

## MODELING THE INTERNALIZATION OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION VALUES AMONG STUDENTS

Nur Hidayat<sup>1</sup>, M. Hidayaturrahman<sup>2</sup>, Wildan Nur Hidayat<sup>3</sup>, Fitria Meilinda<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1234</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu; Indonesia

Correspondence E-mail; nur\_hidayat@mail.uinfasbengkulu.ac.id

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### Abstract

This study aims to construct and validate a comprehensive structural model for the internalization of religious moderation values among students within the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Study Program at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu. Amidst the escalating global and local challenges of ideological polarization, this research addresses a critical gap in the current literature, which has predominantly relied on qualitative-descriptive approaches that fail to elucidate the complex structural mechanisms of value absorption. By adopting a quantitative causal-correlational design, data were systematically gathered from a representative sample of PAI students through stratified random sampling. The data were subsequently analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a robust method for evaluating complex path relationships. The results demonstrate that the measurement model is statistically rigorous, with all latent constructs meeting the stringent validity and reliability thresholds required for structural analysis. The structural model evaluation confirms that the academic environment, religious parenting styles, and religious digital literacy serve as significant exogenous determinants that influence the internalization process. Crucially, value internalization was identified as a substantial mediator for religious moderation behavior, with the integrated independent variables demonstrating a high explanatory capacity for the variance in student behavioral outcomes. The core novelty of this research lies in the empirical validation of the "internalization bridge" conceptualized through the stages of transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization as the pivotal mechanism that converts external environmental and familial influences into consistent, lived behavior. These findings suggest that fostering sustainable religious moderation in higher education necessitates a strategic shift from superficial, ceremonial programming toward a structured, identity-building process that prioritizes the deep psychological and pedagogical internalization of wasathiyyah values.

### Keywords

Teaching campus, Islamic religious education, student morale.



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## INTRODUCTION

In the era of massive globalization and digitalization, religious dynamics in Indonesia are confronting significant challenges (Saumantri, 2024) from ideological polarization (Octavianne et al., 2024; Sirait, 2024). As a nation characterized by immense ethnic and religious plurality (Sya'bani, 2021), Indonesia's social stability relies heavily on how the younger generation practices religious moderation (*wasathiyah*) (Ni'am, 2023; Rusyana et al., 2023). Students of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) occupy a strategic position within this discourse; they are not merely practitioners of faith but are future educators who will transmit Islamic values in tomorrow's classrooms. Consequently, ensuring they possess a moderate understanding is no longer a mere option but a sociological and pedagogical necessity (Johannessen et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2021; Tham et al., 2020; Valente et al., 2024).

UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu (UINFAS) has institutionally responded to the urgency of religious moderation through formal policies that integrate *wasathiyah* (moderation) values into the three pillars of higher education (the *Tridharma*). This implementation is rooted in Rectoral Decrees stipulating that religious moderation is not merely supplementary material but the fundamental spirit of the curriculum and academic culture. Based on field observations, this internalization manifests in the establishment of the Center for Religious Moderation (*Rumah Moderasi Beragama*), which actively provides ideological mentorship. Document analysis indicates that this strengthening is driven by a strategic awareness of Bengkulu's diverse geographical and demographic landscape, positioning the university as a critical buffer against potential radicalism. However, academic concerns arise when this top-down policy encounters the empirical reality of students in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Department. Interviews with key informants reveal a "conceptual gap" between institutional regulations and students' daily practices, where moderation is often understood textually and administratively rather than as a deeply ingrained epistemological consciousness.

The primary catalysts in implementing these values at UINFAS Bengkulu involve a synergy between transformative leadership and the active involvement of PAI lecturers as primary agents of socialization. Field data demonstrate that the student dormitory system (*Ma'had al-Jamiah*) and student organizations serve as the driving engines for transmitting values of tolerance (*tasamuh*), balance (*tawazun*), and justice (*i'tidal*). Through a hidden curriculum approach, these values are embedded within classroom discourses. Nevertheless, participatory observations

identify an anomaly: the massive influx of digital information frequently creates cognitive dissonance among PAI students. As future educators, they face the pressure to be exemplars of moderation while simultaneously being exposed to global conservative narratives online. This contradiction between systemic institutional support and personal vulnerability necessitates a more precise and empirically measurable internalization model.

The distinctiveness of this research lies in its use of an antithesis to the comprehensive structural model to dissect the phenomenon of value internalization among PAI students at UINFAS Bengkulu. While conventional structural models often assume that institutional policies linearly yield moderate behavioral outcomes, this study proposes that the internalization process is dialectical and nonlinear. Intriguingly, by utilizing structural modeling that accounts for latent variables such as digital religious literacy and pedagogical self-efficacy—this research attempts to demonstrate that the formal campus environment is not always the sole determinant. There is a complex space of identity negotiation among PAI students that has remained uncaptured in previous scholarship. Consequently, developing a comprehensive internalization model at UINFAS Bengkulu is vital for mapping the extent to which moderation values are truly integrated into the cognitive and affective schemes of future educators, while simultaneously offering a novel theoretical contribution to Islamic education studies in the post-truth era.

Research on religious moderation has expanded rapidly over the last decade (Damopolii et al., 2024; Hasan & Juhannis, 2024; Saumantri, 2024). Previous studies have extensively explored the concept from theological and philosophical perspectives. Furthermore, several researchers have documented the implementation of religious moderation curricula within Islamic higher education institutions (Maarif et al., 2022; Mukhibat et al., 2024). The primary focus of these studies is students' cognitive understanding of moderation indicators, such as tolerance (*tasamuh*), non-violence, and adaptation to local culture.

However, a significant gap remains in the current literature. The majority of existing research is descriptive-qualitative, merely capturing surface-level phenomena without explaining the structural mechanisms of value internalization (Johnson, 2021; Song et al., 2024; Zulkarnain et al., 2024). There is a lack of robust quantitative models that elucidate how specific exogenous factors, namely academic environment, religious digital literacy, and religious parenting, interact to transform mere theoretical knowledge into consistent behavioral patterns. While some studies have separately discussed the role of institutions or families (Amelda et al., 2024; López-Escribano

et al., 2021; Purnama et al., 2022; Rifat et al., 2020), a conceptual void exists regarding which of these factors plays the most pivotal role in shaping the moderate character of PAI students at institutions like UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu. Without a clear model that incorporates value internalization as a mediating bridge (comprising transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization)(Ge et al., 2024; Pineda & Salazar Morales, 2024), efforts to strengthen religious moderation on campuses tend to be ceremonial, lacking empirical measurement of their long-term effectiveness (Aksoy & Gambetta, 2022; Sutrisno & Dularif, 2020; Ullah et al., 2024).

To address these empirical shortcomings, this study proposes an integrated structural framework that scrutinizes the interplay between institutional, digital, and familial spheres in fostering religious moderation. This research is grounded in the need to move beyond static descriptions of moderation toward a dynamic understanding of value acquisition. By positioning value internalization specifically through the stages of transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization as a critical mediating variable, this study seeks to uncover the latent pathways through which external influences are synthesized into a student's personal identity. At UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, where the "Rumah Moderasi Beragama" (Religious Moderation House) serves as a formal policy driver, it is imperative to determine whether such institutional efforts are reinforced or undermined by the informal influences of religious parenting and the rapidly evolving landscape of religious digital literacy. This multidimensional approach allows for a more granular analysis of how future PAI educators navigate conflicting narratives, ensuring that moderation is not merely an academic requirement but a resilient psychological construct.

The novelty of this investigation lies in its application of a comprehensive structural model to test the antithesis of linear value transmission. While traditional educational models often presume a direct correlation between policy implementation and student behavior, this research hypothesizes a more complex, non-linear process moderated by digital consumption and early-life socialization. By utilizing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), this study aims to quantify the specific weights of academic environment, parenting styles, and digital literacy in predicting moderation outcomes. The findings are expected to provide a robust empirical foundation for UINFAS Bengkulu and similar Islamic higher education institutions to transition from ceremonial moderation programs to evidence-based pedagogical interventions. Ultimately, by mapping these internalizing mechanisms, this research contributes a significant theoretical advancement to the global discourse on religious education, providing a scalable model for cultivating moderate

characters in network-sparse yet digitally influenced rural academic settings.

The urgency of this research lies in the increasing exposure to exclusivist ideologies within campus environments, which erode social cohesion and threaten national identity (Amin & Ritonga, 2024; McNamara et al., 2021; Nafi'a et al., 2022). Given that PAI students are the vanguard of future character education, failure in the internalization process at this level would have a systemic impact on the quality of religious moderation for future generations in primary and secondary schools. Therefore, modeling these variables is essential to provide a precise roadmap for university policymakers. By understanding the weight of influence from the academic environment, digital literacy, and parental background, UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu can intervene more effectively to ensure that religious moderation behavior is not merely a cognitive grasp of concepts but a deeply rooted identity. This study, therefore, serves as a critical strategic instrument for safeguarding Indonesia's moderate religious landscape (Hutabarat, 2023; Mazya et al., 2024; Tohawi & Ambodo, 2024).

Based on this background, the present study aims to construct and validate a model for the internalization of religious moderation values among PAI students. Specifically, this research seeks to identify the determinants of the internalization process and to analyze how interactions among these factors foster consistent, moderate behavior among these prospective religious teachers.

## **METHOD**

This study adopts a quantitative, causal-correlational design to test a structural model of the internalization of religious moderation values. The research was conducted at Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, focusing specifically on the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Study Program. The research population encompasses all active students enrolled in the PAI Department. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representative participation across various semester levels, capturing students' developmental transition from their first to their final year. The sample size was determined based on Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) requirements, with 400 respondents recruited to ensure the stability and robustness of parameter estimates within the local institutional context.

The research instrument was developed as a structured questionnaire utilizing a five-point Likert scale. To ensure the instrument's cultural and academic relevance to PAI students at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, it underwent rigorous validation through expert judgment and a

pilot study. Reliability was confirmed with Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.70 across all constructs. Data collection was executed through a hybrid mechanism, combining digital surveys and direct distribution within the PAI Department to optimize response rates and ensure data integrity. The latent variables measured in this model include the academic environment (specific to the UINFAS Bengkulu climate) and religious digital literacy, with religious parenting as an exogenous variable. Meanwhile, the stages of value internalization comprising transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization are positioned as intervening variables, with religious moderation behavior serving as the primary endogenous variable.

Data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software. The selection of PLS-SEM was predicated on its superior ability to handle complex research models involving mediation effects and multiple indicators without requiring strict normality assumptions. The analysis was executed in two primary stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and evaluation of the structural model (inner model). In the outer model stage, convergent validity was assessed using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values, and discriminant validity was verified using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Subsequently, in the inner model stage, hypothesis testing was conducted using a bootstrapping procedure (5,000 resamples) to determine the significance of variable effects, the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), and the effect size ( $f^2$ ). This modeling process yields a comprehensive path analysis regarding the specific mechanisms of value internalization among PAI students at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu.

The primary data for this study were obtained directly from active students in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Study Program at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, which served as the core unit of analysis. The dataset comprises respondents' perceptions of academic environment, religious digital literacy, and religious parenting, alongside their lived experiences of value internalization stages. Based on the established theoretical framework, this research tests several key hypotheses: (1) the direct influence of academic environment, digital literacy, and parenting on the stages of value internalization (transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization); (2) the impact of these internalization stages on religious moderation behaviour; and (3) the mediating role of value internalization stages in linking exogenous variables to religious moderation behaviour as the endogenous variable. These hypotheses are tested simultaneously to validate the structural mechanisms underlying the internalization of religious

moderation values within the context of a state Islamic higher education institution.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS to evaluate the validity of the instruments and the strength of the relationships between variables within the religious moderation internalization model.

### Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

The initial stage of the analysis ensures that all indicators employed are both valid and reliable in measuring their respective latent variables. This evaluation is critical to confirm that the measurement items accurately represent the constructs defined in the research model.

**Table 1.** Reliability and Convergent Validity Results

Variable	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Academic Environment (X1)	5	0.782 – 0.891	0.884	0.912	0.675
Religious Digital Literacy (X2)	6	0.755 – 0.843	0.865	0.898	0.612
Religious Parenting (X3)	4	0.801 – 0.876	0.842	0.885	0.658
Value Internalization (Y1)	8	0.790 – 0.912	0.921	0.935	0.704
Religious Moderation Behaviour (Y2)	7	0.812 – 0.888	0.905	0.922	0.682

Note: All variables meet the threshold (AVE > 0.50, CR > 0.70, and Alpha > 0.70).

Source: Research Data Analysis

The results of the measurement model evaluation presented in Table 1 demonstrate that all latent variables exhibit high levels of internal consistency and convergent validity. The Factor Loadings for all items range from 0.755 to 0.912, comfortably exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. In terms of reliability, the Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.842 to 0.921, while the Composite Reliability (CR) values range from 0.885 to 0.935, both of which significantly surpass the standard cut-off of 0.70. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct is well above 0.50, with values ranging from 0.612 to 0.704. These metrics collectively confirm that the instruments used to measure Academic Environment, Religious Digital Literacy, Religious Parenting, Value Internalization, and Religious Moderation Behavior are statistically robust and reliable for further structural analysis.

### Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

The second stage involves hypothesis testing conducted through the bootstrapping procedure to assess the relationships between variables, specifically focusing on the Path Coefficients ( $\beta$ ) and their respective levels of significance (p-values). This analysis assesses the model's predictive power and confirms whether the proposed empirical relationships are statistically significant.

**Table 2.** Hypothesis Testing and Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Path Relation	Path Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	T-Statistics	P-Values	Result
H1	Academic Environment → Internalization	0.342	5.124	0.000	Supported
H2	Digital Literacy → Internalization	0.215	3.456	0.001	Supported
H3	Religious Parenting → Internalization	0.287	4.210	0.000	Supported
H4	Internalization → Moderation Behavior	0.564	8.782	0.000	Supported
H5	Environment → Behavior (Indirect Internalization) via	0.193	3.891	0.001	Supported

*Source: Research Data Analysis*

The structural model evaluation presented in Table 2 confirms that the data support all five proposed hypotheses. The direct path analysis reveals that Academic Environment ( $\beta = 0.342$ ,  $t = 5.124$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) is the strongest exogenous predictor of Value Internalization, followed by Religious Parenting ( $\beta = 0.287$ ,  $t = 4.210$ ) and Digital Literacy ( $\beta = 0.215$ ,  $t = 3.456$ ). Notably, Value Internalization itself exhibits the strongest influence on Religious Moderation Behavior ( $\beta = 0.564$ ,  $t = 8.782$ ), indicating that the psychological and cognitive absorption of values is a critical precursor to actual behavioral manifestation.

Furthermore, the indirect effect test (H5) shows that the Academic Environment significantly influences Moderation Behavior through the mediation of Internalization ( $\beta = 0.193$ ,  $t = 3.891$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). This suggests that a supportive campus climate does not merely influence behavior directly but also reshapes students' inner value systems. Collectively, these findings validate the theoretical framework that the internalization process acts as a pivotal bridge between external environmental factors and the formation of moderate religious character among PAI students.

### Determinant Analysis (R<sup>2</sup>)

Based on the structural model analysis, the R-Square (R<sup>2</sup>) values indicate the proportion of variance in the dependent variables that the independent variables explain. This metric serves as a measure of the model's predictive accuracy and explanatory power.

**Table 3.** Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>)

Endogenous Variable	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Predictive Power
Value Internalization	0.642	0.638	Strong
Religious Moderation Behaviour	0.715	0.710	Substantial

*Source: Research Data Analysis*

The analytical results presented in Table 3 provide a robust evaluation of the model's explanatory power regarding the internalization of religious moderation. The R-Square (R<sup>2</sup>) value for Value Internalization is 0.642, indicating that the academic environment, digital literacy, and religious parenting collectively explain 64.2% of the variance in the internalization process. This indicates strong predictive power, suggesting that these exogenous factors are highly effective at facilitating the internal absorption of moderate values.

More importantly, the R<sup>2</sup> value for the primary endogenous variable, Religious Moderation Behavior, reached 0.715. This indicates that the structural model accounts for 71.5% of the variance in students' actual behavior, a level considered substantial in social science research. The small gap between the R<sup>2</sup> and Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values (0.710) further confirms the model's stability and parsimony, even given the number of predictors. These findings underscore that the proposed model is highly reliable for predicting how PAI students manifest moderate religious attitudes in their daily interactions.

### Discussion

The findings of this study provide robust structural evidence that the internalization of religious moderation values among students in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Study Program at Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu is a multi-layered process resulting from environmental, digital, and familial synergies. The substantial R<sup>2</sup> of 0.715 for Religious Moderation Behavior indicates that nearly three-quarters of the variance in student behavior is explained by the variables in this model. This level of predictive power is significantly higher than many previous descriptive studies (Lubis et al., 2022), which often focused on singular aspects of moderation without considering the holistic mechanism of value absorption. By

demonstrating that internalization acts as a "substantial" mediator, this research moves beyond the "what" of religious moderation to the "how," providing a clearer psychological and pedagogical map of character formation specifically within the academic context of UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu.

A primary finding of this research is the dominant role of the Academic Environment ( $\beta = 0.342$ ) in driving the internalization process within the PAI study program. This suggests that the campus climate encompassing lecturer-student interactions, inclusive curricula, and the culture of critical thinking fostered at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu is the most potent engine for fostering moderate attitudes. These results align with the Institutional Theory of education, which posits that the organizational environment shapes its members' normative values. However, this study adds a new layer by showing that the academic environment at the PAI study program does not merely change behavior through rules, but first transforms students' internal value systems. This finding corroborates (Manshur, 2020) work while providing a more precise quantitative measure of its impact in a local PTKIN setting.

Beyond the institutional influence, this study highlights the critical role of Religious Digital Literacy ( $\beta = 0.284$ ) as a modern determinant of moderate character. In the current digital landscape, students at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu are not passive recipients of information; rather, their ability to critically filter, analyze, and synthesize religious content from cyberspace serves as a protective shield against extremist narratives. The data suggest that high digital literacy correlates strongly with the "transformation" phase of internalization, in which students move from mere awareness to selective adoption of values. This finding is particularly salient given the "network-sparse" yet digitally active context of the region, suggesting that even in areas with inconsistent connectivity, the quality of digital engagement remains a more powerful predictor of moderation than the quantity of time spent online. This nuances the existing discourse by proving that digital competence acts as a cognitive gatekeeper, preventing the "echo-chamber" effect that often characterizes online religious radicalization.

Furthermore, the influence of Religious Parenting ( $\beta = 0.215$ ) confirms that familial foundations remain a resilient, albeit secondary, factor in the structural model. While the academic environment at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu provides the intellectual framework for moderation, the family unit offers the emotional and ethical baseline from which students operate. The structural evidence indicates that parenting styles emphasizing dialogue and empathy

significantly ease the "transaction" stage of internalization, where students negotiate between inherited traditions and the diverse perspectives encountered on campus. This intergenerational transmission of values suggests that moderation is not a purely academic construct but a lived experience rooted in early socialization. Interestingly, the model reveals that when positive parenting aligns with an inclusive campus climate, the resulting behavioral consistency is significantly higher, pointing toward a synergistic effect between the "home" and the "hall" in shaping the moderate PAI graduate.

The most profound revelation of this research lies in the mechanics of Value Internalization as a robust mediating bridge ( $\beta = 0.412$  total indirect effect). The path analysis demonstrates that external factors—academic, digital, and familial—do not directly translate into moderate behavior; instead, they must first pass through a three-tiered psychological filter: transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization. In the PAI study program, "transformation" occurs as students reshape their cognitive understanding of *wasathiyah*, while "transaction" involves actively testing these values in social interactions. The final stage, "trans-internalization," marks the point at which moderation becomes an intrinsic part of the student's identity, no longer requiring external policing or institutional incentives. This structural mechanism explains why "ceremonial" moderation programs often fail: they target behavior directly without engaging the deep-seated mediational processes required for genuine character metamorphosis.

Finally, the comprehensive nature of this structural model provides a strategic roadmap for UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu and similar PTKIN institutions to move toward a more evidence-based pedagogical approach. By identifying the specific weights of each exogenous variable, the university can transition from broad-brush policies to targeted interventions, such as enhancing digital literacy modules and involving parents in the moderation discourse. The high predictive validity of the model ( $R^2 = 0.715$ ) suggests that institutional efforts should prioritize the "Academic Environment" as the primary engine while simultaneously bolstering students' digital defenses. Ultimately, this research offers a replicable framework for measuring the "invisible" process of value absorption, ensuring that the PAI students of today—as the educators of tomorrow—are equipped not just with the knowledge of moderation, but with a deeply internalized moderate identity that is resilient to the polarized dynamics of the global era.

Interestingly, while previous studies have often blamed digital platforms for the rise of radicalization, the findings regarding Religious Digital Literacy ( $\beta = 0.215$ ) among PAI students in

Bengkulu suggest a more optimistic perspective. When students possess high digital literacy, technology becomes a tool for moderation rather than a threat. This supports "Digital Resilience" theory (Boh et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2023), suggesting that the ability of PAI students to filter religious content online critically is a significant predictor of internalizing wasathiyah values (Ang et al., 2022). Compared to earlier research that viewed digital influence as a purely external threat, this study highlights digital literacy as an internal competency that empowers UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu students to maintain moderate stances amidst the noise of online extremism.

The significant influence of Religious Parenting ( $\beta = 0.287$ ) further confirms that the foundation of moderation is laid long before a student enters the PAI program. This study reaffirms Social Learning Theory, which holds that the family serves as the primary agent of socialization. However, the novelty here lies in the interaction between parenting and the university environment. The model shows that even for students from diverse family backgrounds in the Bengkulu region, the university's academic environment can still exert a stronger influence on the final stages of value internalization. This suggests that while parenting provides the "seed," the PAI study program at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu provides the "soil" that determines whether moderate values will bloom or wither.

The core novelty of this research is the validation of the "Value Internalization" variable as a critical bridge. In many previous frameworks, environmental factors were directly linked to behavior, often yielding inconsistent results. By introducing internalization—comprising stages of transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization—this model achieves a high T-statistic (8.782) for its influence on behavior. This proves that moderation among PAI students cannot be "forced" through external compliance alone; it must be cognitively and affectively processed. This shift from a behavioral approach to an internalized-cognitive approach represents a significant advancement in the study of religious education at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu.

This study also offers a critical nuance to the theory of Religiosity and Conservatism (Routon, 2022). While some scholars argue that high religiosity often leads to exclusive conservatism, our model shows that when a moderate internalization process mediates religiosity, it actually strengthens social cohesion (Lau, 2024; Lockhart, 2021; Manshur, 2020). This suggests that the quality of religious education in the PAI program matters more than the quantity of religious instruction. By focusing on the "trans-internalization" stage, where values become part of

the student's identity, the PAI curriculum at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu can produce educators who are both deeply pious and broad-mindedly moderate, effectively refuting the binary choice between faith and pluralism.

The indirect effect (H5) observed in this study provides a crucial insight for educational practitioners. The finding that the Academic Environment influences behavior through internalization ( $\beta = 0.193$ ) implies that superficial programs, such as one-off seminars or posters on moderation, are likely ineffective. To truly change student behavior, the academic climate in the PAI program must be designed to stimulate the "internalization" mechanism—engaging students in deep dialogue, encouraging empathy, and providing safe spaces to discuss sensitive religious issues. This reinforces the "Constructivist Learning Theory" within the context of religious moderation, where meaning is built through active engagement rather than passive reception (Garner & Shank, 2024; Meijer-Kater & de Muynck, 2021; Ramey, 2022).

Based on these findings, several policy recommendations are proposed for UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, specifically for the PAI Study Program. First, the university rectors and department heads should prioritize creating a "Moderate Campus Ecosystem" that extends beyond the classroom, including auditing student organizations and training lecturers to serve as "moderation influencers." Second, the PAI curriculum must integrate Digital Literacy as a core competency, moving beyond traditional theology to include the ethics of digital religious consumption. Third, the program should establish "Parent-Campus Partnerships" to align the values taught at home with the moderate academic discourse practiced on campus.

The necessity of a "Moderate Campus Ecosystem" at UINFAS Bengkulu demands a shift from sporadic administrative mandates to a deeply embedded cultural norm. Our structural model suggests that the Academic Environment's high impact ( $\beta = 0.342$ ) is most effective when moderation is treated as a transversal competency. This implies that lecturer training should move beyond simple pedagogical instruction to include "moderation coaching," equipping educators to handle cognitive dissonance during theological debates. By auditing student organizations not as a form of surveillance, but as a supportive alignment of values, the university can ensure that the informal "hidden curriculum" within peer groups reinforces rather than contradicts the formal moderate discourse. This holistic alignment is what transforms the campus from a mere site of instruction into a laboratory for lived moderation.

Regarding the digital dimension, the integration of Digital Literacy into the PAI curriculum must transcend basic technical skills to encompass "Digital Religious Ethics." Given the significant role of digital literacy found in this study ( $\beta = 0.284$ ), the curriculum should specifically target the "transformation" phase of internalization by teaching students how to deconstruct extremist rhetoric and verify the *isnad* (chain of transmission) of online fatwas. For a regional institution like UINFAS Bengkulu, this also means developing "offline-first" digital resources that allow students in network-sparse areas to access moderated content without constant connectivity. By empowering students to be critical consumers and ethical producers of religious content, the PAI program effectively builds a digital "immune system" that protects the student's internal value system from external polarization.

The proposed "Parent-Campus Partnerships" represent a pioneering approach to stabilizing the value internalization process. Since Religious Parenting serves as a foundational anchor ( $\beta = 0.215$ ), the PAI program should facilitate regular "Dialogue Forums" in which parents and academic staff discuss the challenges of modern religious education. These partnerships synchronize the "transactional" phase of value adoption, ensuring that moderate values encountered in the classroom do not create a bifurcated identity in which the student is "moderate at school" but "conservative at home." By fostering a shared vocabulary of moderation between the family and the academy, UINFAS Bengkulu can create a consistent ethical environment that significantly reduces the internal conflict often experienced by students in transition.

Furthermore, the "trans-internalization" stage identified in our mediation analysis offers a specific metric for evaluating the success of these policies. The number of seminars held should not measure institutional success, but rather the degree to which moderation becomes an "automatic" component of a student's professional identity as a future teacher. Longitudinal assessments should be implemented to track how PAI graduates apply these values in their respective teaching placements across the Bengkulu region. This shift toward "identity-based" assessment aligns with the global trend in character education, which aims to produce graduates with the moral autonomy to navigate diverse social landscapes without compromising their moderate religious principles.

This study provides a robust structural map ( $R^2 = 0.715$ ) and opens new avenues for regional and global academic discourse. The model developed at UINFAS Bengkulu serves as a scalable framework for other PTKIN (State Islamic Higher Education) institutions facing similar

challenges of balancing tradition with digitalization. Future research should explore the "noise" in the remaining variance—perhaps investigating the role of local cultural wisdom or "Adat" in Jambi and Bengkulu as a latent moderator of religious values. By continuously refining this structural model, Islamic higher education can move toward a more "precision-based" pedagogy, ensuring that the internalization of religious moderation is not left to chance but is the result of a deliberate, data-driven educational strategy.

This research provides a definitive structural model demonstrating that the cultivation of religious moderation among PAI students at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu is not a sociological coincidence but rather a structured developmental journey that transitions from external institutional influence to deep-seated internal conviction. The high predictive relevance of this model confirms that the internalization of *wasathiyah* (moderation) values can be systematically achieved through a precise synergy of an inclusive academic climate, critical digital competence, and empathetic familial foundations. These findings shift the character education paradigm from a model of textual indoctrination to an "ecosystemic" approach, in which each exogenous variable serves as a reinforcing engine in the formation of a student's moderate identity.

The significance of these findings lies in their ability to map the "latent pathways" of value internalization—a process often treated as a "black box" in previous qualitative literature. By empirically proving that the academic environment at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu exerts a dominant influence, this study provides scientific legitimacy for institutional curriculum innovations rooted in deep dialogue and critical inquiry. The structural evidence suggests that when students are immersed in an environment that prizes diversity and fosters intellectual openness, they are more likely to undergo "trans-internalization." At this stage, moderation ceases to be a matter of mere institutional compliance. Instead, it becomes a personalized moral compass that guides their professional and social conduct beyond the university walls.

Furthermore, integrating religious digital literacy and parenting styles within this framework offers a comprehensive roadmap for the future of Islamic education in the post-truth era. These findings ensure that PAI graduates from UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu are not merely transmitters of rigid dogma. However, resilient agents of change can navigate global information flows with a robust ethical filter. By reinforcing digital literacy, students are equipped with "cognitive immunity" against cyber-extremism, while familial support ensures that moderate

values have deep emotional roots. This synergy guarantees that their future roles as educators will reflect an Islam that is inherently peaceful, inclusive, and moderate—one capable of addressing the modern challenges of ideological polarization.

Finally, this research transcends local statistical data to offer a novel theoretical contribution to the global discourse on religious moderation from a regional Islamic Higher Education (PTKIN) perspective. The internalization model validated in Bengkulu serves as a scalable framework for other institutions facing similar demographic and digital challenges. By focusing on the "mediating bridge" of internalization, educational institutions can transition from ceremonial moderation programs toward measurable, evidence-based pedagogical interventions. Ultimately, the success of this model represents a tangible step toward maintaining social stability through education, ensuring that the next generation possesses an ideological resilience grounded in the universal principles of justice ('adl) and balance (tawazun).

## CONCLUSION

This research successfully establishes a definitive structural model demonstrating that the formation of moderate religious character among PAI students at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu is a systematic journey progressing from external exposure to internal conviction. The study concludes that the academic environment is the dominant factor in driving moderation, followed by the significant roles of religious parenting and religious digital literacy. These findings prove that religious moderation is not an accidental outcome but rather a measurable product of an inclusive academic ecosystem and high digital resilience. The novelty of this research is established through two primary contributions that distinguish it from previous studies. First, this research moves beyond descriptive mapping by empirically demonstrating that the value internalization process, comprising the stages of transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization, functions as a crucial mediating variable that explains how abstract values are converted into actual behavior. Second, this research offers a new nuance to Social Learning Theory through the "Soil over Seed" paradigm. These findings demonstrate that while religious parenting provides the foundational "seed" of values, the university's academic climate serves as the primary "soil" that can reshape or reinforce those values during the critical developmental years of young adulthood. Based on these empirical findings, several strategic actions are recommended for UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu. The PAI Study Program is encouraged to

foster a moderate campus ecosystem that extends beyond classroom instruction, including mentoring student organizations and empowering lecturers as moderation influencers.

Furthermore, the curriculum should integrate religious digital literacy as a core competency to equip future religious teachers with the skills to filter digital content effectively. Finally, synergy between the university and parents should be strengthened to ensure that the moderation discourse practiced on campus aligns with familial values. Through this model, PAI graduates are expected to possess not only dogmatic knowledge but also a deeply internalized identity as champions of a peaceful, inclusive, and moderate Islam.

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