

Religious Moderation, Academic Reform, and Global Competitiveness in Indonesian Islamic Higher Education

Aceng Aminullah

Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Islam Darussalam (UID), Ciamis, Indonesia
Email: acengaminullah@uidc.ac.id

Riyan Nurdiyansah

Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Islam Darussalam (UID), Ciamis, Indonesia
Email: riyannurdiyansah@uidc.ac.id

Hernandi Hernandi

Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Islam Darussalam (UID), Ciamis, Indonesia
Email: hernandi@uidc.ac.id

Received: 16-1-2026 | Revised: 27-4-2026 | Accepted: 23-5-2026

Abstract

This article examines the relationship among religious moderation, academic reform, and global competitiveness in Indonesian Islamic higher education. Using a qualitative literature-based approach, more specifically an integrative literature review, the article synthesizes recent studies on moderation policies, curriculum integration, institutional governance, pedagogical innovation, digital transformation, internationalization, and Islamic identity. The analysis shows that religious moderation functions as an ethical foundation for strengthening tolerance, balance, justice, national commitment, and cultural accommodation within Islamic universities. Academic reform provides the institutional mechanism through which these values are translated into curriculum, pedagogy, research, quality assurance, and digital innovation. Global competitiveness, meanwhile, creates strategic pressure for Islamic higher education to improve international visibility, institutional performance, research productivity, and technological capacity. However, the article also finds that these agendas may produce tensions, particularly when moderation remains superficial, academic reform imitates secular models uncritically, or global competitiveness is driven mainly by rankings and academic capitalism. The article contributes by offering an integrated framework for understanding Indonesian Islamic higher education as a negotiated field in which Islamic values, institutional reform, and global academic pressures shape one another.

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji hubungan antara moderasi beragama, reformasi akademik, dan daya saing global dalam pendidikan tinggi Islam di Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis kepustakaan, lebih khususnya tinjauan pustaka integratif, artikel ini menyintesis berbagai studi mutakhir tentang kebijakan moderasi, integrasi kurikulum, tata kelola kelembagaan, inovasi pedagogis, transformasi digital, internasionalisasi, dan identitas keislaman. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa moderasi beragama berfungsi sebagai landasan etis bagi penguatan toleransi, keseimbangan, keadilan, komitmen kebangsaan, dan akomodasi budaya di lingkungan perguruan tinggi Islam. Reformasi akademik menyediakan mekanisme kelembagaan yang memungkinkan nilai-nilai tersebut diterjemahkan ke dalam kurikulum, pedagogi, penelitian, penjaminan mutu, dan inovasi digital. Sementara itu, daya saing global menciptakan tekanan strategis bagi pendidikan tinggi Islam untuk meningkatkan visibilitas internasional, kinerja kelembagaan, produktivitas penelitian, dan kapasitas teknologi. Namun demikian, artikel ini juga menemukan bahwa agenda-agenda tersebut dapat melahirkan ketegangan, terutama ketika moderasi beragama berhenti pada tataran

superfisial, reformasi akademik meniru model-model sekuler secara tidak kritis, atau daya saing global terutama digerakkan oleh logika pemeringkatan dan kapitalisme akademik. Artikel ini memberikan kontribusi dengan menawarkan kerangka integratif untuk memahami pendidikan tinggi Islam di Indonesia sebagai arena yang terus dinegosiasikan, tempat nilai-nilai Islam, reformasi kelembagaan, dan tekanan akademik global saling membentuk satu sama lain.

Keywords

Religious moderation, academic reform, global competitiveness, Islamic higher education, Indonesia, internationalization

Introduction

Indonesian Islamic higher education is currently positioned within a complex field of transformation. It is no longer sufficient to understand Islamic universities merely as institutions that transmit religious knowledge, preserve Islamic traditions, or produce graduates for religious professions. Their role has expanded. They are expected to contribute to national cohesion, democratic citizenship, interreligious harmony, scientific development, digital adaptation, and global academic competitiveness. Muhlisin et al. (2023) show that state policy has increasingly placed religious moderation at the center of Islamic higher education governance, especially in response to social fragmentation, ideological exclusivism, and the growing need to strengthen inclusive religious understanding. This policy direction is not accidental. It reflects a broader national concern that Islamic higher education should become one of the intellectual and moral anchors of Indonesian pluralism.

At the same time, Indonesian Islamic higher education faces another pressure that is equally decisive. Fathana et al. (2024) argue that Islamic universities in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, are increasingly shaped by the logic of academic capitalism, institutional competition, international visibility, and market-oriented reform. This development brings opportunities, of course. It encourages institutions to improve governance, strengthen research culture, expand international partnerships, and increase graduate employability. Yet it also raises an uncomfortable question. Can Islamic higher education pursue global competitiveness without reducing its Islamic identity to institutional branding? This question cannot be ignored, because global academic standards often operate through ranking systems, publication metrics, accreditation regimes, and managerial models that do not always fit neatly with the ethical and epistemological foundations of Islamic education.

Religious moderation therefore emerges not only as a theological or moral discourse, but also as an institutional strategy. Nasir and Rijal (2021) describe the mainstreaming of religious moderation in Islamic higher education as an effort to maintain the middle path within religious, educational, and civic life. Burhanuddin and Ilmi (2022) further show that religious moderation in Indonesian higher education takes various typological forms, ranging from institutional-cultural models to symbolic-paradigmatic approaches. These studies suggest that moderation is not a single program that can be inserted into the curriculum and then considered complete. It is better understood as a value orientation that must shape policy, pedagogy, campus culture, student formation, research, and public engagement. In a country as religiously, culturally, and politically diverse as Indonesia, this orientation becomes deeply relevant.

However, the implementation of religious moderation remains uneven. Chotimah et al. (2025) warn that religious moderation in Islamic educational management is often implemented superficially, especially when it is treated as administrative compliance rather than a substantive educational transformation. Muhsin et al. (2024) also indicate that

institutional initiatives, such as religious moderation programs and campus-based policy interventions, may contribute to identity formation, but their effectiveness depends on how far they are embedded in everyday academic and social practices. It is one thing to mention moderation in policy documents. It is another thing to cultivate tolerant reasoning, dialogical habits, intellectual humility, and ethical responsibility in classrooms, student organizations, research agendas, and community service. The gap between normative commitment and lived practice is precisely where further academic reflection is needed.

Academic reform adds another layer to this discussion. Irham (2025) explains that Indonesian Islamic higher education continues to negotiate patterns of integration between science and religion. This negotiation is not purely curricular. It touches deeper issues of knowledge structure, epistemological legitimacy, institutional identity, and the future of Islamic scholarship. Shaleh et al. (2024) show that holistic-integrative curriculum development can become one pathway for connecting Islamic values with contemporary educational needs. Meanwhile, F. Fauzi et al. (2025) propose a transdisciplinary framework for Islamic higher learning that seeks to connect Islamic epistemology with global innovation. These contributions are important because they remind us that academic reform in Islamic universities should not simply imitate secular higher education models. It must also reconstruct the relationship between revealed knowledge, rational inquiry, scientific development, and social responsibility.

The challenge becomes more complicated when global competitiveness is introduced into the debate. Susilawati et al. (2025) demonstrate that educational technology, digital administration, learning management systems, and blended learning have become important instruments for internationalizing Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam. Sholehuddin et al. (2025) emphasize the role of local wisdom in shaping internationalization strategies, suggesting that global engagement does not have to erase local and religious identity. Usman and Rokhimawan (2024) also point to the strategic roadmaps pursued by Indonesian Islamic universities in their aspiration to achieve world-class status. These studies indicate that competitiveness is not simply a matter of ranking or institutional prestige. It involves leadership, curriculum adaptation, knowledge production, digital capacity, cultural negotiation, and the ability to present Islamic higher education as globally relevant without becoming detached from its moral roots.

Within this context, academic reform and religious moderation should not be treated as separate agendas. M. Fauzi et al. (2025) show that the mainstreaming of religious moderation in higher education requires clear goals, appropriate curriculum content, and effective implementation strategies. Saepudin et al. (2023) further suggest that character education and religious moderation are strengthened when learning becomes interactive, reflective, and action-oriented. This means that moderation needs academic reform in order to move beyond slogans, while academic reform needs moderation in order to remain ethically grounded. Put differently, religious moderation provides a moral horizon, academic reform provides institutional mechanisms, and global competitiveness provides strategic direction. The three are different, but they are not disconnected.

This article argues that Indonesian Islamic higher education is undergoing a negotiated transformation shaped by religious moderation, academic reform, and global competitiveness. Sudirman et al. (2025) show that the transformation of state Islamic higher education institutions toward world-class university status involves the reinterpretation of globalization through institutional values. Sibawaihi et al. (2024) similarly indicate that the transformation of Islamic institutes and colleges into universities reflects both globalization and glocalization. The central issue, then, is not whether Islamic higher education should become modern or remain traditional. That opposition is too simple. The more relevant question is how Islamic universities can construct an institutional model that is intellectually credible, religiously moderate, socially inclusive, and globally competitive.

Based on this concern, the article aims to examine the relationship between religious moderation, academic reform, and global competitiveness in Indonesian Islamic higher education. It seeks to synthesize recent scholarship on moderation policies, curriculum integration, institutional transformation, internationalization, leadership, digital innovation, and Islamic identity. The contribution of this article lies in its attempt to offer an integrated conceptual reading of Indonesian Islamic higher education as a field of negotiation between Islamic values and global academic pressures. This reading is modest, but necessary. Without such integration, discussions on religious moderation may remain normatively rich but institutionally weak, while discussions on global competitiveness may become technically ambitious but ethically thin.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

The discussion on religious moderation in Indonesian Islamic higher education cannot be separated from the wider intellectual and political context of Indonesia as a plural society. Religious moderation has become an important vocabulary in public policy, Islamic education, and civic discourse because it offers a way to sustain religious commitment without allowing religion to become a source of exclusion or violence. Nasir and Rijal (2021) describe religious moderation as a middle-path orientation that allows Islamic higher education institutions to mediate between doctrinal fidelity and social plurality. In a similar direction, Burhanuddin and Ilmi (2022) show that moderation in Indonesian higher education appears in different typologies, including institutional, symbolic, cultural, and paradigmatic forms. These studies are important because they prevent us from treating moderation as a flat or one-dimensional concept. It is not simply a polite attitude toward difference. It is a structured way of thinking, acting, governing, and educating in a society where religious diversity is a daily reality.

At the conceptual level, religious moderation in Islamic higher education is often associated with the values of *tarwassuth*, *tarwazun*, *ta'adul*, and *tasamuh*. These concepts may sound familiar in Islamic educational discourse, but their institutional translation is not always simple. Surawardi et al. (2024) demonstrate that moderate Islamic values can be internalized through social exchange processes in educational settings, where students gradually learn moderation through interaction, trust, reciprocity, and institutional habit. Zaluchu et al. (2025) also show through bibliometric reconstruction that religious moderation in Indonesia has developed as a conceptual field shaped by education, national identity, interfaith relations, and social cohesion. This suggests that moderation is not merely a theological slogan. It is a social and pedagogical project. In my view, this is where Islamic higher education has a distinctive responsibility, because it deals not only with religious texts but also with future teachers, scholars, bureaucrats, community leaders, and public intellectuals.

A number of studies emphasize that religious moderation becomes meaningful when it is embedded in institutional life. Muhsin et al. (2024) explain that policy implementation at IAIN Ponorogo, including the formation of moderation-related programs and institutional narratives, contributes to identity formation among students and campus communities. Muliadi et al. (2025) further show that moderation by design in higher education can influence student attitudes related to national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and cultural accommodation. These findings indicate that moderation needs architecture. It requires institutional design, not only individual goodwill. Still, the problem is that institutional design can easily become formalistic. Chotimah et al. (2025) warn that religious moderation in Islamic educational management may remain superficial when it is reduced to administrative language, ceremonial programs, or curriculum labels without deep pedagogical transformation. This warning is useful, perhaps even necessary, because many

educational reforms fail not because their concepts are weak, but because their implementation is too shallow.

The literature also shows that religious moderation is closely related to student formation. Thoyib et al. (2024) argue that pesantren backgrounds may strengthen tolerance and open-mindedness among Islamic university students, while Nasution et al. (2024) show that *kitab kuning* traditions can support wasatiah values when classical texts are interpreted within a moderate educational framework. These studies complicate the assumption that traditional Islamic learning necessarily produces exclusivism. In fact, tradition can become a source of moderation when it is mediated by responsible pedagogy, reflective interpretation, and ethical institutional culture. Hasan and Mujahidin (2023) similarly demonstrate that Sufism-based value internalization can foster tolerance, non-violence, and love. It is therefore reasonable to argue that Indonesian Islamic higher education has rich internal resources for moderation. The challenge is not the absence of Islamic values. The challenge is how these values are transformed into critical, dialogical, and socially relevant educational practices.

Another stream of literature links religious moderation with curriculum and pedagogy. M. Fauzi et al. (2025) emphasize that mainstreaming religious moderation requires clarity of goals, curriculum content, and implementation strategies. Kosim et al. (2024) show that moderation-based curriculum modules can be developed within laboratory madrasah connected to Islamic higher education, while Mukhibat et al. (2024) demonstrate that religious moderation education can be systematically designed and evaluated at the higher education level. Basri et al. (2022) connect higher-order thinking skills with religious moderation, suggesting that moderation is not only affective or moral, but also cognitive. Students need to compare arguments, evaluate claims, understand complexity, and resist simplistic narratives. This point is quite important. A moderate student is not merely someone who avoids conflict. A moderate student is someone who can think carefully, ethically, and proportionally when facing difference.

Pedagogical innovation appears as another significant theme. Saepudin et al. (2023) show that character education for religious moderation becomes stronger when learning involves action research, reflection, and active participation. Hamdanah et al. (2026) discuss interreligious-based instruction in Islamic boarding school through a love-based curriculum perspective, indicating that affective and relational dimensions are crucial in moderation education. Lamont (2020) offers a useful theoretical contribution through the distinction between safe spaces and brave spaces, which can help Islamic higher education design classrooms where difficult religious and social conversations are handled with courage, humility, and responsibility. Nurhayati et al. (2025) extend this discussion into digital citizenship, showing that religious moderation in open and distance education must respond to digital risks, online polarization, and the moral formation of learners in virtual environments. This is a reminder that moderation today is not formed only in classrooms. It is also contested on screens, platforms, and algorithmic spaces.

Academic reform in Islamic higher education forms the second major body of literature. Irham (2025) shows that Indonesian Islamic higher education has developed various policies and patterns for integrating science and religion. This integration is often presented as a defining feature of Islamic universities, especially after institutional transformation from institutes to universities. Yet integration is not merely about adding religious verses to scientific subjects or placing Islamic terminology beside modern disciplines. Tanjung et al. (2026) distinguish between symbolic and epistemic dimensions of Islamic values integration in undergraduate biology education, and this distinction is very helpful. Symbolic integration may decorate the curriculum, while epistemic integration reshapes how knowledge, ethics, purpose, and human responsibility are understood. Zul et al. (2026) also note that the integration of Islamic ethics into modern education curriculum faces conceptual,

institutional, and resource-related challenges. The literature therefore suggests that academic reform must go deeper than curriculum packaging.

Several studies propose more holistic models of academic reform. Shaleh et al. (2024) develop a holistic-integrative Islamic religious education curriculum, while F. Fauzi et al. (2025) propose the Jabalul Hikmah curriculum as a transdisciplinary framework for global innovation. Firdaus et al. (2025) examine the integration of Islamic values and digital technology at UIN Siber Cirebon, showing that Islamic higher education reform increasingly involves digital transformation. These works share one underlying concern. Islamic higher education should not isolate religious knowledge from contemporary science, technology, and social change. At the same time, it should not surrender its epistemological identity to secular models of modernization. The balance is delicate. Perhaps no single model can solve it completely, but the direction is clear enough. Islamic universities need an academic framework that is intellectually open, ethically grounded, and institutionally adaptive.

Global competitiveness forms the third conceptual field in this article. Achruh and Sukirman (2024) describe how Indonesian Islamic higher education institutions respond to globalization through curriculum adaptation, institutional reform, and efforts to preserve Islamic principles. Susilawati et al. (2025) show that educational technology-based strategies, including learning management systems and digital administration, support the internationalization of Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam. Sholehuddin et al. (2025) emphasize that local wisdom can shape internationalization strategies, allowing Islamic higher education to participate in global academic networks without losing cultural rootedness. This literature helps us move beyond a narrow understanding of competitiveness. Global competitiveness is not only about being visible in rankings. It is about building institutions that are academically credible, culturally grounded, technologically capable, and ethically persuasive.

Leadership and governance are also central to competitiveness. Zakaria et al. (2025) show that strategic management practices in pesantren contribute to educational quality and organizational sustainability. Hamdanah, Baharun, et al. (2025) highlight the role of kiai leadership and service quality in shaping pesantren reputation, while Hamdanah, Mardia, et al. (2025) discuss visionary leadership within the Barakka framework. Amas (2026) also shows that the transformation of Salafiyah pesantren into a Khalafiyah model reflects institutional adaptation in response to changing educational demands. In higher education, these studies suggest that leadership is not simply managerial. It is symbolic, cultural, spiritual, and strategic at the same time. This is especially true in Islamic institutions, where leaders are expected to manage quality while also embodying moral authority.

The literature on internationalization also reveals tensions. Usman and Rokhimawan (2024) discuss the strategic roadmap toward world-class status in Indonesian Islamic universities, while Sudirman et al. (2025) argue that transformation toward world-class universities requires negotiation between globalization and institutional values. Sibawaihi et al. (2025) draw lessons from Australia for internationalizing Islamic higher education in Indonesia, and Sibawaihi et al. (2024) frame institutional transformation as a process of globalization and glocalization. These studies make one thing quite clear. Internationalization is not a neutral technical process. It carries assumptions about quality, language, publication, mobility, accreditation, and institutional prestige. Islamic higher education must engage these standards, but it also needs to interpret them critically. Otherwise, competitiveness may become imitation rather than transformation.

A further issue concerns Islamic identity under global academic pressure. Fathana et al. (2024) show that academic capitalism may push Islamic universities toward revenue generation, ranking competition, and market-based rationality. Musgamy et al. (2026) explain that quality governance under globalized policy regimes involves institutional negotiation, especially when ethical and spiritual values must be maintained within

managerial frameworks. Khotimah et al. (2025) add another dimension by examining the quest for Islamic identity among Muslim university students in Riau, showing that identity is shaped through local cultures, transnational networks, and institutional environments. These studies suggest that Islamic identity is not static. It is negotiated, reinterpreted, and sometimes contested. That is why religious moderation and academic reform must be linked to identity formation, not treated as separate administrative agendas.

Based on this literature, the conceptual framework of this article rests on the interaction among three dimensions. Religious moderation functions as the ethical foundation that guides Islamic higher education toward tolerance, balance, justice, and civic responsibility. Academic reform functions as the institutional mechanism through which values are translated into curriculum, pedagogy, governance, research, and quality assurance. Global competitiveness functions as the strategic orientation that encourages Islamic higher education to engage international standards, digital innovation, and academic networks. Wakano et al. (2025) show that multiculturalism in Islamic higher education requires institutional pathways beyond rhetoric and resistance, while Kurniawan et al. (2025) argue that strategic management of religious moderation must be integrative. Muhibbi et al. (2025) similarly identify typology, strategy, and evaluation as key elements in moderation practices, and Nirwana et al. (2024) remind us through bibliometric analysis that Islamic education and character development remain closely connected in Indonesian scholarship. In this article, these strands are brought together to argue that Indonesian Islamic higher education is best understood as a negotiated field where moderation, reform, and competitiveness shape one another. This framework does not claim to resolve all tensions, but it offers a clearer way to see why the future of Islamic higher education in Indonesia depends on the ability to integrate moral depth, academic quality, and global relevance.

Method

This article employs a qualitative literature-based design, more specifically an integrative literature review, to examine the relationship among religious moderation, academic reform, and global competitiveness in Indonesian Islamic higher education. An integrative review is appropriate because the article does not seek to test a single hypothesis through field data, but to synthesize, compare, and reinterpret existing studies that have addressed the three themes from different angles. Muhlisin et al. (2023), Nasir and Rijal (2021), and M. Fauzi et al. (2025) were used to understand the policy and institutional mainstreaming of religious moderation, while Irham (2025), Shaleh et al. (2024), and F. Fauzi et al. (2025) helped frame the discussion on curriculum reform, knowledge integration, and Islamic epistemology. In this sense, the method is not merely descriptive. It is interpretive and analytical, because it tries to identify how separate bodies of literature may speak to each other when placed within a single conceptual frame.

The data sources consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles, empirical studies, conceptual papers, bibliometric studies, systematic reviews, and policy-oriented analyses related to Indonesian Islamic higher education. The selection of literature focused on works discussing religious moderation, curriculum integration, student formation, institutional governance, pesantren-based higher education, digital transformation, internationalization, leadership, and global competitiveness. Chotimah et al. (2025), Muhsin et al. (2024), and Ainissyifa and Nasrulloh (2025) were particularly relevant for identifying implementation barriers, including superficial policy adoption, ideological resistance, and digital challenges. Meanwhile, Susilawati et al. (2025), Sholehuddin et al. (2025), Sudirman et al. (2025), and Sibawaihi et al. (2024) were used to examine internationalization, glocalization, institutional transformation, and world-class university aspirations. The inclusion of recent studies is important, perhaps unavoidable, because the field is changing quickly, especially after

religious moderation became more strongly embedded in national educational discourse and institutional policy.

The analysis was conducted through thematic synthesis. First, the literature was read to identify recurring concepts, such as moderation values, institutional culture, curriculum integration, academic capitalism, local wisdom, and global competitiveness. Second, these concepts were grouped into broader analytical themes, including religious moderation as institutional ethos, academic reform as structural transformation, and global competitiveness as strategic orientation. Third, the themes were compared to identify tensions, overlaps, and possible conceptual linkages. For example, Fathana et al. (2024) and Musgamy et al. (2026) make it possible to read global competitiveness not only as institutional progress, but also as a potential source of pressure on Islamic identity and ethical governance. This methodological approach has one limitation. It relies on secondary literature rather than interviews, surveys, or direct institutional observation. Even so, it remains useful because it allows the article to build an integrated framework from a fragmented but growing body of scholarship.

Results and Discussion

Religious Moderation as an Institutional Ethos in Indonesian Islamic Higher Education

Religious moderation in Indonesian Islamic higher education appears in the literature not merely as a doctrinal concept, but as an institutional ethos that shapes policy, curriculum, student formation, and public engagement. Muhlisin et al. (2023) show that government policies have played a significant role in cultivating religious moderation within state Islamic higher education, especially through institutional strategies that link moderation with national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and cultural accommodation. This finding indicates that moderation is not positioned outside the university system. It is expected to become part of the internal logic of governance, teaching, research, and community service. In this sense, Islamic higher education is asked to perform a double task. It must preserve Islamic scholarly identity, and at the same time it must contribute to Indonesia's plural democratic life.

Nasir and Rijal (2021) describe the mainstreaming of religious moderation as an effort to keep Islamic higher education on the "middle path," while Burhanuddin and Ilmi (2022) explain that moderation appears through several institutional typologies, including cultural, symbolic, and paradigmatic forms. These studies suggest that the institutionalization of moderation is not uniform. Some universities emphasize policy and regulation. Others rely more strongly on campus culture, religious symbols, student activities, or pesantren traditions. Such variation is understandable, because Indonesian Islamic higher education is not a single homogeneous field. It includes state Islamic universities, private Islamic institutions, pesantren-based universities, and Islamic colleges that operate in different social, political, and cultural environments. The more interesting point is that moderation becomes meaningful only when it is translated into the daily experience of academic life.

Surawardi et al. (2024) help explain this process through the lens of social exchange theory, in which moderate Islamic values are internalized through interaction, reciprocity, trust, and social recognition. This perspective is useful because it shifts the focus from formal curriculum to lived institutional relations. Students do not learn moderation only from textbooks. They also learn it from how lecturers respond to difference, how campus leaders manage diversity, how student organizations handle disagreement, and how religious authority is practiced in everyday academic spaces. A campus may declare itself moderate, but students will evaluate that declaration through experience. This is perhaps a small but important point. Moderation must be felt as a culture, not only read as a policy statement.

The literature also shows that religious moderation is strengthened when it is connected with existing Islamic educational traditions. Thoyib et al. (2024) argue that

pesantren experience contributes to tolerance and open-mindedness among Indonesian Islamic university students. Nasution et al. (2024) further show that *kitab kuning* traditions can support wasatiyah values when classical Islamic texts are interpreted through a balanced and contextual approach. Hasan and Mujahidin (2023) add another layer by showing that Sufism-based internalization can foster love, tolerance, and non-violence. These findings challenge the simplistic assumption that traditional Islamic learning is inherently conservative or resistant to pluralism. In many cases, tradition can become a strong foundation for moderation, provided that it is taught with reflective, ethical, and dialogical sensibility.

At the level of campus organization, Muhsin et al. (2024) show that religious moderation programs at IAIN Ponorogo contribute to policy implementation and identity formation. The establishment of dedicated institutional units, such as religious moderation houses, becomes one mechanism for organizing seminars, workshops, community engagement, and interfaith literacy programs. Kurniawan et al. (2025) also emphasize that strategic management of religious moderation requires integrative planning rather than fragmented activities. These studies suggest that moderation needs institutional infrastructure. However, infrastructure alone is not enough. A unit may exist, but its influence depends on whether its programs are connected to teaching, research, student affairs, and university governance. Otherwise, moderation risks becoming peripheral, active in ceremonial moments but weak in academic substance.

From Normative Commitment to Practical Implementation

Although religious moderation has gained strong policy visibility, the literature repeatedly indicates that implementation remains uneven. Chotimah et al. (2025) warn that moderation in Islamic educational management is often implemented superficially, especially when institutions treat it as a requirement to be documented rather than a value to be cultivated. This is one of the most serious findings in the current scholarship. The problem is not that institutions reject moderation openly. Rather, the problem is that moderation may be accepted rhetorically but practiced minimally. It appears in official documents, banners, seminars, and curriculum labels, but does not always transform classroom interaction, student reasoning, or institutional decision-making.

Ainissyifa and Nasrulloh (2025) show that the implementation of religious moderation values in Islamic religious higher education may be constrained by ideological resistance, limited pedagogical clarity, and uneven understanding among educators. This indicates that moderation is not automatically internalized simply because it is declared by policy. Lecturers and institutional actors need conceptual clarity. They must understand what moderation means, what it does not mean, and how it can be taught without reducing religious conviction. This point matters because some communities may misread moderation as theological compromise, while others may reduce it to generic tolerance without Islamic grounding. Both tendencies are problematic. Religious moderation in Islamic higher education must be intellectually serious enough to engage Islamic sources and socially responsive enough to address plural public life.

Digital culture complicates the picture further. Zulkarnain et al. (2025) show that religious educators in Indonesia and Malaysia face new challenges in promoting moderation and interfaith dialogue within an environment shaped by social media, online preaching, and polarized religious narratives. Nurhayati et al. (2025) similarly argue that digital citizenship must be integrated with religious moderation, especially in open and distance education. These studies remind us that students' religious imagination is no longer shaped only by family, mosque, pesantren, or university. It is also shaped by short videos, recommendation systems, online debates, and algorithmic exposure. This creates a difficult educational situation. A lecturer may spend a semester teaching tolerance and critical reasoning, while

students encounter hundreds of emotionally charged online messages that simplify religious difference into suspicion or hostility.

Muliadi et al. (2025) show that students in Islamic higher education may display stronger scores on indicators of moderation than those in public universities, particularly in national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and cultural accommodation. Hak and Putra (2025) also find that information literacy has an effect on religious moderation among students, with important differences between Islamic and public university contexts. These findings are encouraging, but they should not lead to complacency. Higher moderation scores do not necessarily mean that all students have developed deep dialogical capacity. They may indicate cognitive familiarity with moderation indicators, but the deeper question remains. Can students apply moderate reasoning when facing real disagreement, provocative information, sectarian sentiment, or political manipulation of religion? The answer depends on pedagogy, campus culture, and repeated practice.

Academic Reform and the Reconfiguration of Islamic Higher Education

Academic reform in Indonesian Islamic higher education has developed alongside the agenda of religious moderation. Irham (2025) shows that the integration of science and religion has become one of the central patterns of reform in Indonesian Islamic higher education. This reform reflects a broader institutional transformation, especially after many Islamic institutes and colleges expanded into universities. Such transformation is not simply administrative. It changes the structure of knowledge, the range of academic programs, the expectations placed on lecturers, and the identity of the institution itself. Islamic higher education is no longer judged only by its mastery of religious sciences, but also by its ability to participate in modern scientific, technological, and social debates.

Sibawaihi et al. (2024) describe the transformation of Islamic higher education institutions from institutes or colleges into universities as a process shaped by globalization and glocalization. This is a useful formulation. Globalization pushes institutions toward international standards, quality assurance, research productivity, and managerial efficiency. Glocalization, however, requires institutions to reinterpret those pressures through local values, Islamic identity, and Indonesian social realities. Sudirman et al. (2025) similarly argue that the movement of state Islamic higher education institutions toward world-class university status involves negotiation between global aspirations and institutional values. This negotiation is not always smooth. There is pressure to publish internationally, attract partnerships, improve rankings, and professionalize governance. At the same time, Islamic universities must avoid becoming indistinguishable from secular institutions except in name.

Curriculum integration becomes one of the most visible forms of reform. Shaleh et al. (2024) show that a holistic-integrative Islamic religious education curriculum can connect intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social dimensions of learning. F. Fauzi et al. (2025) propose a transdisciplinary framework through the *Jabalul Hikmah* curriculum, which seeks to connect Islamic higher learning with global innovation. Firdaus et al. (2025) examine the integration of Islamic values and digital technology at UIN Siber Cirebon, indicating that reform increasingly involves the digital transformation of Islamic education. These studies point in a similar direction. Islamic higher education needs models of reform that are not merely additive. It is not enough to place Islamic values beside modern science. The deeper task is to construct an academic culture in which knowledge, ethics, technology, and human responsibility are mutually connected.

Tanjung et al. (2026) distinguish between symbolic and epistemic integration of Islamic values in undergraduate biology education, and this distinction is especially relevant for Islamic higher education reform. Symbolic integration may include references to Qur'anic verses, Islamic terminology, or moral language without changing how knowledge is produced and evaluated. Epistemic integration, by contrast, asks how Islamic ethical and

metaphysical assumptions shape the purpose, limits, and social use of knowledge. Zul et al. (2026) also note that integrating Islamic ethics into modern education curriculum faces conceptual and institutional challenges. These findings suggest that academic reform must move beyond surface-level Islamization. It requires serious intellectual work, including curriculum redesign, lecturer capacity building, interdisciplinary collaboration, and philosophical clarity about the meaning of Islamic knowledge in the contemporary university.

Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Student Formation

The connection between curriculum, pedagogy, and student formation is one of the strongest themes in the literature. M. Fauzi et al. (2025) show that the mainstreaming of religious moderation requires alignment between goals, curriculum content, and implementation strategies. This means that moderation cannot be inserted randomly into a course or delivered only through occasional lectures. It must be integrated into learning outcomes, teaching materials, classroom methods, assessment, and student activities. Kosim et al. (2024) demonstrate that moderation-based curriculum modules can be developed within laboratory madrasah connected to Islamic higher education, while Mukhibat et al. (2024) show that religious moderation education can be designed and evaluated systematically at the higher education level. The important implication is that moderation can be taught intentionally, but only when institutions treat it as a pedagogical project rather than an administrative theme.

Basri et al. (2022) connect higher-order thinking skills with religious moderation, showing that students' capacity for analysis, evaluation, and reflective judgment is closely related to the strengthening of moderation. Nugraha et al. (2026) similarly show that cognitive test instruments based on religious moderation can support higher-order thinking in educational statistics. At first glance, statistics and religious moderation may appear unrelated. But the connection is actually meaningful. Moderation requires the ability to reason proportionally, interpret evidence, avoid overgeneralization, and evaluate claims critically. A student who cannot distinguish evidence from opinion may be more vulnerable to extremist simplification, digital misinformation, or sectarian rhetoric. In this sense, critical thinking is not an external addition to Islamic education. It is part of moral and religious formation.

Ibrahim et al. (2023) find a positive correlation between attitudes toward religious moderation and academic achievement among Islamic higher education students. This finding should be interpreted carefully. It does not mean that moderation automatically produces academic excellence, or that high-achieving students are always moderate. Still, it suggests that openness, discipline, reflective attitude, and balanced reasoning may support both academic and ethical development. Saepudin et al. (2023) also show that character education aimed at religious moderation becomes stronger through action research and participatory learning. These findings support the idea that moderation is learned through practice. Students need to engage real problems, discuss difference, reflect on their assumptions, and encounter social plurality in guided ways. The classroom must become not only a site of knowledge transfer, but also a space for ethical rehearsal.

Dialogical and transformative pedagogy is therefore essential. Hamdanah et al. (2026) show that interreligious-based instruction in Islamic boarding school can be developed through a love-based curriculum perspective, emphasizing relational ethics and human dignity. Lamont (2020) provides a broader theoretical contribution by distinguishing safe spaces from brave spaces. In Islamic higher education, this distinction can help lecturers create classrooms where students feel respected but are also challenged to engage difficult questions. Religious difference, sectarian tension, gender debates, minority issues, and global religious conflict cannot be understood through avoidance. They require brave pedagogical

spaces where students learn to disagree without hostility and to defend convictions without dehumanizing others. It is not an easy task. Yet it is precisely the kind of intellectual discipline that moderation requires.

Global Competitiveness and Internationalization

Global competitiveness in Indonesian Islamic higher education is often associated with internationalization, digital transformation, leadership, and institutional reputation. Susilawati et al. (2025) show that educational technology-based strategies, including learning management systems, blended learning, e-learning, and digitized administration, support the internationalization of Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam. Achruh and Sukirman (2024) argue that Indonesian Islamic higher education institutions respond to globalization through curriculum adaptation, institutional development, and efforts to safeguard Islamic principles. These studies indicate that competitiveness is not merely a matter of external recognition. It involves internal capacity. Universities must build systems that can support academic mobility, digital learning, research collaboration, quality assurance, and multilingual academic communication.

Sholehuddin et al. (2025) emphasize the role of local wisdom in shaping internationalization strategies. This finding is important because internationalization is sometimes misunderstood as the adoption of foreign models. In fact, Islamic higher education can engage global academic networks while drawing from local culture, Indonesian pluralism, pesantren traditions, and Islamic ethical values. Supriyanto et al. (2025) show that madrasah education faces globalization by moving from bilingual to international classrooms, and although the study focuses on madrasah, its implications resonate with higher education. Language, curriculum, pedagogy, and global exposure matter. Yet they should not erase the deeper educational mission. Internationalization without identity may produce institutional visibility, but it may not produce meaningful educational transformation.

Usman and Rokhimawan (2024) discuss the strategic roadmap toward world-class status in Indonesian Islamic universities. Their work shows that world-class aspiration involves governance, research productivity, academic networks, leadership, and institutional differentiation. Sibawaihi et al. (2025) further draw lessons from Australia, suggesting that Indonesian Islamic higher education can learn from international systems while adapting them to local institutional needs. The issue, however, is not simply how to become world-class. The more difficult question is what kind of world-class Islamic university Indonesia wants to develop. If world-class status means only ranking, publications, and global branding, then Islamic higher education may become trapped in an external logic of competition. If it is reinterpreted through Islamic ethics, social responsibility, and moderation, then global competitiveness may become a means of strengthening the public contribution of Islamic universities.

Leadership plays a decisive role in this process. Zakaria et al. (2025) show that strategic management practices in pesantren contribute to educational quality and organizational sustainability. Amas (2026) shows that the transformation of Salafiyah pesantren into a Khalafiyah model reflects adaptive leadership in response to changing educational demands. Hamdanah, Baharun, et al. (2025) highlight the role of kiai leadership and service quality in shaping pesantren reputation, while Hamdanah, Mardia, et al. (2025) discuss visionary leadership in Islamic boarding schools within the Barakka framework. Although several of these studies focus on pesantren rather than universities, they offer relevant insights for Islamic higher education. Leadership in Islamic institutions is not only managerial. It carries moral, symbolic, cultural, and spiritual authority. This makes leadership both a resource and a responsibility.

Negotiating Islamic Identity, Academic Capitalism, and Global Standards

One of the most critical findings in the literature is that global competitiveness may create tension with Islamic identity. Fathana et al. (2024) argue that academic capitalism in Southeast Asian Islamic universities pushes institutions toward market-oriented behavior, ranking competition, revenue generation, and managerial rationality. These pressures are not necessarily negative. They may encourage efficiency, innovation, accountability, and productivity. Yet they can also narrow the mission of Islamic higher education if not critically negotiated. A university that becomes too focused on metrics may neglect moral formation, community service, and Islamic intellectual tradition. It may become successful in measurable terms, but thinner in educational meaning.

Musgamy et al. (2026) show that quality governance in Indonesian Islamic higher education under globalized policy regimes involves institutional negotiation. This means that global standards are not simply adopted. They are interpreted, adjusted, resisted, and sometimes reconfigured. Such negotiation is necessary because Islamic higher education carries normative commitments that cannot always be measured through ordinary performance indicators. The value of moderation, for example, cannot be captured only through the number of seminars conducted. The integration of knowledge cannot be assessed only through curriculum documents. The formation of ethical graduates cannot be reduced to employability statistics. These are measurable to some extent, but not fully. This does not mean that Islamic universities should reject evaluation. It means that evaluation must be designed with sensitivity to Islamic educational purposes.

Khotimah et al. (2025) show that Muslim university students in Riau negotiate Islamic identity through local culture, transnational networks, and campus environments. This finding broadens the discussion beyond institutional policy. Students are not passive recipients of university programs. They actively interpret Islam, modernity, nationality, and global culture. In the age of digital media and transnational religious discourse, students may draw from local ulama, global Islamic influencers, campus lecturers, pesantren traditions, online communities, and international political narratives. Religious moderation, therefore, must help students navigate identity complexity. It should not suppress identity, but guide it toward balance, responsibility, and openness.

Wakano et al. (2025) argue that multiculturalism in Islamic higher education requires institutional pathways beyond rhetoric and resistance. This is a useful reminder. It is easy to speak about tolerance, diversity, and moderation. It is harder to build systems that protect minority voices, support intergroup learning, handle conflict fairly, and cultivate ethical citizenship. Kurniawan et al. (2025) similarly emphasize that strategic management of moderation must integrate policy, curriculum, leadership, and institutional culture. Muhibbi et al. (2025) identify typology, strategy, and evaluation as key elements in religious moderation practices across Indonesian higher education institutions. These studies suggest that moderation must be managed, but not bureaucratized to death. It needs structure, but it also needs sincerity, intellectual depth, and lived example.

Toward an Integrated Model of Moderated, Reform-Oriented, and Globally Competitive Islamic Higher Education

The findings discussed above indicate that religious moderation, academic reform, and global competitiveness are mutually connected. They should not be treated as separate institutional agendas. Religious moderation without academic reform may remain morally attractive but pedagogically weak. Academic reform without moderation may become technically efficient but ethically uncertain. Global competitiveness without Islamic identity may produce visibility but not necessarily meaningful contribution. This is why an integrated model is needed.

In this proposed model, religious moderation functions as the ethical foundation of Islamic higher education. It provides values such as balance, justice, tolerance, anti-violence, and cultural accommodation. Academic reform functions as the institutional mechanism that translates those values into curriculum, pedagogy, governance, research, digital transformation, and quality assurance. Global competitiveness functions as the strategic orientation that pushes Islamic universities to engage international standards, research networks, technological development, and public accountability. Local wisdom and Islamic identity function as cultural anchors, ensuring that global engagement does not become rootless imitation. Transformative leadership functions as the enabling capacity that connects vision with institutional practice.

Nirwana et al. (2024) show through bibliometric analysis that Islamic education and character development remain strongly connected in Indonesian religious education scholarship. This supports the argument that the future of Islamic higher education should not be measured only by institutional expansion, but also by its capacity to form ethical and intellectually responsible graduates. Syabuddin et al. (2026) strengthen this point by proposing an integrative construction model for religious moderation through strategic management in Islamic boarding schools. Although the institutional context differs, the principle is relevant. Moderation requires construction. It must be built through planning, leadership, curriculum, culture, and evaluation. It cannot depend only on moral appeals.

The integrated model proposed here does not remove all tensions. It does not pretend that Islamic higher education can easily reconcile religious identity, academic capitalism, technological disruption, and global competition. The tensions are real. Yet the model offers a more balanced way to understand them. Indonesian Islamic higher education is not simply preserving tradition, nor is it merely adopting global academic modernity. It is negotiating both. At its best, this negotiation can produce institutions that are religiously grounded, intellectually open, socially inclusive, and globally relevant. That, according to us, is the central promise of Indonesian Islamic higher education in the contemporary period.

Conclusion

Indonesian Islamic higher education is undergoing a significant institutional and intellectual transformation. This transformation cannot be understood only as a movement toward modernization, nor can it be reduced to the preservation of inherited religious traditions. The findings of this article show that religious moderation, academic reform, and global competitiveness are increasingly intertwined in shaping the direction of Islamic universities in Indonesia. Religious moderation provides the ethical foundation for cultivating tolerance, balance, justice, national commitment, and respect for cultural diversity. Academic reform provides the institutional mechanism through which these values can be translated into curriculum, pedagogy, governance, research, digital innovation, and quality assurance. Global competitiveness, meanwhile, creates strategic pressure for Islamic higher education to improve its academic visibility, international partnerships, technological capacity, and institutional performance.

At the same time, this article has shown that the relationship among these three dimensions is not always smooth. Religious moderation may become superficial when it is treated only as administrative rhetoric. Academic reform may lose its Islamic depth when it merely imitates secular models of higher education. Global competitiveness may become problematic when it is driven only by rankings, market logic, and academic capitalism. For that reason, Indonesian Islamic higher education needs a more integrated framework, one that connects moral formation with academic excellence and global relevance. In our view, the future strength of Islamic universities lies precisely in their ability to negotiate these tensions without abandoning their ethical and epistemological roots.

The contribution of this article lies in offering an integrated reading of Indonesian Islamic higher education as a negotiated field between Islamic values, institutional reform,

and global academic pressures. Rather than viewing moderation, reform, and competitiveness as separate agendas, this article argues that they should be understood as mutually reinforcing dimensions. Future research may extend this discussion through empirical studies involving university leaders, lecturers, students, policymakers, and quality assurance actors. Comparative studies across Muslim-majority countries would also enrich the debate and help clarify how Islamic higher education can remain religiously grounded, intellectually credible, socially inclusive, and globally competitive.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the colleagues for sharing, discussing, and providing their very useful comments to improve the manuscript.

Conflict of Interests

There are no disclosed conflicts of interest for the authors. We attest that the submission is unique and is not already being considered by another publisher.

Ethical Considerations

The sources of this research—articles, books, research papers, and scientific forum proceedings—are all free of copyright violations.

Disclaimer

The views and assumptions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the authors.

REFERENCES

- Achruh, A., & Sukirman, S. (2024). An Analysis of Indonesian Islamic Higher Education Institutions in The Era of Globalization. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 23(9), 78–102. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.23.9.5>
- Ainissyifa, H., & Nasrulloh, Y. M. (2025). Implementation of Religious Moderation Values in Islamic Religious Higher Education in Garut, West Java. *Ulumuna*, 29(1), 515–542. <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v29i1.1371>
- Amas, A. (2026). The Transformation of Salafiyah Islamic Boarding School Into Khalafiyah Model: A Case Study of Al-Marjan Pesantren in Banten, Indonesia. *Asian Journal of Human Services*, 30(1). <https://doi.org/10.14391/ajhs.e3001.1.007>
- Baharun, H., Thohir, P. F. D. M., & Sanjani, M. A. F. (2025). The Role of Kiai Leadership and Service Quality in Shaping The Reputation of Pesantren. *Munaddhomah*, 6(4), 695–709. <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v6i4.1785>
- Basri, H., Suhartini, A., Nursobah, A., & Ruswandi, U. (2022). Applying Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS) To Strengthen Students' Religious Moderation At Madrasah Aliyah. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(2), 207–220. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v8i2.21133>
- Bulan, S., & Fuad, Z. (2025). The Dynamics of Religious Moderation and Interfaith Dialogue in Educational Institutions: Perspectives From Religious Educators in Indonesia and

- Malaysia. *International Studies in Catholic Education*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19422539.2025.2600994>
- Burhanuddin, N., & Ilmi, D. (2022). Typologies of Religious Moderation in Indonesian Higher Education Institutions. *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 16(2), 455–479. <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2022.16.2.455-479>
- Chotimah, C., Qudsy, S. Z., & Yusuf, M. (2025). Superficial Implementation of Religious Moderation in Islamic Educational Management. *Cogent Education*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2442235>
- Fathana, H., Herdianto, E. F., & Dewi, K. U. (2024). Academic Capitalism in Southeast Asia: Lessons From Islamic Universities in Indonesia. *Journal of ASEAN Studies*, 12(2), 263–282. <https://doi.org/10.21512/jas.v12i2.11501>
- Fauzi, F., Fakhruddin, A. U., & Syauqi, M. (2025). Re-Envisioning Islamic Higher Learning Through The Jabalul Hikmah Curriculum: A Transdisciplinary Framework For Global Innovation. *Kharisma*, 4(2), 187–210. <https://doi.org/10.59373/kharisma.v4i2.120>
- Fauzi, M., Yussof, M. H. B., Thoha, A. M., & Jhoni, M. (2025). Mainstreaming Religious Moderation in Indonesian Higher Education: Perspectives on Goals, Curriculum Content, and Implementation Strategies. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 22(2), 400–422. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v22i2.12901>
- Firdaus, S., Suwendi, S., Nafi'a, I., Gumindari, S., Huriyah, H., & Juanda, A. (2025). Transforming Islamic Higher Education: Integrating Islamic Values and Digital Technology At UIN Siber Cirebon. *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun*, 13(3), 2337–2362. <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v13i3.2330>
- Hadisi, L. (2025). Facing The Challenges of Globalization: Transforming Madrasah Education From Bilingual To International Classrooms. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(1), 17–30. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v8i1.125>
- Hak, A. A., & Putra, R. A. (2025). Information Literacy Effect on Religious Moderation Among Students of Islamic and Public Universities. *Record and Library Journal*, 11(2), 312–329. <https://doi.org/10.20473/rlj.V11-I2.2025.312-329>
- Hamdi, S., & Maulidi, A. R. (2024). Implementation of Moderate Islamic Values in Education At STAI Al-Falah Banjarbaru: An Analysis Through George Homans' Social Exchange Theory. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 2024(114), 141–155. <https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2024.114.09>
- Hasan, M. S. (2023). Sufism and Religious Moderation: The Internalization Process in Thoriqoh Syadziliyah Al Masudiyah Jombang. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 6(3), 492–511. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v6i3.4841>
- Ibrahim, R., Rifa'i, A. A., Triana, Y., Haryanto, S., & Mukhlisin, A. (2023). The Correlation Between Attitude Toward Religious Moderation and Academic Achievement of Islamic Higher Education Students. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice*, 23(18), 46–59. <https://doi.org/10.33423/jhetp.v23i18.6621>
- Irham. (2025). Policies and Patterns of Integration of Science and Religion in Indonesian Islamic Higher Education. *Higher Education*, 90(5), 1311–1328. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-024-01378-9>

- Kholis, N., & Rini, J. (2023). Navigating The Nexus: Government Policies in Cultivating Religious Moderation Within State Islamic Higher Education. *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies*, 11(1), 207–236. <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v11i1.12677>
- Kosim, M., Kustati, M., Sirait, W. R., Fajri, S., Febriani, S. R., & Perrodin, D. D. (2024). Developing A Religious Moderation-Based Curriculum Module For Laboratory Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Islamic Higher Education. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10(2), 350–362. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v10i2.39163>
- Kurniawan, A. F., Juhji, J., Mufrodi, M., & Sumintak, S. (2025). Strategic Management of Religious Moderation in Indonesian Higher Education: An Integrative Islamic Education Perspective. *Kharisma*, 4(2), 260–271. <https://doi.org/10.59373/kharisma.v4i2.100>
- Lamont, T. (2020). Safe Spaces Or Brave Spaces? Re-Envisioning Practical Theology and Transformative Learning Theory. *Religious Education*, 115(2), 171–183. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2019.1682452>
- Muhibbi, M. S., Yaakob, M. F. M., Utama, S., & Fahmi, M. (2025). Religious Moderation Practices in Indonesian Higher Education Institutions: A Systematic Literature Review on Typology, Strategy, and Evaluation. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 22(2), 423–445. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v22i2.11691>
- Muhsin, M., Kususiyah, A., & Maksum, M. (2024). Religious Moderation in Indonesian Islamic Universities: Policy Implementation and Identity Formation At IAIN Ponorogo. *Ascarya: Journal of Islamic Science, Culture and Social Studies*, 4(2), 54–66. <https://doi.org/10.53754/iscs.v4i2.713>
- Mukhibat, M., Effendi, M., Setyawan, W. H., & Sutoyo, M. (2024). Development and Evaluation of Religious Moderation Education Curriculum At Higher Education in Indonesia. *Cogent Education*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2302308>
- Muliadi, M., Syamsidar, S., & Islam, N. (2025). Religious Moderation By Design: A Comparative Sociological Da'wah Study in Indonesian Higher Education. *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun*, 13(2), 1549–1580. <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v13i2.1778>
- Musgamy, A., Rappe, R., Abd. Rahman, R., Muslimin, A. A., & Nadirah, S. (2026). Quality Governance and Institutional Negotiation in Indonesian Islamic Higher Education Under Globalised Policy Regimes. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 25(3), 1011–1032. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.25.3.45>
- Nasir, M., & Rijal, M. K. (2021). Keeping The Middle Path: Mainstreaming Religious Moderation Through Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, 11(2), 213–241. <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v11i2.213-241>
- Nasution, S., Asari, H., & Al-Rasyid, H. (2024). Kitab Kuning and Religious Moderation: A Study on State Islamic Universities in Indonesia. *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, 19(2), 73–88. <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol19no2.5>
- Nirwana, A. A. N. (2024). Bibliometric Analysis of Islamic Education and Character Development in Religious Education Practices in Indonesia. *Pakistan Journal of Life and Social Sciences*, 22(2), 1231–1245. <https://doi.org/10.57239/PJLSS-2024-22.2.0086>

- Nugraha, E., Syarifudin, E., Ansori, A., Velia, L. C., & Nurachma, V. (2026). Improving Educational Statistics on HOTS Through Religious Moderation and Cognitive Test. *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura*, 26(1), 25–43. <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v26i1.27357>
- Nurhayati, L., Supriadi, U., Jenuri, J., & Karim, A. (2025). Integrating Digital Citizenship and Religious Moderation in Open and Distance Education: A Holistic Approach To Character Development in Indonesia. *Asian Association of Open Universities Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AAOUJ-02-2025-0025>
- Rokhimawan, M. A. (2024). Unraveling The Strategic Roadmap To Achieve World-Class Status in Indonesia's Islamic Universities: A Comparative Study. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 14(4), 430–442. <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2024-0113>
- Rosidi, I., & Embong, R. (2025). The Quest For Islamic Identity Among Muslim University Students in Riau, Indonesia. *Ascarya: Journal of Islamic Science, Culture and Social Studies*, 5(2), 180–196. <https://doi.org/10.53754/ft8w0z82>
- Rusydi, M. (2025). Visionary Leadership in Islamic Boarding Schools: Implications For Institutional Management Within The Barakka Framework. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 24(8), 1041–1057. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.24.8.46>
- Saepudin, A., Supriyadi, T., Surana, D., & Asikin, I. (2023). Strengthening Character Education: An Action Research in Forming Religious Moderation in Islamic Education. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 22(12), 84–105. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.22.12.5>
- Shaleh, M. (2024). Development of A Holistic-Integrative Islamic Religious Education Curriculum in An Integrated Islamic School. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 2024(113), 227–241. <https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2024.113.13>
- Sholehuddin, M. S., Hardini, I., Jaeni, M., Sofa, E. M., & Ho, T. T. H. (2025). The Role of Local Wisdom in Shaping Internationalisation Strategies of Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia. *Intellectual Discourse*, 33(2), 607–634. <https://doi.org/10.31436/id.v33i2.2315>
- Sibawaihi, S., Ratnasari, D., Purnami, S., & Brooks, M. (2025). Internationalizing Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia: A Lesson Learned From Australia. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 11(1), 90–100. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v11i1.43950>
- Sibawaihi, S., Suyatno, S., Suyadi, S., & Fernandes, V. (2024). Transforming Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia From “Institutes/Colleges” Into “Universities”: Globalization Or Glocalization? *Management in Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08920206241268506>
- Soebahar, A. H., Wijdan, A. F., & Budiharso, T. (2026). Exploring Inter-Religious-Based Instruction in Islamic Boarding School: Loved-Based Curriculum Perspectives. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, 17(1), 276–306. <https://www.scopus.com/inward/record.uri?eid=2-s2.0-105034927392&partnerID=40&md5=d2e806870edb3c5db758791bddf3846b>
- Sudirman, S., Ramadhita, R., Bachri, S., & Whindari, Y. (2025). The Transformation of State Islamic Higher Education Institutions Into World-Class University: From Globalisation To Institutional Values. *Social Sciences and Humanities Open*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2025.101705>

- Susilawati, S., Supriyatno, T., Yasin, A. F., Chakim, A., Hani'ah, Z., Putri, C. A., & Sabri, A. (2025). Educational Technology-Based Strategies For The Internationalization of Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(2), 414–431. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v8i2.63>
- Syabuddin, S., Muhammad, M., Sakdiah, S., Fithriani, F., & Furqan, M. (2026). The Integrative Construction Model: A Strategic Management Approach To Religious Moderation in Indonesian Islamic Boarding Schools. *Kharisma*, 5(1), 113–129. <https://doi.org/10.59373/kharisma.v5i1.131>
- Tanjung, I. F., Ibrohim, I., Susilo, H., & Suryani, I. (2026). Symbolic and Epistemic Dimensions of Islamic Values Integration in Undergraduate Biology Education. *Journal of Culture and Values in Education*, 9(1), 335–360. <https://doi.org/10.46303/jcve.2026.15>
- Thoyib, M. E., Degaf, A., Fatah, A. A., & Huda, M. (2024). Religious Tolerance Among Indonesian Islamic University Students: The Pesantren Connection. *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, 19(2), 239–250. <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol19no2.16>
- Wakano, A., Ernas, S., Sai'dah, U., Lapele, F., & Prihono, E. W. (2025). Beyond Rhetoric and Resistance: Institutional Pathways of Multiculturalism in Islamic Higher Education. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 11(2), 293–306. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v11i2.50392>
- Zakaria, A. R., Budiman, A. M., Fatahillah, M., & Akib, A. R. M. (2025). Strategic Management Practices in Pesantren: Innovations For Enhancing Educational Quality and Organizational Sustainability. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Management*, 13(2), 86–97. <https://www.scopus.com/inward/record.uri?eid=2-s2.0-105006511332&partnerID=40&md5=78bcaee81c88f3027f1d75113d7b3375>
- Zaluchu, S. E., Widodo, P., & Kriswanto, A. (2025). Conceptual Reconstruction of Religious Moderation in The Indonesian Context Based on Previous Research: Bibliometric Analysis. *Social Sciences and Humanities Open*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2025.101552>
- Zul, Z., Najihul Huda, M., Fuad, Z., & Abdullah, M. (2026). Integration of Islamic Ethics in Modern Education Curriculum: Challenges and Opportunities-A Systematic Literature Review. *British Journal of Religious Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2026.2621177>