of beliefs. Through interactions among fellow students, discussions, and religious activities, they can broaden their horizons and deepen their understanding of various religious teachings. By prioritizing tolerance and mutual respect, students are able to build harmonious relationships between religious communities. Not only that, students must also learn to recognize the importance of tolerance and diversity in building an inclusive community. With religious moderation, students can learn to respect the opinions of others while remaining true to their own beliefs. This is an integral part of the learning experience on campus that prepares students to become open-minded individuals committed to diversity.

The purpose of this study is to determine the role of students in moderating religious knowledge in the digital era. The focus of the research examines the implementation of tolerance in religious students in the digital era.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1 Research Design

This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method. The literature study is conducted by collecting data from various written literature sources such as books, scientific journals, articles, and online sources relevant to the research topic

## 2.2 Data Sources

The sources of data in this study were obtained through online media such as websites, blogs, and social media that discuss related topics.

## 2.3 Data Collection

Data collection is a systematic standardized procedure or procedure in the process of collecting research information (data) (Utomo et al., 2024). Literature searches were conducted through libraries and online databases such as Google Scholar, news platforms, and others. In addition, literature searches were also conducted manually through textbooks, journals, and articles related to the research topic.

## 2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study used the content analysis method with the stages of data reduction, data presentation, data interpretation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is done by selecting, focusing, and simplifying data from various literature that have been collected. Then the data is presented in a form that allows drawing conclusions. Furthermore, the data is interpreted by giving meaning and explanation. Finally, the final conclusion is drawn from the whole research process. To ensure the validity of the data, this research uses source triangulation by comparing and checking information from different literature to find similarities or differences in views.

# 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

## 3.1 Result

### 3.1.1. Religious Moderation and its Urgency

Religious moderation means “moderate”, neither more nor less nor excessive (Apriani & Aryani, 2022). In Arabic, the notion of religious moderation refers to the word “wasath” or “wasathiyah”, similar to the word “tawassuth”, which means middle, and “i’tidal”, which means fair. This word was later absorbed into moderation in Indonesian, which is defined in the Big Indonesian Dictionary as having two meanings: First, the reduction of violence; and Second, avoiding extreme behavior, while moderate always means avoiding extreme behavior and leading to the middle ground dimension. Lukman Hakim Saifuddin stated that moderate people are those who act in a way that is reasonable, ordinary, and not extreme. He also stated that in English, the word moderation is often used to describe things like average, core, standard, or impartial. In general, being moderate means finding a balance in terms of beliefs, morals, and good nature when treating others as individuals and with governments (RI, 2019).

According to Sheikh Yusuf ‘Al Qardhawi’, ‘wasathiyah’ is also referred to as “at-tawazun”, which means balanced between two opposing parties, kept from being one-sided or one side more dominant than the other. Being balanced means giving the right portion, not too much or too little (Abror, 2020). A moderate Muslim, according to Anis Malik Thoha, is a Muslim who fulfills the principle of wassathiyah (moderation in Islam), which means that they are not too extreme from the right or left point of view. This means that people who are Muslims should be able to keep themselves from using violence, and rather bring peace and mercy to all of nature. They should also understand that Islamic law is eternal and cannot be changed or altered over time. They must also not use violence, not use coercion, not compromise basic religious matters to maintain the sanctity of their religion, and not compromise basic religious matters, such as getting along with everyone (Zuhri, 2020).

Indonesia is indeed in the spotlight of the world for its diversity, being one of the countries with a very rich diversity of tribes, cultures, ethnicities, languages, and religions. There are not many other countries that can match the rich diversity that Indonesia has. With more than 17,000 islands spread from Sabang to Merauke, Indonesia is home to hundreds or even thousands of tribes spread across the archipelago. Each tribe has its own culture, traditions, language, and script, making Indonesia a very unique cultural laboratory.

One aspect that enriches Indonesia's diversity is religious plurality. Indonesia recognizes six official religions, namely Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. However, in addition, there are also various local beliefs that are still maintained by people in various regions. This reflects the tolerance and harmony between religious communities that have been inherited from the ancestors of the Indonesian people. This diversity is the main identity of the Indonesian nation, reflecting the spirit of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* which means “Different but still one”. In this diversity lies the strength of Indonesia, which is able to unite various differences to achieve common progress. However, challenges also arise in maintaining inter-religious and ethnic harmony amid the dynamics of modernization and globalization.

To produce harmony between religions or beliefs, moderation in religious harmony must be practiced (Irama & Zamzami, 2021). To manage the highly diverse religious situation in Indonesia as mentioned above, we need visions and solutions that can create harmony and peace in practicing religious life. These solutions include the application of religious moderation to appreciate the diversity of interpretations and avoid intolerance, radicalism, and extremism. The spirit of religious moderation is an approach to reach agreement and peace between two different religious camps. On the one hand, there are some extreme religious believers who strictly believe in one interpretation of religious texts and regard other interpreters as heretical. This community is usually referred to as extreme conservatives.

Religious diversity in Indonesia is a fact that cannot be eliminated. For this reason, religious moderation serves to maintain similarities rather than sharpen differences. There are several reasons why religious moderation is so important, especially in Indonesia:

First, moderation is a cultural strategy that is crucial to maintaining Indonesians. Due to its multicultural nature, Indonesia's founding fathers have from the very beginning bequeathed the nation, state, and religious agreement, namely Pancasila in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Pancasila has successfully united all religions, ethnicities, languages, and cultures in Indonesia. Religion has become a guide in daily life and an integral part of the lives of the Indonesian people. Even some religious laws are developed by the state in the Constitution and Government Regulations, where religious values are combined with local wisdom values.

Secondly, religion emerges to defend human dignity and preserve its life. Therefore, every religion carries a mission to promote peace and safety. Religion teaches balance in various aspects of life, including preserving human life, because eliminating one life is the same as eliminating all of humanity. Therefore, this religious moderation should be a way to restore religious practice to its essence and religion truly becomes the spirit of life to maintain human dignity and worth.

Third, after religions have emerged for thousands of years, humanity continues to develop and diversify, tribes, skin colors, and nations, and continues to grow. To answer humanity's problems, science continues to develop throughout the ages. When religions are interpreted many times, the truth becomes relative, and some believers no longer believe in the true teachings, leading to fanaticism toward their preferred version of the truth. Hence, the inevitable disputes. The complexity of this problem of religion and human life does not only occur in one country or region but also in various places around the world. Therefore, religious moderation is the best solution to this problem and is very important to implement to prevent religious conflicts and maintain the existence of humanity.

This is Indonesia, known as a religious country, where values such as hospitality, tolerance, and the ability to interact with diverse beliefs and cultures are fundamental. In this context, religious moderation emerges as an important foundation for maintaining social stability and avoiding the threat of radicalism and extremism that can disrupt the unity and diversity of society. Religious moderation is not just a worldview, but also a moral calling that governs the behavior of individuals, communities, and institutions. The importance of religious moderation lies in its role in promoting the values of tolerance and harmony amidst Indonesia's diversity. To strengthen the foundation of the nation, it is important for national education to incorporate an understanding of pluralism and diversity into the education curriculum from an early age. In this way, Indonesians can grow in understanding and appreciation of differences, allowing the country to continue to evolve towards sustainable peace, progress, and sustainability.

### 3.1.2 Tolerance and its Urgency

Basically, to avoid the appearance of hostility, quarrels, and disputes, people must live together in society with the frame of "unity of heart" and "agreement". If this understanding is taken as a guide, "harmony" will be something that is very ideal and coveted by everyone.

Tolerance is the result of close social interaction in society. Religious tolerance refers to tolerance of matters of human belief relating to their faith or divinity. Everyone should be given the freedom to choose their own religion, have their own creed, and respect their teachings. In religious social life, humans cannot avoid association, either with people around them or with other groups that sometimes have different religions or beliefs. Therefore, religious people should try to create peace and tranquillity in the context of tolerance, so that social stability and ideological conflicts between religious people will not occur. According to research conducted by (Subchi et al., 2022) found that religious moderation is positively influenced by religiosity. High levels of religiosity are usually accompanied by high levels of religious moderation. This indicates that someone who is identified as religiously moderate has high religious tolerance, and national commitment, and is accommodating to local culture supported by religious intellectualism, ideology, public practice, private practice, and religious experience.

In Islam, the word "tasamuh" is used to describe this tolerance. This is actually not entirely in line with the meaning of the word "tolerance", as tasamuh includes both demand and acceptance within certain limits. In Islam,

people who practice tasamuh are referred to as 'mutasamihin', which means "accepting, offering, gracious, and forgiving as a host to his guest." In reality, those who practice tasamuh should not only accept but also should not suppress their own rights and obligations. In other words, acting or behaving in a way that is tasamuh in religious life means not violating or overstepping boundaries, especially with regard to the boundaries of faith (aqidah). Tolerance is taught in Islam not only toward fellow humans but also towards nature, animals, and the environment. With this broad meaning, inter-religious tolerance is very important, because religious tolerance is an issue related to human belief in Allah SWT.

Since Islamic 'shari'ah' guarantees that there is no compulsion in religion, this tolerant and peace-loving attitude is recorded in Islamic history by historians, showing how good Islamic civilization was in the past. As a result, ahistorical attitudes that force others to follow our beliefs must be eliminated. According to Islam, religious tolerance is not about sharing religions. Nor is it to exchange beliefs with various religious groups (Ibrahim, 2018). Tolerance here is meant in the sense of social interaction, or 'mu'amalah' so that there are mutual boundaries that may and may not be violated.

### 3.1.3 The Influence of Digital Technology on Religious Moderation

With the adoption of digital technology, the way people access religious information has undergone a significant transformation. In the past, religious information was limited to books, magazines, and direct meetings with religious leaders. However, with the advent of the internet and social media, religious information has become more accessible globally in a short period of time. Nowadays, the world is being influenced by digital development, and almost all human activities involve digital technology. Digital has a big impact on human life, including religion. Today, communication can not only be done face-to-face but also virtually over long distances. Thus, digital media is sometimes used as a place to blaspheme, insult, discriminate, incite, provoke, and spread news or information that is not true or what is often called a hoax (Fatmawati & Sholikin, 2019).

Basically, technology comes from the advancement of Science or science. Therefore, according to experts, technology is the implementation of science itself and the role of both is very influential in the development of human material civilization (Rusdiana, 2014). So that the essence of technological neutrality can be used in a segmentation that is more at the mouth of social benefits. This happens because the presence of technology can be accompanied by presenting moderate content that reflects an inclusive religious reading as the orientation of religious moderation itself. Over time, people will get used to moderate religious content, which does not exclude the existence of social inevitability, such as diverse beliefs, diverse mindsets, and diverse traditions. Such efforts are also prevalent in religious universities, which have been regenerating the presence of Indonesian intellectuals who have an inclusive understanding of religion. So far, many intellectuals born from these universities have become pioneers of the moderate movement (Hefni, 2020).

The influence of digital technology can also be seen in its role in facilitating interfaith dialog and interfaith cooperation (Utomo & Proyogi, 2021). Through social media platforms and instant messaging applications, individuals from different religious backgrounds can interact directly, exchange ideas, and understand other religious views more deeply. This opens up opportunities to build tolerance and overcome interfaith divisions that may exist in society.

In addition, digital technology also enables the creation of online discussion forums, webinars, and virtual conferences that facilitate the exchange of ideas and understanding of various aspects of religion (Basmanova et al., 2020). For example, through platforms such as Zoom or Google Meet, religious discussions can be held online, allowing participation from people in geographically diverse locations. This broadens the scope of religious dialog and allows a wider range of views to be considered.

However, it is important to remember that digital technologies can also be a source of polarization and conflict in religious contexts. Misinformation, propaganda, and online radicalization can easily spread through social media and other online platforms, muddying the waters and reinforcing divisions between religious groups. Therefore, it is important for users of digital technology, including university students, to be critical of the information they receive and play an active role in promoting an inclusive and tolerant understanding of religion (Wulan, 2024). The influence of digital technology on religious moderation includes not only access to information and dissemination of moderate understandings, but also facilitating interfaith dialog, interfaith cooperation, and inclusive religious discussion forums. However, challenges in the form of misinformation and online radicalization also need to be seriously addressed to create a conducive environment for religious moderation in the digital era. Students have an important role in moderating religious knowledge in the digital era, especially through their active participation in filtering and disseminating religious-related information on social media (Arifuddin, 2020). They must have a critical attitude toward any information they receive and be responsible for what they share with the online community.

In this context, students have extensive access to and influence in the online environment. With critical skills and awareness of the impact of the information they convey, they can be powerful agents of change in promoting an inclusive and tolerant understanding of religion on social media platforms. However, it is important to remember that awareness of the impact of any online actions is also important. As expressed by (Miller, 2016). While social media offers a platform to spread positive messages, it can also be a place for the spread of harmful content. Students must understand their moral responsibility in managing the information they share and ensure that they are not part of the spread of harmful content."

Thus, students have great potential to play a significant role in moderating religious knowledge in the digital age. With a critical attitude, awareness of impact, and moral responsibility, they can become messengers of peace, tolerance, and inclusiveness in religious discussions on social media.

### 3.2. Discussion

#### 3.2.1 The Role of Students as Agents of Change

To improve the quality of education, changes need to be made to the education of the nation's younger generation. Students who have a good quality of education will become agents of change for the nation. Speaking of students, there is a strong connection between them and their organizations, as well as their involvement in various events at the university and in society. The campus activities they participate in will benefit the country, nation, and society as a whole, not just the individual. Students do not just graduate and work; they also have a responsibility to contribute to society as a whole. The role of students in society consists of at least eight elements, including: a) Conveying people's aspirations for the government, b) Political control, c) Government mouthpiece, d) Agent of change, e) Social control, f) Moral force, g) Iron stock, and h) Guardian of value (Gonzalez et al., 2019).

Agents of change lead the community in changing the social system. To be an agent of change, you must be able to make positive changes and even prepare for positive changes in the surrounding community institutions. Social engineering or social planning are terms for how to influence society through an organized and planned system (Astakhova & Medvedev, 2021). Change should contribute to the progress of the country, especially for students who have education and research and an important role in community service. Education gives students the opportunity to apply their knowledge, such as conducting research in a community setting. This helps to address society's problems. By utilizing programs such as internships, students can be directly involved in the problem. Therefore, it is expected that students can carry out their role as agents of change both now and in the future.

Students as agents of change are an important element in education (Roffey, 2015). This means that as the young generation of Indonesia, students must get adequate education to broaden their horizons so that they can bring change to the nation. Students are also tasked with being a change that was initially unknown due to the results of teaching activities and the application of positive values developed by the public (Jannah & Sulianti, 2021). To become students as agents of change, students must have qualities and abilities consisting of knowledge, attitudes, and skills. After applying these three qualities to daily life, the potential of students can be formed and achieved.

The role of students as agents of change in religious moderation is very important to build an inclusive and harmonious society. As agents of change, students have a significant role in shaping public opinion, influencing policy, and inspiring positive action in society. Here are some roles that students can play as agents of change in religious moderation:

- a) Advocacy and Education. Students can play a role as supporters of religious moderation through education and advocacy activities on campus and in the surrounding community.
- b) Institutionalization of Tolerance Values. Students can also strengthen the values of tolerance and harmony on campus by establishing organizations or communities that encourage interfaith discussion, understanding, and cooperation. They can do this by holding seminars, workshops, and open discussions.
- c) Community Empowerment. Students can work with local communities to increase their capacity and encourage them to talk to others, address interfaith conflicts, and build sustainable solidarity.
- d) Use of Social Media. Students can spread the message of religious moderation widely and effectively to the community by using social media and digital technology. They have the ability to create educated content, conduct online campaigns, and utilize online platforms to build strong interfaith networks.

#### 3.2.2 Challenges and Opportunities

The challenges faced in moderating religious knowledge include several important aspects. First, maintaining a balance between religious freedom and the public interest is a complex task. On the one hand, individuals have the

right to exercise their religious beliefs and practices in accordance with the freedom of religion guaranteed by law. However, on the other hand, there is a need to ensure that such religious practices do not disrupt social order or violate the rights of other individuals. For example, religious practices that involve noise or exclusive use of public spaces may trigger tensions in the community. Therefore, the government and other stakeholders should create regulations that accommodate religious practices without compromising public order (Van Eeten, 2001).

Second, moderating religious knowledge also involves handling conflicts between faiths. In today's multicultural and multi-religious society, there are often conflicts between different religious values and practices (Sumarna et al., 2021). For example, different views on women's rights, freedom of speech, and other moral issues are often a source of conflict. Addressing such conflicts requires a sensitive and fair approach, which respects the rights of all parties involved while seeking widely acceptable solutions. Mediation and interfaith dialog can be effective tools for easing tensions and promoting cooperation.

Third, there are challenges in dealing with diverse interpretations of sacred texts. Different denominations and sects within the same religion can have different understandings of their basic teachings. This can lead to internal divisions and even violence. Moderate and inclusive approaches in the interpretation of sacred texts need to be promoted to create a broader and more tolerant understanding (Kayaoglu, 2015). While there are significant challenges, there are also opportunities to moderate religious knowledge. One of these is the promotion of interfaith dialog that strengthens tolerance and interfaith understanding. Through open and constructive dialogue, individuals can learn about different religious beliefs and practices, thereby deepening appreciation for diversity and minimizing tensions between groups. For example, initiatives such as interfaith dialogue forums or cultural exchange programs can be effective platforms for building bridges of understanding. In addition, facilitating research and development in the religious field is also a significant opportunity.

By expanding our understanding of world religions, we can promote a more inclusive and in-depth perspective on human spirituality and belief. In-depth academic research on various religious traditions can help uncover universal values that can serve as a foundation for social harmony. For example, the study of concepts such as love, justice, and peace that exist in different religions can help build a broader awareness of shared values. In addition, inclusive religious education can play an important role in moderating religious knowledge (Maarif et al., 2024). An education curriculum that teaches about different religions and emphasizes the values of tolerance and mutual respect can shape a younger generation that is more open and appreciative of differences. Training programs for religious leaders can also focus on developing a moderate and inclusive understanding so that they can become agents of positive change in their communities.

## **4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

### *4.1 Implications*

The discussion of the meaning of religious moderation enriches the academic literature by providing a comprehensive definition. Explanations of the etymological roots and practical applications of the concept help clarify theoretical understandings that can be used as a basis for research and policy development. The emphasis on balance and justice in religious practice can serve as a reference for interdisciplinary studies that link religion to social, cultural, and political aspects. In addition, the role of students as agents of change offers a new perspective on how the younger generation can actively contribute to spreading the values of moderation and tolerance. Students' activities and initiatives show that their education and empowerment can be an effective strategy to promote harmony and reduce religious-based conflicts. The implications are particularly relevant for higher education institutions and non-governmental organizations working in the field of peacebuilding and inclusive education. The included case studies provide strong empirical evidence of the positive impact of student participation, which can be used to design better programs and support their active engagement in social issues. The influence of digital technology on religious moderation also provides important insights into how technology can be used to promote interfaith dialog and interfaith cooperation. Through digital technology, information about religious moderation can be disseminated quickly and effectively, reaching a wider audience. However, there are also potential dangers of misinformation and radicalization on digital platforms. Therefore, it is important for researchers and practitioners to develop strategies that make positive use of digital technologies while addressing the challenges. As such, this article not only makes a valuable theoretical contribution but also offers practical guidance for religious moderation efforts in the digital age.

## **4.2 Contributions**

Theoretically, the discussion of the role of students as agents of change provides an in-depth conceptual foundation regarding the contribution of students in various aspects of community life. First, the identification of eight key elements of the student role, including advocacy, political control, and moral power, enriches the academic literature on youth participation in social and political transformation. It also broadens the academic discourse on how students can influence social change through active involvement in campus and community activities.

The integration of the concepts of social engineering and social planning as a framework for students to lead positive change offers an important reference point for further research on the effectiveness of educational and social interventions. As such, this perspective not only contributes to theories on the relationship between higher education, research, and community service but also provides insights into how education can empower students to apply their knowledge to solve societal problems. In addition, the emphasis on the importance of religious moderation enriches the theoretical understanding of the role of university students in promoting tolerance and inclusiveness in a multicultural and multi-religious environment. It provides a strong academic foundation for further studies on how education can shape students' attitudes and behaviors in the face of religious diversity.

In practice, this discussion provides concrete guidance for students to play an active role as agents of change. Through advocacy and education, students are encouraged to educate themselves and their communities about the importance of religious moderation and tolerance values. This activity can be realized through seminars, workshops, and interfaith discussions that encourage open dialogue on campus and in the surrounding community. The institutionalization of tolerance values can also be strengthened by establishing organizations or communities that encourage interfaith cooperation. Thus, students can directly influence the campus and community environment, creating an inclusive and harmonious atmosphere. The use of social media as a tool to spread the message of religious moderation is also an effective practical step. Students can utilize digital technology to create educational content, conduct online campaigns, and build strong interfaith networks.

The inspiring story of a female student in Australia who overcame fears of Islam phobia and practiced her religion with the full support of an inclusive campus environment provides a real and practical example for other Muslim students who plan to study abroad. It shows that a positive attitude and open communication can help overcome the challenges faced, providing practical guidance on how students can manage their religious life in different contexts.

By outlining the challenges and opportunities in moderating religious knowledge, it also provides guidance for governments, educational institutions, and mass media to create an environment conducive to interfaith dialogue and the development of moderate understanding. Fair regulation, inclusive religious education, and balanced media coverage can help overcome intergroup tensions and promote social harmony. Overall, this discussion not only offers theoretical benefits in enriching the academic literature on the role of university students and religious moderation but also provides practical guidelines that can be directly applied by students and other stakeholders to create positive change in society. These guidelines can help students develop the qualities and abilities needed to be effective agents of change, as well as promote critical attitudes and moral responsibility in the use of digital technology and social media.

## **5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS**

### **5.1 Limitations**

In the ever-evolving digital era, research on the role of students in moderating religious knowledge faces various obstacles. One of the main obstacles is the amount of information circulating on the internet and limited access to accurate and reliable sources of information. Students often face challenges in distinguishing between valid and misleading information online. In fact, the digital world can be used as a platform to break the unity of the ummah by certain groups who feel dissatisfied with certain contestations and then take control of the authority of religious sources through the digital world. In addition, the lack of digital literacy is also an obstacle, where the ability to use technology effectively is still uneven among students. Students as agents of change face challenges in sorting and filtering truly reliable information, and the lack of specialized training in digital literacy and in-depth religious knowledge makes their role in moderating religious knowledge less than optimal.

Second, there is a lack of comprehensive empirical data related to students' activities and influence in religious discussion forums on social media. Most of the existing research focuses more on theoretical aspects without being supported by adequate field studies. The methodology used in research is also often less varied, so it is unable to capture the diversity of student perspectives from various backgrounds. Another obstacle faced is the rapid

development of digital technology which makes the data obtained quickly obsolete and difficult to actualize. In addition, limited digital literacy among students is also an obstacle, because not all students have the same ability to use technology for moderation purposes. The different views and interpretations of religious teachings among students make this research more complex and require a more holistic approach.

Another obstacle is the resistance of more conservative circles to new approaches in the delivery of religious knowledge. Finally, inadequate support from educational institutions and the government is a significant obstacle to developing students' abilities in this area. Therefore, collaborative efforts between various parties are needed to overcome these limitations and ensure that students can play an effective role in moderating religious knowledge in the digital era.

### 5.2 Recommendations for Future Researchers

In the face of limited research on the role of university students in moderating religious knowledge in the digital era, future researchers are advised to further integrate multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches in their studies. Collaboration between the fields of religious studies, communication, information technology, and sociology will provide a richer perspective. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of how university students interact with digital information and how they can be empowered to become agents to gain a more comprehensive picture of this phenomenon. In addition, researchers need to focus on developing digital literacy among college students. Strong digital literacy will help students sort out valid information from misleading ones, and avoid the hoax trap that can disrupt the unity of the people. Sustainable and inclusive training programs that emphasize not only technical skills but also ethical understanding of technology use are urgently needed. Finally, it is important for researchers to conduct more intensive and structured field studies to obtain relevant empirical data. Involving students directly in research as participants and collaborators can provide more authentic insights into their role in moderating religious science. Longitudinal research that monitors changes and developments in students' involvement in religious discussions on social media can also provide more dynamic and actual data. Support from educational institutions and the government in the form of funding and policies that support this research is crucial.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In the growing digital era, the role of students in moderating religious knowledge is becoming increasingly important. Through extensive access to information and technology, students have the opportunity to become agents of change who promote interfaith dialog and religious tolerance. By utilizing online platforms and social media, students can expand the reach of messages of peace and religious equality, and garner support for intergroup reconciliation efforts. In addition, through active involvement in campus and community activities, students can become leaders who build bridges between different faiths and champion inclusive values in society. Thus, the role of students in moderating religious knowledge in the digital age is not only a moral responsibility but also a real opportunity to create a more tolerant and harmonious world for future generations.

The research conclusions reveal that the role of the mass media should not be overlooked. The media has the power to shape public opinion and influence people's perceptions of religion. Therefore, balanced and educative reporting on religious issues is essential. The media can be a means to spread messages of tolerance and mutual respect and overcome stereotypes and prejudices that are often at the root of conflict. Thus, the challenges in moderating religious knowledge are complex and diverse, but with the right approach, these challenges can be overcome and even become opportunities to create a more harmonious and inclusive society.

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## Author Contribution Statement

All authors declare that each author has contributed to the preparation and completion of this article and discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript.

## Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that they have no significant competing financial, professional or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript

## Ethical Approval Statement

The author declares that this study is a literature review and does not involve human participants, personal data, or any other subjects. Therefore, this study does not require ethical approval from a research ethics committee. The entire research process was conducted in accordance with academic ethical standards, upholding scientific honesty, integrity, and the ethical use of legitimate sources.

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