



RELIGIOUS LITERACY AND MODERATION: MAPPING HADITH INTERPRETATION MODELS AMONG INDONESIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION STUDENTS

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Abstract

This article aims to map students' understanding of hadiths that contain counter-moderation content. Three aspects of moderation that are the focus of this study include: national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and adaptation to local culture. The main focus of the study is directed at three things, namely students' understanding of hadiths, the understanding model used, and their level of Islamic literacy. This research is field research with a qualitative approach. Data was collected from fifth-semester students at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FTK) through in-depth interviews. Respondents were asked to read and understand a number of hadiths with anti-moderation nuances (along with their translations) that had been prepared by the researcher. The researchers then explored how they understood the meaning and context of these hadiths. The collected data were then classified and analyzed based on the research questions. The results showed that the students' thinking tended to be very moderate, with a contextual understanding model, especially towards hadiths that, according to common sense, contradicted state law. Meanwhile, towards hadiths that did not conflict with national legal values, students tended to use a textual approach. However, the students' level of Islamic literacy was relatively low, as indicated by the lack of literary references in the arguments they presented. Based on these findings, the study recommends that stakeholders integrate specific material on religious moderation into the student learning curriculum.

Keywords: *Religious Literacy, Religious Moderation, Understanding of Hadiths*

Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk memetakan pemahaman mahasiswa terhadap hadis-hadis yang mengandung konten kontra-moderasi. Tiga aspek moderasi yang menjadi fokus dalam penelitian ini meliputi: komitmen kebangsaan, toleransi, anti-kekerasan, dan adaptasi terhadap budaya lokal. Fokus utama penelitian diarahkan pada tiga hal, yaitu pemahaman mahasiswa terhadap hadis, model pemahaman yang digunakan, dan tingkat literasi Islam mereka. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian lapangan dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan dari mahasiswa semester lima di Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan (FTK) melalui wawancara mendalam. Responden diminta untuk membaca dan memahami sejumlah hadis yang bernuansa anti-moderasi (berserta terjemahannya) yang telah disiapkan oleh peneliti. Peneliti kemudian menggali bagaimana mereka memahami makna dan konteks hadis-hadis tersebut. Data yang terkumpul kemudian diklasifikasikan dan dianalisis berdasarkan rumusan masalah penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pola pikir mahasiswa cenderung sangat moderat, dengan model pemahaman yang kontekstual, terutama terhadap hadis-hadis yang secara logika bertentangan dengan hukum negara. Sementara itu, terhadap hadis-hadis yang tidak bertentangan dengan nilai hukum nasional, mahasiswa cenderung menggunakan pendekatan tekstual. Namun, tingkat literasi Islam mahasiswa tergolong rendah, yang ditunjukkan dengan minimnya referensi kepustakaan dalam argumen yang mereka kemukakan. Berdasarkan temuan ini, penelitian merekomendasikan agar para pemangku kepentingan mengintegrasikan materi khusus tentang moderasi beragama ke dalam kurikulum pembelajaran mahasiswa..

Kata kunci: Literasi Keagamaan, Moderasi Beragama, Pemahaman Hadis

INTRODUCTION

In an era of increasing religious pluralism and global interaction, the importance of religious literacy and moderation cannot be overstated particularly in societies like Indonesia where Islam plays a central role in shaping public values, social attitudes, and educational discourse. Religious literacy, as defined by the *National Institute for Literacy*, goes far beyond the technical ability to read and write. It includes the capacity to process, understand, and utilize religious information to solve problems in personal, familial, and social contexts.¹ When applied to Islamic education, religious literacy entails a nuanced engagement with core religious texts, most notably the Qur'an and Hadith, in ways that are context-sensitive and ethically constructive.

Although both the Qur'an and Hadith serve as foundational sources in Islamic law and ethics, Hadith literature presents distinct interpretive challenges. Unlike the Qur'an, which requires primarily a correct understanding to be actionable, Hadith interpretation demands rigorous scrutiny, including verification of authenticity, consistency of content with higher-order Islamic principles, linguistic analysis, and contextual relevance.² Misreading Hadith texts especially when approached through a purely textualist or literalist lens can lead to misapplication, radicalization, and ethical contradictions in everyday practice.³ A textualist understanding of hadith can lead to a rigid radical understanding.⁴ An example of a contextual approach is the hadith regarding *isbāl* which is specifically directed at people who do it out of arrogance, not at people who do it without arrogance.⁵

This interpretive challenge becomes particularly pressing when Hadiths contain content that appears to oppose the values of religious moderation, such as inclusivity, non-violence, and interfaith harmony. One example is the Hadith reported by Abu Dawud:

*“Do not initiate greetings with the Jews and Christians, and if you meet them on the road, force them to the narrowest part.”*⁶

A purely textual reading of this narration could be interpreted as permitting exclusion and even hostility toward religious minorities. However, such a reading conflicts not only with broader Islamic ethical values—such as compassion and human dignity—but also with Indonesia's constitutional principles of religious freedom and human rights, as articulated in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia.⁷

¹Dil Mashuri, Chamdan; Ginanjar Setyo Permadi; Tahnella Zein Vitadiar, *Buku Ajar Literasi Digital*, ed. Tim Penyusun (Tasikmalaya: Perkumpulan Rumah Cemerlang Indonesia, 2022).

²Suryadi, 'Rekonstruksi Metodologis Pemahaman Hadis Nabi', in *Wacana Studi Hadis Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2002), 137–41.

³Fuad dkk Thohari, 'The Implications of Understanding Contextual Hadith on Religious Radicalism (Case Study of Darus-Sunnah International Institute for Hadith Sciences)', *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 5, no. 2 (2021): 736, doi:10.22373/sjhk.v5i2.11124.

⁴Miqdam Dinajan A, 'Pendekatan Kontekstual Dalam Memahami Hadis', *TAMMAT: Journal of Critical Hadith Studies* 1, no. 2 (26 June 2023): 63–72.

⁵Rozian Karnedi, 'Pemahaman Hadis *Isbāl* Dalam Perspektif Sosiologis', *AL QUUDS : Jurnal Studi Alquran dan Hadis* 5, no. 1 (27 April 2021): 291, doi:10.29240/alquds.v5i1.2187.

⁶Sulaiman ibn al-Asy'ats Al-Sijistani, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, ed. Al-Albani (Riyadh: Bayt al-Afkar al-Dauliyah, n.d.).

⁷To understand hadiths accurately, Abdin Chande proposes the necessity of using the Qur'an as a barometer to critically assess hadiths that contradict the Qur'an's internal logic and contemporary social realities, including cases where such hadiths conflict with the spirit of moderation. See, Abdin Chande, 'A Critical Evaluation of Some Problematic Hadith Narratives', *AJIS: American Journal of Islam and Society* 26, no. 4 (2009): 95, doi:https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v26i4.390.

Indeed, Hadiths were transmitted in a wide variety of socio-political contexts and cover a range of themes beyond ritual and legal matters, including war, peace, medicine, cosmology, and interpersonal relations. Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ life involved interactions with Muslims, polytheists, Christians, Jews, and hypocrites; he also functioned in multiple roles: as a religious leader, statesman, military commander, judge, and family man. The diversity of his contexts necessarily influenced his actions and sayings. Yet many Muslims today treat all Prophetic sayings as uniformly prescriptive, without distinguishing between context-specific guidance and universal principles.⁸

This has led to the emergence of different schools of interpretation. For instance, classical scholars have long debated the meaning of ambiguous Hadiths (*mutasyabihat*). One well-known example is the narration from Sahih al-Bukhari stating that “*Allah descends to the lowest heaven every last third of the night.*” The term *nuzūl* (descent) triggered significant theological discussion: some scholars (*the Salaf*) accepted the wording as-is without delving into the modality, while others (*the Khalaf*) interpreted it metaphorically—as referring to the descent of God’s mercy or acceptance of prayers.⁹ These differing approaches reflect two broader interpretive paradigms: textualism and contextualism.

Such divergence is especially relevant in the Indonesian context, where the government has promoted religious moderation (*moderasi beragama*) as a national policy framework. The Indonesian model of religious moderation is centered around four key principles: (1) national commitment, (2) tolerance for religious diversity, (3) rejection of violence, and (4) accommodation of local culture.¹⁰ These principles are expected to inform religious interpretation and educational practice. This is because Muslims have the potential to contribute to peace, justice, and humanity at all levels, both local and international, with a moderate attitude.¹¹ However, the extent to which students in Islamic higher education especially those in teacher training faculties internalize and apply these principles in their engagement with Hadith remains under-researched.

Despite the emergence of literature on religious moderation and the growing concern for religious radicalization, most existing studies have focused on ideological orientations or curricular initiatives. The study of Ibn Imam Al Ayyubi, et al., explores the concept of moderation in the literature of the Quran and Hadith in Islamic education.¹² There are also studies on the understanding of moderation in Islamic Religious Education textbooks at the Madrasah Aliyah

⁸The position and role of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a religious leader among his companions led to various actions and legal consequences, both individual and collective, for the Muslim community. These various forms and legal consequences can be examined, see, Sa’du al-Din Al-Usmāni, *Kontekstualisasi Hadis: Mengungkap Muatan Hukum Dan Metodologi Dari Realitas Sunnah Nabi* (Makassar: Alauddin University Press, 2011).

⁹Ali Mustafa Ya’qub, *Cara Benar Memahami Hadis* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2019).

¹⁰Agus Muhammad; Sigit Muryono, *Jalan Menuju Moderasi: Modul Penguatan Moderasi Beragama Bagi Guru* (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Islam Kementerian Agama RI, 2021).

¹¹Savri Yansah, Toha Andiko, and Moch Iqbal, ‘Religious Moderation in the Qur’an and Hadith: Theological Foundations and Implications for Contemporary Life’, *Al-Quds: Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Hadis* 9, no. 2 (2025): 442.

¹²Ibnu Imam; dll Al Ayyubi, ‘Moderasi Beragama Dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam Berdasarkan Literatur Al-Qur’an Dan Hadits’, *Syaikhona: Jurnal Magister Pendidikan Agama Islam* 02, no. 01 (2024): 67–84, doi:<https://doi.org/10.59166/syaikhona.v2i1.180>. Ibid.

level,¹³ the practice of religious moderation among university students.¹⁴ Religious moderation is linked to religious literacy among students.¹⁵ Studies that connect hadith with Quranic literacy.¹⁶ However, there are also studies that examine the understanding of hadith that are indicated as radical from the perspective of female scholars written by Munawir, etc.

Very few have investigated the interpretive behavior of students in higher education institutions, particularly how they engage with Hadiths that seem to contradict moderate values. Moreover, there is a lack of empirical research examining the relationship between religious literacy and interpretive models used by students when dealing with such texts.

This study seeks to fill that gap by examining how students of Islamic Education Faculties interpret Hadiths with anti-moderation content. Specifically, it investigates: the extent of students' religious literacy; the interpretive models they employ (textual vs. contextual); and how these models reflect or contradict Indonesia's national values of religious moderation.

By analysing students' interpretations of selected controversial Hadiths—within the framework of national religious moderation values—this study contributes to the development of a critical and contextually aware pedagogy in Islamic education. Furthermore, it provides insights for curriculum developers, religious authorities, and policymakers on how to better integrate religious literacy and moderation into the training of future educators and preachers in Muslim-majority societies.

METHOD

1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative field research design with a descriptive-interpretative approach. The design aims to explore and map Islamic education students' interpretive models of hadiths that appear to contradict the values of religious moderation. This approach enables an in-depth understanding of students' interpretive orientations whether moderate or radical, and whether their interpretive styles are textual, contextual, or intertextual.

2. Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted among students of the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FTK) at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, Indonesia. Participants were selected purposively, focusing on students from the fifth semester or higher, assuming that they had already received foundational courses on religious moderation, Pancasila and Civic Education, and Islamic socio-ethical values. A total of 20 students participated in in-depth interviews, representing various study programs within the faculty.

¹³Masyithah Rosidin, Mardhatillah, Fenty Andriani, and Abdul Rahman Addakhil, 'Moderate Interpretation in Islamic Religious Education Textbooks: A Case Study in An Indonesian Islamic Senior High School', *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 22, no. 2 (2024): 383–420, doi:<https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v22i2.1273>.

¹⁴Parjiman Lathif, 'The Practice of Religious Moderation in Muhammadiyah Higher Education (A Case Study in The Hadith Studies Program at Ahmad Dahlan University)', *IJISH (International Journal of Islamic Studies Dan Humanities)* 7, no. 2 (2024): 148–53, doi:<https://doi.org/10.26555/ijish.v7i2.12795>.

¹⁵Dil Yusuf Hanafi, Muhammad Saefi, Diyana, Tsania N, 'Students' Perspectives on Religious Moderation: A Qualitative Study into Religious Literacy Processes', *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 78, no. 1 (2022): 1–7, doi:<https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i1.7638>. Also Fahmi Sahlan et al., 'Digital-Based Literacy Analysis of Religious Moderation: Study on Public Higher Education Students', *Progresiva: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 2 (2022): 157–70, doi:[10.22219/progresiva.v11i02.20906](https://doi.org/10.22219/progresiva.v11i02.20906).

¹⁶Fauzi Saleh, 'The Role of Hadiths in Enhancing Quranic Literacy', *El-Sunan: Journal of Hadiths and Religious Studies* 3, no. 1 (2025): 15–24, doi:[10.46870/jiat.v4i1.178.3](https://doi.org/10.46870/jiat.v4i1.178.3).

3. Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews using a text-stimulation technique. Participants were presented with selected hadiths that textually appear to contradict moderation values. They were then asked to interpret these hadiths, explain their reasoning, and identify the sources of religious literacy (e.g., books, digital media, or online content) that shaped their understanding. Field observations and researcher notes were also used to enrich the contextual interpretation.

4. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2014) interactive model, consisting of:

1. Data reduction – selecting, coding, and categorizing relevant statements.
2. Data display – organizing data in thematic matrices to map interpretive models (textual, contextual, intertextual).
3. Conclusion drawing and verification – identifying core themes related to religious literacy and moderation.

To ensure analytical rigor, data were cross-checked through peer debriefing and member checking with selected participants.

5. Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

Credibility and trustworthiness were ensured through triangulation of data sources (interviews, field notes, and texts) and researcher reflexivity. Ethical approval was obtained from the UIN Antasari Research Ethics Committee, and all participants gave informed consent. Their identities were anonymized to maintain confidentiality

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the field study focusing on three key dimensions: (1) Students' understanding of hadith texts that appear to contradict the principles of religious moderation;

- (2) The interpretive models used by students textualist, contextualist, or intertextualist; and
- (3) The sources of religious literacy underpinning these interpretations.

Four hadith texts were introduced to participants, each representing a challenge to one of the four pillars of moderation national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and respect for local culture. The data were collected through text-stimulated interviews and analyzed thematically.

1. Interpretation of Hadith on National Commitment

Hadith:

تَكُونُ النُّبُوَّةُ فِيكُمْ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ ثُمَّ يَرْفَعَهَا إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْ يَرْفَعَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ خِلَافَةً عَلَيَّ

مِنْهَاجِ النُّبُوَّةِ فَتَكُونُ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ ثُمَّ يَرْفَعَهَا إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْ يَرْفَعَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ مُلْكًا عَاصًا فَيَكُونُ مَا

شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ ثُمَّ يَرْفَعَهَا إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْ يَرْفَعَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ مُلْكًا جَبْرِيَّةً فَيَكُونُ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ ثُمَّ يَرْفَعَهَا إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْ يَرْفَعَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ خِلَافَةً عَلَىٰ مِنْهَاجِ نُبُوَّةٍ¹⁷

“Prophethood shall remain among you as long as Allah wills... then there will be a caliphate upon the prophetic method.”

This hadith is often cited to justify the re-establishment of a *khilāfab* (caliphate). Students were asked whether Islam obliges Muslims in Indonesia to establish a caliphate and to replace democracy with it.

Table 1. Students’ Responses to the Hadith on Caliphate and National Commitment

Issue	Agree (Examples & Reasons)	Disagree (Examples & Reasons)
Necessity of establishing a caliphate	Some students (e.g., Su, Ra, Za, Re, Sai) viewed <i>khilāfab</i> as an ideal system based on prophetic tradition; several emphasized non-violence (“Islam is mercy”).	Others (e.g., Li, Ya, Ha, Ro, Iz) argued that governance is defined by state constitution; democracy represents people’s consensus (<i>syura</i>).
Replacing democracy with <i>khilāfab</i>	A few (Su, Sai, Dea, Lis) considered gradual reform possible but peaceful; viewed both systems as not entirely contradictory.	Most (Za, Yan, Had, Ro, Iz, Rea, Angg, Sar) rejected replacement, reasoning that democracy aligns with Islamic justice and pluralism.
Compatibility of democracy and <i>khilāfab</i>	Some (Ra, Zak, Rea) found harmony between both through the principle of consultation (<i>musyawarah</i>).	Others (Lin, Yan, Had) saw them as distinct legal-political systems, but prioritized compliance with national law.

Interpretation:

Findings indicate a balanced split between textualist and contextualist orientations. Textualists perceive the hadith literally as a divine command to restore the *khilāfab*, while contextualists interpret it as historical prophecy, not a binding political mandate.

Discussion:

These divergent views echo classical debates. *An-Nabhani*¹⁸ and *Sulaiman Rasjid*¹⁹ argued for the *fard kifayah* obligation of establishing a caliphate, while *Quraish Shihab*²⁰ and *Munawir Sjadzali*²¹ contextualized governance as value-based rather than form-based. Students’ contextualist

¹⁷ Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *Musnad Al-Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*, juz 30 (Beirut: al-Resalah, 1999).

¹⁸ Taqiyuddin An-Nabhani, *Daulah Islam*, ed. terj. Umar Faruq (Jakarta, 2009).

¹⁹ Sulaiman Rasjid, *Fiqh Islam* (Bandung: Sinar Baru Algensindo, 2013).

²⁰ M. Quraish Shihab, *Khilafah: Peran Manusia Di Bumi* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2020).

²¹ Munawir Sjadzali, *Islam Dan Tata Negara: Ajaran Sejarah Dan Pemikiran* (Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia Press, 1993).

responses suggest the growing influence of civic education and moderate Islamic instruction within Indonesian higher education.

2. Interpretation of Hadith on Violence

Hadith:

لَا تَبْدَءُوهُمْ بِالسَّلَامِ وَإِذَا لَقَيْتُمُوهُمْ فِي الطَّرِيقِ فَاضْطَرُّوهُمْ إِلَى أَضْيَقِ الطَّرِيقِ²²

“Do not greet the unbelievers first, and when you meet them on the road, force them to its narrowest part.” (Abu Dawud)

Table 2. Students’ Responses to the Hadith on Non-Muslims and Violence

Issue	Agree (Examples & Reasons)	Disagree (Examples & Reasons)
Greeting non-Muslims	Most participants (Su, Zak, Yan, Lis, Sai) agreed Muslims should not say <i>assalamu’alaikum</i> to non-Muslims, considering it a religious salutation reserved for believers.	A minority (Raf) proposed reinterpreting the hadith contextually as a matter of <i>wartime etiquette</i> rather than a universal norm.
Harsh treatment of non-Muslims	A few (Su, Kan) justified strictness toward hostile non-Muslims (<i>kafir harbî</i>).	The majority (Yan, Had, Ro, Rea, Nur) rejected any violence, emphasizing compassion, coexistence, and Qur’anic guidance (Q.S. 60:8).

Discussion:

Almost all students refrained from literal enforcement, demonstrating **contextual awareness**. Their understanding aligns with the exegetical positions of *Ibn Hajar* and *Al-Tabari*, who viewed this hadith as context-specific. Ibn Hajar mentions the differences of opinion among scholars. First, some permit greeting non-believers with salam. He cites al-Tabari’s opinion, transmitted from Ibn ‘Uyaynah, which allows offering salam to non-believers based on Qur’an, Surah al-Mumtahanah (60:8), which reads:

لَا يَنْهَاكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

And the words of Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim) to his father in Qur’an, Surah Maryam (19:47), which reads:

قَالَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ سَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكَ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِي حَفِيًّا

²²Sulaiman ibn al-Asy’ats Al-Sijistani, *Sunan Abu Daud*, ed. Syekh Al-Albani (Riyadh: Bayt al-Afkar al-Dauliyah, n.d.).

The second opinion is a compromise between the two views—those that permit and those that prohibit. Al-Bayhaqi stated that offering salam to Muslims serves as a form of praise, while to *ahl al-dhimmah* (non-Muslims under Muslim protection) it serves as a gesture of safety. On the other hand, al-Tabari explained that the hadith permitting greeting non-believers when accompanied by believers is specific, whereas the hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah is general in scope.

According to him, it is prohibited to greet non-believers with the prescribed Islamic form of salam without a valid reason or need—such as friendship, neighborhood, or mutual responsibility. However, if the greeting does not take the form of a supplication (i.e., not invoking peace in the religious sense), then it is permissible—such as saying:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ

As for the meaning of the hadith “*force them to the narrowest part of the road,*” it refers to a prohibition against giving way on a narrow path out of respect or honor for non-Muslims. This hadith does **not** mean that when encountering non-believers on a wide road, Muslims should push them aside or corner them, as such behavior would cause harm—and causing harm without justification is forbidden.²³

The preference for peaceful coexistence reflects the impact of Indonesia’s pluralistic environment and aligns with *Nurcholish Madjid’s* notion of inclusive Islam (*Islam rahmatan lil alamin*).²⁴

4. Interpretation of Hadith on Apostasy

Hadith:

« مَنْ بَدَّلَ دِينَهُ فَاقْتُلُوهُ » البخاري²⁵

Issue	Agree (Examples & Reasons)	Disagree (Examples & Reasons)
Legitimacy of executing apostates	A few (Nurdi) interpreted the hadith literally, associating it with serious treason (<i>hirabah</i>).	Most (Rafi’, Lin, Kan, Rea, Sai) rejected literal application, emphasizing that punishment for apostasy falls under state jurisdiction, not individuals.

Discussion:

Students overwhelmingly rejected vigilantism, emphasizing state authority and human rights principles. Their reasoning resonates with *Ali Mustafa Ya’qub* and *Said Ramadban al-Butbi*, who argue that execution applies only in cases of open rebellion, not mere change of faith.²⁶ This opinion, according to him, is supported by a hadith narrated by Muslim in which the Prophet (peace be

²³Ahmad ibn ‘Ali ibn Hajar, *Fath Al-Bary Bi Syarb Shahib al-Imam Abi Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Isma’il al-Bukhari* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Malik Fahd al-Wathaniyah, 2001).

²⁴Laily Nur Arifa, ‘Pemikiran Universalisme Islam Nurcholish Madjid Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Multikultural’, *Al-W’ijdan: Journal of Islamic Education Studies* II, no. November (2017): 195, doi:https://doi.org/10.58788/alwijdn.v2i2.57.

²⁵ Muhammad ibn Ismail Al-Bukhari, *Shahib Al-Bukhari* (Beirut: Dar Ibn Katsir, 2002).

²⁶Ya’qub, *Cara Benar Memahami Hadis*.

upon him) stated:

لَا يَحِلُّ دَمُ أَفْرَجٍ مُّسْلِمٍ يَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَّا بِأَخَذِي ثَلَاثِ الثَّيْبِ الرَّانِ وَالنَّفْسِ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالتَّارِكِ لِدِينِهِ
المُفَارِقِ لِلْجَمَاعَةِ

And by the words of Allah in Surah Ali ‘Imran (3:85), which say:

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

In the above verse, Allah does not command the killing of those who apostatize from Islam.

This indicates a moderate interpretive tendency, grounded in contextual understanding and civic legal awareness.

4. Interpretation of Hadith on Local Culture

Hadith:

مَنْ تَشَبَهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ» 27. ابو داود

Whoever imitates a people is one of them.” (Abu Dawud)

Issue	Agree (Examples & Reasons)	Disagree (Examples & Reasons)
Use of symbols associated with other religions	A few (Raf) permitted non-religious use (e.g, fashion), provided no intention of adopting other faiths.	Most (Lin, Zak, Iza, Sai, Nur) viewed it as forbidden due to its association with religious identity and theological boundaries.

Discussion:

Students’ cautious stance toward adopting symbols of other religions shows a predominantly **textual-conservative** interpretation in this domain. However, the minority’s symbolic-contextual reasoning suggests a nuanced understanding of cultural diversity. This reflects the dialectic between **religious orthodoxy** and **cultural pluralism** within Indonesian Islamic education.

Cross-Case Analysis: Interpretation Models

Model	Characteristics	Frequency	Illustrative Cases
Textualist	Literal adherence to hadith wording; minimal contextual engagement	40%	Responses to khilāfah and symbol hadiths
Contextualist	Interpretation guided by social and national context	45%	Responses to democracy, tolerance, and apostasy

²⁷ Al-Sijistani, *Sunan Abu Dawud*.

Intertextualist	Integration of hadith with Qur'anic and socio-legal reasoning	15%	Limited but visible in references to Q.S. 60:8 and legal norms
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Discussion Summary

Overall, the findings reveal that students of Islamic education at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin demonstrate a predominantly contextualist and moderate orientation in hadith interpretation. While textualist tendencies remain in theological matters, interpretive flexibility emerges in political and social domains.

This pattern supports earlier studies (e.g., Abdullah, 2021; Latif, 2022) showing that exposure to civic and moderation education fosters interpretive balance among Indonesian Muslim students. Their literacy is not merely textual but mediated by national, social, and academic discourses emphasizing pluralism and non-violence.

CONCLUSIONS

This study mapped the models of hadith interpretation among students of the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FTK) at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, particularly regarding hadiths often perceived as contradictory to the principles of religious moderation. The findings indicate that the dominant interpretive tendency among students is contextualist in nature, where hadiths are understood in relation to contemporary social realities, civic values, and Indonesia's pluralistic national framework. Through this approach, students attempt to reconcile religious teachings with humanitarian principles, tolerance, and social coexistence. Nevertheless, the study also found that some students continue to demonstrate selective textualist tendencies, especially in doctrinal and identity-related issues, such as hadiths concerning the prohibition of imitating followers of other religions. This suggests that traditional literalist frameworks still retain influence within certain theological discussions.

In addition, several participants displayed an emerging intertextual awareness by connecting hadith interpretation with Qur'anic principles, ethical considerations, and broader social contexts. This pattern reflects the development of a more critical and reflective form of religious literacy among Islamic education students. Overall, the study demonstrates an ongoing transition from rigid textualism toward a more balanced interpretive paradigm in which contextual reasoning coexists with commitment to scriptural authority. Such findings further indicate that the integration of religious moderation discourse and civic education within Islamic higher education has contributed significantly to shaping more adaptive, dialogical, and socially responsive models of hadith interpretation among students.

IMPLICATIONS

This study offers several important implications for the development of contemporary hadith studies and Islamic education. Theoretically, the findings reinforce the idea that religious literacy should not be understood merely as textual competence, but also as interpretive awareness

shaped by social and intellectual contexts. The coexistence of textual, contextual, and intertextual reasoning models among students demonstrates that hadith interpretation is dynamic, negotiated, and socially embedded rather than fixed and monolithic. In this regard, the study supports the arguments of M. Amin Abdullah and M. Quraish Shihab that religious moderation emerges through interpretive literacy and critical engagement with religious texts. Pedagogically, the findings suggest that Islamic higher education institutions need to strengthen hermeneutical and critical literacy approaches in hadith learning by integrating textual analysis with socio-ethical reflection, contextual interpretation, and civic values. Such an approach may encourage students to engage more responsibly and constructively with religious texts within pluralistic societies.

From a policy perspective, the study highlights the importance of embedding religious moderation literacy as a transversal competence across Islamic education curricula. Collaboration between the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, Islamic universities, and digital literacy initiatives could enhance students' interpretive capacity while strengthening resilience against exclusivism and religious extremism. Furthermore, this study opens opportunities for broader academic exploration in the future. Subsequent research may conduct comparative studies across multiple Islamic universities in Indonesia or employ mixed-method approaches to statistically examine interpretive tendencies among students. Cross-cultural studies are also necessary to investigate how Indonesian models of moderate hadith interpretation can contribute to global discussions on Islamic pedagogy, religious literacy, and moderation in contemporary Muslim societies.

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