DIGITAL RELIGIOUS LITERATURE AND ITS ROLE IN SHAPING RELIGIOUS MODERATION AMONG INDONESIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Digital religious literature circulating on social media has reshaped how university students access and interpret Islamic teachings, yet limited research has examined how the narrative structure of these digital texts influences the formation of religious moderation. This study addresses this gap by analysing how digital interpretations of QS. Al Hujurat 49:13 construct specific emphases of meaning and how students internalise these messages. The research employs a descriptive qualitative design using two types of data: digital religious texts from tafsir applications, YouTube, and Instagram, and interview data from university students. These data were analysed through content analysis and hermeneutic interpretation to identify narrative patterns, framing strategies, and interpretive tendencies. The findings show three key patterns. First, digital interpretations consistently highlight equality, diversity, and social harmony, producing simplified moral messages that are easily circulated. Second, the structure of digital texts compresses and fragments Quranic meaning, reducing engagement with socio historical context and limiting interpretive plurality. Third, students' levels of digital literacy significantly shape how they evaluate and internalise moderation narratives, functioning as an epistemic filter that distinguishes reflective understanding from superficial acceptance. These findings indicate that digital platforms do not merely transmit religious messages but actively shape interpretive outcomes through narrative design and algorithmic visibility. The study contributes to digital religion scholarship by demonstrating that religious moderation in the digital era is a mediated interpretive product. It recommends strengthening critical digital literacy and improving the contextual quality of digital religious content to support deeper and more balanced interpretations among students.

Keywords: **literatur keagamaan digital, media sosial, moderasi**

beragama, Al-Hujurāt 13.

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan literatur keagamaan digital di media sosial telah melahirkan bentuk baru otoritas keagamaan yang berpengaruh signifikan terhadap cara mahasiswa memahami dan mempraktikkan moderasi beragama. Studi ini bertujuan menganalisis bagaimana narasi, gaya penyajian, dan struktur teks keagamaan digital membentuk pola interpretasi mahasiswa terhadap nilai-nilai moderasi beragama. Literatur keagamaan digital diposisikan sebagai medium epistemik yang menengahi proses pemaknaan ulang ajaran agama, terutama ketika pesan keagamaan disampaikan dalam bentuk ringkas, terkurasi, dan terfragmentasi sesuai karakteristik platform digital. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif-deskriptif dengan fokus pada analisis penafsiran digital terhadap QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]:13, yakni ayat yang menegaskan prinsip kesetaraan manusia, penghargaan terhadap keragaman, dan etika relasi sosial sebagai fondasi nilai moderasi beragama dalam Islam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa representasi ayat tersebut pada berbagai platform tafsir digital sangat dipengaruhi oleh pola narasi, visualisasi, dan teknik framing yang digunakan. Penelitian ini mengungkap tiga tema utama dari analisis tafsir digital QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]:13 serta persepsi mahasiswa terhadap moderasi beragama: (1) penekanan naratif kesetaraan dan keragaman, (2) struktur teks digital yang menyederhanakan dan mengemas pesan moderat, dan (3) peran literasi digital mahasiswa dalam menafsirkan pesan moderat. Hal ini berimplikasi pada terbentuknya penekanan makna tertentu yang kemudian diinternalisasi mahasiswa sebagai kerangka memahami moderasi beragama. Temuan penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa ekosistem digital tidak sekadar berfungsi sebagai ruang distribusi wacana keagamaan, tetapi juga menjadi arena pembentukan orientasi keberagamaan generasi muda. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi bagi penguatan kajian literatur keagamaan digital di Indonesia, sekaligus menekankan urgensi pengembangan literasi keagamaan digital yang kritis, etis, dan moderatif di kalangan mahasiswa.

Kata kunci:*: Literatur Keagamaan Digital, Media Sosial, Moderasi Beragama, QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]:13.*

INTRODUCTION

The global expansion of social media has transformed digital platforms into major arenas for religious communication, reshaping how religious knowledge is produced, circulated, and consumed. Over the past two decades, shifts in information

behavior have redirected religious authority from classical texts and face-to-face sermons toward digital formats that are concise, visually oriented, and easily disseminated[1]. Online interpretations of scripture, verse quotations, short videos, and infographics have introduced new forms of religious authority that influence users' perceptions, interpretive habits, and ideological orientations[2]. This transformation is particularly visible among university students, who represent one of the most active digital user groups worldwide[3].

In the Indonesian context, digital religious literature has become a primary reference for students seeking accessible and practical religious guidance. Its multimodal, fragmented, and algorithmically curated nature enables rapid consumption but often simplifies or reduces the depth of religious meaning. These characteristics shape how students understand key Islamic values, including religious moderation, within a multicultural society. Digital religious texts therefore function not only as channels of dissemination but also as interpretive mediators that frame, emphasize, or reduce meaning according to platform logic. This aligns with findings that digital religious messages are frequently packaged in short, curated, and visually persuasive forms that influence users' interpretive tendencies[4][5]

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[1] Ibrahim N. Abusharif, "Religious Knowledge Production and Digital Affordances," *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies* 9, no. 1 (May 2024): 108–14, https://doi.org/10.2979/jims.00030.

[2] Mónika Andok, "The Impact of Online Media on Religious Authority," *Religions* 15, no. 9 (September 2024): 1103, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15091103.

[3] Clyde Anieldath Missier, "A Qualitative Study of Digital Religious Influence: Perspectives from Christian, Hindu, and Muslim Gen Y and Gen Z in Mumbai, India," *Religions* 16, no. 1 (January 2025): 73, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16010073.

[4] Abdul Rahman Matondang, Hasan Sazali, and Zainun Zainun, "Exploration of Simulacra in Moderation Messages: Analysis of Salafi Dakwah on Youtube," *Journal La Sociale* 5, no. 3 (April 2024): 590–604, https://doi.org/10.37899/journal-la-sociale.v5i3.1170.

[5] Sri Afsinatun et al., "Digital Da'wah Exposure and Religious Moderation among Indonesian Islamic University Students," *EDUKASI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan* 23, no. 2 (August 2025): 359–76, https://doi.org/10.32729/edukasi.v23i2.2218.

A growing body of research highlights the importance of digital literacy in fostering moderate religious attitudes. Critical and ethical digital literacy is understood to support the development of peaceful, responsible, and inclusive digital communication, grounded in the principles of maqasid al-shariah, particularly the preservation of intellect, life, and religion[6]. Studies by Haniati, Adelia, and Winastwan[7] show that digital moderation literacy enhances students' ability to evaluate the authenticity of online religious content and avoid biased or radical narratives. In the educational domain, Rajaminsah and colleagues[8] argue for integrating digital literacy into Islamic Religious Education curricula to maintain wasathiyyah values in the post truth era. These studies collectively demonstrate the importance of equipping students with critical digital competencies to navigate the complexities of online religious information.

Some recent studies demonstrate the relevance of the relationship between digital literacy and the strengthening of religious moderation in the era of social media. Zulfa Ilma Nuriana and Nisrina Salwa for example, in her integrative analysis, asserts that digital literacy developed critically and ethically serves as a vital instrument in building a narrative of moderate da'wah (Islamic proselytizing) among social media users. She finds that the values of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, such as the preservation of intellect (*hifẓ al-'aql*), life (*hifẓ al-nafs*), and religion (*hifẓ al-dīn*), are employed as core principles in producing digital communication that is peaceful, inclusive, and

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[6] Mohamad Saifudin Mohamad Saleh, Ali Mehellou, and Bahiyah Omar, "Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah as Goal Framing for Sustainable Behaviours: A Conceptual Framework," *Intellectual Discourse* 31, no. 1 (June 2023), https://doi.org/10.31436/id.v31i1.1805.

[7] Umi Haniati, Nisa Adelia, and Rheza Ega Winastwan, "LITERASI DIGITAL MODERASI BERAGAMA MAHASISWA UIN K.H. SAIFUDDIN ZUHRI PURWOKERTO," *Pustakaloka* 16, no. 2 (2024): 222–45, https://doi.org/10.21154/pustakaloka.v16i2.9735.

[8] Rajaminsah Rajaminsah et al., "Moderasi Beragama Dan Literasi Digital: Pengembangan Kurikulum PAI Adaptif Terhadap Tantangan Era Post-Truth," *ALACRITY : Journal of Education*, August 18, 2025, 1052–65, https://doi.org/10.52121/alacrity.v5i2.854.

free from extreme rhetoric[9]. Other research by Haniati, Adelia, and Winastwanhighlights the importance of digital moderation literacy in enhancing the ability of UIN (State Islamic University) students to deal with diverse religious information on social media. Haniati et al. found that the ability to critically select and assess the authenticity of digital religious literature enables students to better avoid biased or radical content, while also facilitating the development of an open and tolerant religious attitude. In the context of education, Rajaminsah et al. propose strengthening the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum to be adaptive to the post-truth era through the integration of digital literacy in the learning process. This aims to preserve the values of wasathiyyah (moderation) in the religious understanding of students and university students. Their research suggests that by equipping learners with critical digital skills to evaluate online religious content, the curriculum can effectively counter extremist narratives and foster a balanced, evidence-based approach to religious interpretation in the digital age.

Despite the rapidly growing body of research on digital literacy and religious moderation, there are several important weaknesses and gaps worth noting. Many previous studies tend to focus on quantitative aspects such as attitude surveys, literacy indices, or frequency of digital media use, without delving deeper into how the narrative structure and selection of verses in digital religious literature contribute to the formation or transformation of the meaning of religious moderation. For example, the research by Noor Amirudin[10], while identifying a positive correlation between religious digital literacy and students' moderate attitudes, remains limited to identifying correlations and does not analyze the narrative content of the digital texts that shape

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[9] Zulfa Ilma Nuriana and Nisrina Salwa, "Digital Da'wah in the Age of Algorithm: A Narrative Review of Communication, Moderation, and Inclusion," *Sinergi International Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 4 (November 2024): 242–56, https://doi.org/10.61194/ijis.v2i4.706.

[10] Noor Amirudin, "Literasi Digital Dalam Membentuk Karakter Religius Generasi Milenial (Studi Tentang Pembentukan Karakter Mahasiswa PAI Universitas Muhammadiyah Gresik," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 1 (March 2022): 87–99, https://doi.org/10.37286/ojs.v8i1.132.

understanding. This leaves unanswered the crucial question of how and why certain digital formats and narrative framing influence the internalization of moderate values[11] found a positive correlation between religious digital literacy and attitudes of religious moderation among high school students. However, the study was limited to identifying this correlation and did not extend to a narrative analysis of the actual digital texts that trigger such understanding. It stopped at showing that a relationship exists, but not how the specific content and rhetoric within digital media lead to the formation of moderate attitudes.

On the other hand, empirical studies by Mualim and Aulia Naufal[12] demonstrate that university students experience a form of social media ambivalence. On the one hand, exposure to digital content disseminating moderate and inclusive values can strengthen tolerance and interreligious understanding. On the other hand, the same digital platforms also serve as spaces where polarization intensifies and hate speech circulates, illustrating the contradictory dynamics of social media in shaping students' social and religious attitudes. However, this research has not yet considered how digital texts or narratives particularly interpretations of Qur'anic verses are reconstructed in ways that can create different meanings within the context of digital consumption.

The research gap becomes even more apparent when reviewing international literature. Global studies such as those by Campbell[13] Have highlighted how religious digital media forms a networked authority, meaning a form of religious authority that is distributed and collaboratively formed on the internet. How-

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[11] Erna Sari Agusta, "Literasi Digital Keagamaan Dan Moderasi Beragama Siswa Sekolah Menengah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 19, no. 2 (2022): 215–28, https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v19i2.5791.

[12] Mualim and Aulia Naufal, "Attitudes Toward Digital Content on Religious Tolerance: A Comparative Study of Students from Religious and Non-Religious Campuses," *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 26, no. 1 (June 2025): 97–109, https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v26i1.6563.

[13] Heidi A Campbell, "Surveying Theoretical Approaches within Digital Religion Studies," *New Media & Society* 19, no. 1 (January 2017): 15–24, https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816649912.

ever, most international research[14] tends to focus on the dynamics of authority and religious communities, rather than on the structure of the texts and their impact on religious moderation. In addition, research on religious moderation specifically in the digital context in Indonesia, particularly when considering the character of Nusantara Islam and its strong multicultural religious culture, remains relatively limited. Therefore, there is an urgent need to analyze how digital religious literature, particularly the interpretation of specific verses such as QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]:13, is constructed in digital media and how this construction influences students' understanding of religious moderation.

Based on these gaps, this present study holds significance. It aims to analyze how the narrative and textual structure of digital religious literature shapes the interpretation of religious moderation among university students. The analytical focus is directed at digital interpretation (tafsir) literature disseminated through social media and other digital platforms, using QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]:13 as the primary verse unit for analysis. This verse was selected because it contains fundamental messages about human equality, appreciation for diversity, and the ethics of social relations core values that form the principles of religious moderation in Islam. Through a qualitative-descriptive approach, this study will examine how this verse is reinterpreted in digital formats, how digital text structures shape specific emphases in

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[14] Akiva Berger and Oren Golan, "Online Religious Learning: Digital Epistemic Authority and Self-Socialization in Religious Communities," *Learning, Media and Technology* 49, no. 2 (April 2024): 274–89, https://-doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2023.2169833; Benny Afwadzi et al., "Religious Moderation of Islamic University Students in Indonesia: Reception of Religious Texts," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 80, no. 1 (March 2024), https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i1.9369; Yaser Amri, Yogi Febriandi, and Phaison Da-Oh, "RELIGIOUS MODERATION UNVEILED: The Intersection of Textual and Contextual Approaches to Understanding Indonesian Muslims," *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 48, no. 1 (June 2024), https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v48i1.1207; R. Hunt, "Religious Internationals in the Modern World: Globalization and Faith Communities since 1750," *Journal of Church and State* 57, no. 1 (March 2015): 168–70, https://doi.org/10.1093/jcs/csu115.

meaning, and how students, as the primary consumers of this literature, internalize these messages in their religious lives.

METHOD

This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach to understand how digital religious literature on social media shapes the interpretation of religious moderation among university students. The qualitative approach was chosen because the research focuses on textual interpretation, narrative dynamics, and the construction of meaning processes that cannot be reduced to numbers or measurable variables but must be understood within their lived and mediated contexts. This aligns with contemporary hermeneutical perspectives which view the act of interpretation as a contextual engagement between text, reader, and medium[15], a process further exemplified by the long history of the Qur'an's adaptation into vernacular forms and everyday practices[16]. The digital sphere, particularly social media, represents a new vernacular space where such interpretive practices occur. Furthermore, the descriptive method enables researchers to describe, analyze, and interpret the phenomenon of digital religious literature as it naturally emerges and circulates on social media platforms, without manipulating its contextual existence, as presented in Table 1.

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[15] Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach* (Routledge, 2005). P. 83

[16] Travis Zadeh, *The Vernacular Qur'an: Translation and the Rise of Persian Exegesis*, Qur'anic Studies Series 7 (Oxford: Oxford university press, 2012). P 1-20

Table 1. Analytical Framework of CDA, Content Analysis, and Hermeneutics in the Study of Religious Moderation among State Islamic University (UIN) Students

Analytical Approaches	Digital Data Sources	Focus of Analysis	Indicators of Religious Moderation	Example of Analysis Unit	Relevance for UIN (State Islamic University) Students
Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)	YouTube (sermons, online religious studies)	Ideologi, Power Relations, and the Construction of Islamic Meaning	Inclusive attitude, acceptance of diversity, anti-extremism	Narratives of "Islam vs the West," "infidel," "religious innovation (bid'ah)," and religious authority legitimation	Revealing how students internalize preaching discourses that tend to be either exclusive or moderate
Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)	Instagram (da'wah posts, reels)	Visual Representation and Short-Form Narratives	Balance between text and context, anti-politicization of religion	Captions of Quranic verses/hadith, religious hashtags, the "hijrah" (migration/repentance) symbol	Assessing the influence of popular discourse on the religious attitudes of university students
Content Analysis	YouTube	Patterns of Themes and Content Frequency	Tolerance, national commitment, non-violence	Number of videos on tolerance or the caliphate	Mapping the most frequently consumed da'wah content among students at UIN
Content Analysis	Instagram	Dominant Themes and Religious Symbols	Symbolic moderation, social piety	Use of tolerance verses, exclusive symbols	Measuring the tendencies of university students' religious narratives on social media
Content Analysis	Aplication Tafsir	Thematic Interpretation of Verses	Justice, balance (wasathiy-yah)	Interpretation of verses on jihad, brotherhood, and plurality	Assessing the interpretation reference sources used by students
Hermeneutics	YouTube	Methods of Interpreting Quranic	Contextualization of texts	Interpretation of verses on jihad and interfaith	Assessing whether students accept literal or

		Verses/ Hadith		relations	contextual interpreta-tions
Herme-neutics	Instagram	Fragmentation of religious texts	Integrity of meaning, anti-decontextualization	Verses/hadith without context	Identifying the risk of superficial understan-ding among university students
Herme-neutics	Aplikasi Tafsir	Digital interpretation methodology	Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah, konteks sosial	Comparison of classical–contemporary interpreta-tions	Strengthening moderate interpretation literacy among students at UIN

Sources: processed by author

The analytical framework presented in Table 1 illustrates how the combined use of Critical Discourse Analysis, content analysis, and hermeneutics enables a comprehensive examination of religious moderation among students at State Islamic Universities. By drawing on digital platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and tafsir applications, the framework captures the diverse ways students encounter and internalize religious messa-ges in contemporary online environments. CDA allows the study to interrogate ideological constructions, power relations, and the formation of Islamic meaning within sermons and short-form da'wah content, revealing how narratives of exclusivism or inclusivity shape students' attitudes toward diversity and extre-mism. Content analysis complements this by mapping dominant themes, symbolic expressions, and the frequency of moderation-related messages, offering insight into the types of religious content students consume most often and how these patterns influence their social piety and national commitment. Hermeneu-tics deepens the analysis by examining how students interpret Quranic verses and hadith across fragmented digital formats, assessing whether they adopt literal or contextual approaches and how these interpretive tendencies align with principles of justice, balance, and maqasid al shariah. Together, these approaches pro-vide a multidimensional understanding of how digital religious exposure shapes the development of moderate or exclusive

orientations among UIN students and highlight the importance of strengthening interpretive literacy in higher education settings.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

FINDING

Digital Religious Literature as an Interpretive and Authoritative Space

The research findings indicate that digital religious literature has become a unique interpretive space used by students to learn, understand, and internalise religious teachings. This literature is available in various digital formats, such as online articles, short videos, infographics, quotes from the Quran, digital tafsir applications, and interactive commentaries that can be shared on YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Quran interpretation applications[17]. Digital religious literature is not like traditional religious literature, which is linear and systematically organised. Conversely, this literature is fragmented, multimodal, algorithmically curated, and compressed to fit the logic of rapid consumption on social media[18]. These characteristics influence how religious meaning is highlighted, made easier to understand, and presented to students.

In this digital space, religious authority is built on things like narrative style, visual presentation, emotional connection with users, and algorithmic visibility, rather than solely on traditional academic credentials. Digital religious literature not

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[17] Liang Zhang, "The Digital Age of Religious Communication: The Shaping and Challenges of Religious Beliefs through Social Media," *Studies on Religion and Philosophy* 1, no. 1 (November 2025): 25–41, https://doi.org/10.71204/de63mn10.

[18] Moh. Nor Ichwan et al., "Digitalization and the Shifting Religious Literature of Indonesian Muslims in the Era of Society 5.0," *Islamic Communication Journal* 9, no. 2 (December 2024): 245–66, https://doi.org/10.21580/icj.2024.9.2.22515; Andrew M. Henry, "Religious Literacy in Social Media: A Need for Strategic Amplification," *Religion & Education* 48, no. 1 (January 2021): 89–101, https://doi.org/10.1080/15507394.2021. 187 6507.

only serves as a channel for disseminating religious knowledge, but also as a platform where interpretive authority and religious orientation are constantly debated. The way digital texts are structured and presented actively directs students towards specific ideas about religious values.

How Digital Interpretation Frames Religious Moderation

Analysis shows that religious moderation in digital religious literature is largely framed as a value orientation that emphasises balance, rejection of extremism, and acceptance of diversity. In Islamic discourse, moderation is consistently associated with the principle of wasathiyyah, which emphasises justice, tolerance, dialogue, and avoiding extremism (ghuluw) as a fundamental ethical commitment[19]. In the digital platform under study, QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]:13 plays a significant role in the narrative of moderation and serves as a normative benchmark for human equality, social diversity, and mutual recognition (lita'ārafū).

Digital interpretations of this verse often depict moderation through three interconnected perspectives. First, moderation is defined as valuing diversity, with QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]:13 seen as supporting ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. Second, moderation is viewed as a way to combat extremism, and this verse is used to combat hate speech, discrimination, and intolerance. Third, moderation is defined as a moral code on how people should interact with each other, emphasising responsible communication, avoiding hoaxes, and maintaining social harmony. This interpretive orientation is reinforced through repetition, visual cues, and simplified moral messages[20].

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[19] Kementerian Agama, *Moderasi Beragama*, 1st ed. 15-35 (Jakarta: Balai Diklat Kementerian Agama, 2019).

[20] Fahmi Sahlan, Eva Dwi Kumala Sari, and Rika Sa'diyah, "Digital-Based Literacy Analysis of Religious Moderation: Study on Public Higher Education Students," *Progresiva : Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 02 (December 2022): 153–66, https://doi.org/10.22219/progresiva. v11i02.20906; Labibah Sayaka Ilma Sayaka et al., "Moderation In The Qur'an: Building Pluralism Through The Principle Of Wasatiyyah (Case

Structural analysis of digital tafsir reveals a uniform pattern of concise, persuasive, and practice-oriented narrative construction across tafsir applications, YouTube channels, da'wah websites, and Instagram infographics[21].

The explanation of verses is often made easier to understand by only discussing certain phrases and not addressing the asbāb al-nuzūl (reasons for revelation). Values of moderation such as tasāmuh (tolerance), taʿāruf (mutual understanding), and taʿāwun (cooperation) are emphasised, and a moral framework is used through clear moral appeals for social harmony, equality, and tolerance. These patterns show that digital texts not only share the content of the Quran but also shape how people understand it.

Digital Literacy and Moderation Interpretation Level

Further research findings indicate that students' digital literacy significantly influences the depth and direction of their

Study Of Surah Al-Hujurat 49:13)," *Fikroh: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 18, no. 1 (May 2025): 114–26, https://doi.org/10.37812/fikroh.v18i1.1784; Radhiatul Husni et al., "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Masyarakat 5.0: Analisis Konsep Berdasarkan Surat Al-Hujurat Ayat 13," *SURAU : Journal of Islamic Education* 1, no. 2 (December 2023): 146, https://doi.org/10.30983/surau.v1i2.7409; Adinda Adinda, "Interreligious Communication Perspective of the Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat Verse 13," *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 8, no. 1 (March 2024): 2368–77, https://doi.org/10.33487/edumaspul.v8i1.8217; Muhammad Halif Asyroful Bahana, "PENGGUNAAN MEDIA SOSIAL DALAM PERSPEKTIF TAFSIR AL-MISBAH BERDASARKAN QS. AN-NAHL [16]: 90 DAN QS. AL-HUJURAT [49]: 6 SEBAGAI ETIKA BERKOMUNIKASI DAN BERINTERAKSI DI ERA DIGITALISASI," *MAHAD ALY JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC STUDIES* 2, no. 1 (April 2025): 21–32, https://doi.org/ 10.63398/jsimahadaly.v2i1.44.

[21] Stig Hjarvard, *The Mediatization of Culture and Society* (Routledge, 2013); Gary R. Bunt, *Hashtag Islam: How Cyber-Islamic Environments Are Transforming Religious Authority*, Islamic Civilization and Muslim Networks (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018); Yasmin Moll, "Television Is Not Radio: Theologies of Mediation in the Egyptian Islamic Revival," *Cultural Anthropology* 33, no. 2 (May 2018): 233–65, https://doi.org/10.14506/ca33.2.07.

interpretation of religious moderation. In this study, digital literacy encompasses the ability to access, evaluate, contextualise, and critically assess digital information. This includes the ability to research the credibility of religious sources, identify algorithmic bias, and distinguish between scientific authority and popular religious figures[22].

Students with high levels of digital literacy tend to interact with moderation narratives reflectively. They examine sources more carefully, challenge overly simplistic or sensationalised interpretations, and analyse content across various platforms. Conversely, limited digital literacy correlates with uncritical acceptance of abbreviated interpretations and difficulty distinguishing between contextual and non-contextual religious explanations. In this context, digital literacy serves as an epistemic filter that assesses whether digital religious literature promotes reflective moderation or merely perpetuates superficial moral messages.

In general, the research results indicate that religious moderation in the digital age is influenced by how digital religious literature, digital stories and interpretive structures, and how well students can think critically about digital content work together. Digital religious literature serves as an interpretive input, digital literacy acts as an epistemic mediating factor, and students' understanding of religious moderation manifests as an interpretive outcome, with QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]:13 serving as the main textual reference in this process.

RESULT

This discussion analyses the findings by examining how digital religious literature produces, reinforces, and disseminates interpretations of religious moderation among students. The main

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[22] OECD, *Skills Matter: Additional Results from the Survey of Adult Skills*, OECD Skills Studies (OECD Publishing, 2019), https://doi.org/10.1787/1f029d8f-en; Heidi A Campbell, "Surveying Theoretical Approaches within Digital Religion Studies," *New Media & Society* 19, no. 1 (January 2017): 15–24, https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816649912; Bunt, *Hashtag Islam* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018).

analytical statement resulting from these findings is that moderation is not only influenced by the normative content of QS. Al-Hujurat [49]:13, but also by the structural reorganisation of religious texts on digital platforms into easily consumable narrative units, which in turn prioritises certain interpretive emphases. In this case, the digital environment doesn't just "convey" the interpretation; it actively participates in the interpretation. This aligns with the theory of mediatisation, which posits that media formats restructure the social and cultural construction of meaning, including religious authority and the interpretation of sacred texts[23].

The research results indicate that the representation of QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]:13 in digital literature produces three main patterns in shaping students' understanding of religious moderation. First, there is a narrative emphasis on equality and diversity[24] (Kusmana & Alam, 2022), where the verse is consistently framed as a theological foundation for appreciating differences and upholding inclusive values. Second, the fragmented and visual structure of digital texts tends to simplify moderation messages into concise, easily consumable units (such as graphic quotes or short videos). This structural reorganization on digital platforms prioritizes certain interpretive emphases while obscuring more complex contextual and theological nuances. Third, students' level of digital literacy plays a crucial role in moderating their interpretations. Students with better critical thinking and digital literacy skills tend to be more reflective and contextual in their understanding, while others are more likely to accept simplified messages literally. The overall findings demonstrate that religious moderation among students is shaped not

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[23] Gary R. Bunt, *Hashtag Islam: How Cyber-Islamic Environments Are Transforming Religious Authority* (University of North Carolina Press, 2018), https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9781469643182_bunt;Campbell, "Surveying Theoretical Approaches within Digital Religion Studies"; Hjarvard, *The Mediatization of Culture and Society*.

[24] Kusmana, & Alam, R. F. (2022). Moderasi beragama dalam tafsir Al-Qur'an di media sosial. *Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an, 18*(1), 45–68. https://doi.org/ 10.21009/JSQ.018.1.03

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only by the normative content of the sacred text but also by the structural logic of digital platforms that actively participate in the interpretation process. The digital environment does not merely convey interpretation; it reorganizes religious texts into consumable narrative units that prioritize specific meanings. This results in the formation of specific meaning emphases such as tolerance and equality within a particular digital framework that become internalized by students as a practical understanding of religious moderation.

DISCUSSION

Digital Religious Literature as an Influential Force in Promoting Moderation

The research findings indicate that digital religious literature is characterised by fragmentation, multimodality, algorithmic curation, and message compression. From an analytical perspective, these characteristics serve as interpretive conditions. They determine what can be said, how it can be said, and what the student audience is most likely to remember. Digital literature acts as an interpretive agent by transforming verses from the Quran into a series of rhetorically effective components, such as keywords, moral appeals, short quotes, captions, infographic titles, and concise video narratives. This is intended to be easily understood and socially actionable.

The implication of his analysis is that "moderation" in this context is achieved through pragmatic hermeneutics: a method of interpretation that prioritises usefulness and ethical guidance over exegetical accuracy. When the verse is presented repeatedly with signals such as ta'āruf (mutual acquaintance), equality, and diversity, the interpretive horizon narrows towards an ethical message that can be used in daily life. This explains why moderation is often internalised as a framework of social ethics (valuing diversity, maintaining harmony) rather than as a contemplative theological attitude rooted in a broad interpretive discourse. This pattern aligns with research investigating how

digital religious engagement highlights accessible meaning, emotional resonance, and the dissemination of interpretive frameworks through networks[25].

The second analytical consequence relates to authority. Research findings indicate that digital actors, such as micro-preachers, content creators, and influencers, gain legitimacy through the quality of their communication and their visibility on the platform. This shows that authority in the context of digital religion is partly procedural; authority is granted through circulation, recognition, and rhetorical clarity, not solely through scientific lineage. This change does not immediately conclude that "students trust influential figures more than scholars," which requires additional evidence. Conversely, it can be analytically concluded that digital visibility parameters determine which voices gain interpretive meaning, as students are repeatedly exposed to these voices in an emotionally engaging format. This aligns with research on connected religious authority and the evolution of religious communities in digital environments[26].

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[25] James Bourk Hoesterey, Norshahril Saat, and Fellow at the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore. He is also Adjunct Lecturer with the Department of Malay Studies, National University of Singapore (NUS), "Rebranding Islam: Piety, Prosperity, and a Self-Help Guru," *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 32, no. 2 (July 2017): 430–31, https://doi.org/10.1355/sj32-2m; Rio Nur Rachmad and Zuliati Rohmah, "Expressive Acts Constructing Religious Identity among Indonesian Muslim Influencers on Instagram," *NOBEL: Journal of Literature and Language Teaching* 13, no. 2 (September 2022): 175–92, https://doi.org/10.15642/NOBEL.2022.13.2.175-192; Nafik Muthohirin, "Faith in the Digital Age: The Rise of Islamic Fundamentalism and the Plurality of Young Muslims' Piety on Social Media," *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 19, no. 2 (March 2025): 199–233, https://doi.org/10.15642/islamica.2025.19.2.199-233.

[26] Eva F. Nisa, "Social Media and the Birth of an Islamic Social Movement: ODOJ (One Day One Juz) in Contemporary Indonesia," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 46, no. 134 (January 2018): 24–43, https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2017.1416758; Bunt, *Hashtag Islam* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018); Muhammad Nasir and Muhammad Khairul Rijal, "Keeping the Middle Path: Mainstreaming Religious Moderation through Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*

Third, the research findings suggest that digital interpretations often diminish the socio-historical context (asbāb al-nuzūl) and interpretive diversity. From an analytical perspective, this is best understood not just as a "deficiency" but as structural selection. Digital text stabilises meaning by emphasising preferred readings and excluding debatable interpretive layers that require extensive elaboration. This stabilising function is crucial because it explains why the moderation narrative appears the same across all platforms and why QS. 49:13 is a "universal bridge" for pluralism discourse. This stabilisation aligns with research on the practice of hypertextual Quran reading and the digital fragmentation of encounters with the holy book[27]. The problem isn't that the digital interpretations are wrong, but that they are inherently designed to produce "portable" packages of meaning.

The results regarding platform variations make this analysis clearer. Long-form platforms allow you to explain something in more detail, while short-form platforms keep things concise and impactful. This difference can be considered a depth gradient caused by the format: the short format is better for quickly absorbing moral lessons, while the long format is better for retaining interpretive reasoning. This does not require further measurement, as the interpretive conclusions are based on documented differences in narrative presentation and the understanding reported by students in the short-form content. This dynamic reflects the methodology of platform studies, which

11, no. 2 (December 2021): 213–41, https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v11i2.213-241; Yidan Ding et al., "The Mediatization of Religion: How Digital-Age Film and Television Reshape Interfaith Experiences," *Religions* 16, no. 9 (September 2025): 1172, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16091172.

[27] Gregory Starrett, "*Islam in the Digital Age: E-Jihad, Online Fatwas, and Cyber Islamic Environments* . By Gary R. Bunt. London: Pluto Press, 2003. Pp. Viii+237. $24.95 (Paper).," *History of Religions* 46, no. 3 (February 2007): 268–71, https://doi.org/10.1086/513258; Sayaka et al., "Moderation In The Qur'an"; Husni et al., "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Masyarakat 5.0."

highlights how format limitations influence the emergence of dominant discourses[28].

Finally, the research results indicate that conflict allows some students to find moderation stories too generic, and algorithms may favour sensational content. This dynamic can be interpreted analytically as the difference between the ethical universality of the slogan of moderation and the specificity of actual conflicts. When a verse is consistently presented as a universal moral imperative, it serves as an effective basic ethic. However, the verse might be considered inadequate when the audience needs help interpreting a specific conflict. The platform's logic, which prioritises virality, can make nuanced content less visible. This isn't because the content is worthless, but because it doesn't fit into the attention economy. This aligns with research on algorithmic bubbles and the politics of visibility within the social media ecosystem[29]. The arguments here are still analytical and conditional, not very empirical in scope: platform logic can influence visibility patterns, which in turn affects the interpretive frameworks that might be encountered.

Digital Literacy as an Epistemological Condition for Interpretive Depth

Research findings indicate that digital literacy acts as an epistemic filter, influencing how students process and evaluate digital religious literature. From an analytical perspective, digital literacy should be considered an interpretive competency rather

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[28] Ian Bogost and Nick Montfort, *Platform Studies: Frequently Questioned Answers*, December 12, 2009, https://escholarship.org/uc/item/01r0k9br; Imam Samudra et al., "Algorithmic Authority and Public Trust: A Bibliometric Analysis of YouTube's Recommendation System in Shaping Islamic Religious Authority (2013-2023)," *Cognoscere: Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Media Pendidikan* 2, no. 3 (July 2024): 35–50, https://doi.org/ 10.61292/ cognoscere.286.

[29] Rachmad and Rohmah, "Expressive Acts Constructing Religious Identity among Indonesian Muslim Influencers on Instagram"; Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion* (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2013). 15-25

than merely a technical skill. This includes the ability to assess source credibility, identify framing techniques, distinguish algorithmic bias, and differentiate between scientific, religious, and pseudo-authoritative perspectives[30]. Due to the structural compression and rhetorical direction of digital religious literature, users' interpretive competence determines whether moderation is internalised reflectively or simply accepted as a superficial moral message.

This explains a significant trend in research findings: students with higher digital literacy may view digital texts as incomplete representations, requiring triangulation to compare across platforms, verify interpretive context, and consider the narrator's credibility. Students with limited digital literacy often perceive narrative packaging as a complete delivery of meaning. From an analytical perspective, this difference can be characterised as a contrast between contextual reading and slogan assimilation. This statement does not require numerical comparison; it stems from qualitative differences in student engagement with content and the conceptualisation of literacy as an epistemic capacity. This is also consistent with research stating that people with low religious digital literacy are more likely to misunderstand and oversimplify the values of moderation[31].

Digital literacy also influences how students interact with the structural elements of digital texts. When a verse is presented without asbāb al-nuzūl or scholarly debate, digitally literate students can recognise that the absence of information is inherent to the medium and seek further context. Conversely, less literate

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[30] OECD, *Skills Matter*; Bunt, *Hashtag Islam* (University of North Carolina Press, 2018); Starrett, "*Islam in the Digital Age*"; Campbell, "Surveying Theoretical Approaches within Digital Religion Studies"; Imran Awan, "Debating the Term Cyber-Terrorism: Issues and Problems," *Internet Journal of Criminology*, 2014. 45-65

[31] Stewart M. Hoover, ed., *The Media and Religious Authority* (Penn State University Press, 2016), https://doi.org/10.5325/j.ctv14gp1zt; Heidi A. Campbell and Giulia Evolvi, "Contextualizing Current Digital Religion Research on Emerging Technologies," *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies* 2, no. 1 (January 2020): 5–17, https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.149.

students might interpret the lack of information as meaning the information doesn't exist. This provides an analytical reason for the different cognitive outcomes produced by identical digital moderation content: the media presents concise interpretive cues, and the reader's literacy skills determine whether these cues serve as a catalyst for deeper reasoning or understanding conclusions. This aligns with the framework of moderation literacy, which views literacy as an essential prerequisite for maintaining moderate discourse in a digital context [32].

Additionally, conceptualising digital literacy as an epistemological condition explains the policy and educational implications of the findings without requiring additional data. If digital text packaging stabilises the meaning of moderation, then strengthening moderation doesn't just mean creating more content. This should also enhance interpretive competence, enabling students to navigate concise texts responsibly. This reason aligns with the theoretical framework of digital literacy as a mediating/moderating variable in research on the effects of digital media[33]. Once again, the argument remains analytical rather than relying on new measurements: literacy determines how the same structure is understood.

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[32] Xiaoxia Tian, Kyung Hee Park, and Qi Liu, "Deep Learning Influences on Higher Education Students' Digital Literacy: The Meditating Role of Higher-Order Thinking," *International Journal of Engineering Pedagogy (iJEP)* 13, no. 6 (September 2023): 33–49, https://doi.org/10.3991/ijep.v13i6.38177; Sarah McGrew, "Teaching Lateral Reading: Interventions to Help People Read like Fact Checkers," *Current Opinion in Psychology* 55 (February 2024): 101737, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2023.101737; Jeffrey Alan Greene, Seung B. Yu, and Dana Z. Copeland, "Measuring Critical Components of Digital Literacy and Their Relationships with Learning," *Computers & Education* 76 (July 2014): 55–69, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2014.03.008.

[33] Muhamad Baedowi et al., "The Influence of Social Media on the Attitude of Religious Moderation among College Students," *Sinergi International Journal of Islamic Studies* 3, no. 3 (July 2025): 156–64, https://doi.org/10.61194/ijis.v3i3.808; Nathaniel Sirlin et al., "Digital Literacy Is Associated with More Discerning Accuracy Judgments but Not Sharing Intentions," *Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review*, ahead of print, December 6, 2021, https://doi.org/10.37016/mr-2020-83.

The findings and analysis together show that religious moderation in digital contexts is produced through a three-part mechanism. First, digital religious literature reorganises sacred texts into compressed narrative units that highlight selected meanings, thereby establishing a preferred moderation framework around QS. 49:13[34]. Second, platforms and content creators translate the verse into moral-social guidance that is compatible with students' media habits and everyday social relations, while inevitably reducing interpretive plurality[35]. Third, students' digital literacy determines whether these moderation frames are internalised as reflective ethical commitments or as generic slogans, functioning as an epistemic filter in digital religious engagement[36]. Accordingly, this study strengthens digital religion scholarship by demonstrating that moderation is not merely a doctrinal or curricular outcome, but also a mediated interpretive product shaped by narrative structure, platform constraints, and literacy-mediated reception.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that digital religious literature on social media plays a decisive role in shaping university students' understanding of religious moderation. The analysis of digital representations of QS. Al Hujurāt 49:13 demonstrates that

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[34] Mahbub Ghozali, Achmad Yafik Mursyid, and Nita Fitriana, "Al-Qur'an (Re)Presentation in the Short Video App Tiktok: Reading, Teaching, and Interpretive," *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 30, no. 3 (August 2022): 1263–82, https://doi.org/10.47836/pjssh.30.3.18; Bouziane Zaid et al., "Digital Islam and Muslim Millennials: How Social Media Influencers Reimagine Religious Authority and Islamic Practices," *Religions* 13, no. 4 (April 2022): 335, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13040335.

[35] Foyasal Khan and Mohamed Aslam Haneef, "RELIGIOUS RESPONSES TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE," *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics and Finance* 8, no. 2 (May 2022): 161–80, https://doi.org/10.21098/jimf.v8i2.1453; Campbell, "Surveying Theoretical Approaches within Digital Religion Studies."

[36] OECD, *Skills Matter*; Campbell and Evolvi, "Contextualizing Current Digital Religion Research on Emerging Technologies"; Campbell, "Surveying Theoretical Approaches within Digital Religion Studies." P 45-52

moderation is constructed through narrative framing, visual cues, and platform-specific communication rather than derived from fixed doctrinal positions. Students internalise moderation as an interpretive outcome shaped by selective digital emphasis on equality, diversity, and social harmony, with digital literacy functioning as a key determinant of how these meanings are processed and evaluated.

This research contributes to the study of digital religion by explaining how Qur'anic verses become dominant interpretive frameworks within online ecosystems and how platform logic influences meaning-making. However, the study is limited by its focus on a single verse, its reliance on selected digital content, and its qualitative design, which restricts generalisability across broader student populations and digital platforms. The emphasis on curated representations rather than real-time user engagement also limits the ability to capture the full complexity of students' interpretive practices.

Future research could expand this inquiry by analysing a wider corpus of digital religious texts, comparing cross-platform interpretive patterns, and incorporating mixed-method approaches that include surveys or digital ethnography. The findings highlight practical implications for higher education institutions, which should strengthen students' critical digital literacy and promote contextualised religious interpretation in digital learning environments. Theoretically, the study underscores the need to examine how digital infrastructures and user competencies jointly shape contemporary Qur'anic interpretation, offering a foundation for deeper exploration of epistemic authority in the digital age.

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