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DEEP STRUCTURES OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: AN ANALYSIS THROUGH THE PERSPECTIVES OF ICEBERG THEORY AND THEORY U

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Abstract

This study investigates the implementation of religious moderation policies across three state religious higher education institutions in Indonesia through the conceptual lenses of the Iceberg Model and Theory U. It aims to explore the visible practices and underlying institutional structures, behavioral patterns, and mental models that shape the implementation of religious moderation. A qualitative multiple-case study design was employed between July and September 2024. The study involved 200 purposively selected participants, comprising students, lecturers, and administrative staff from three participating institutions. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, document analysis, and a descriptive questionnaire used to support data triangulation. Qualitative data were analyzed inductively using thematic analysis and subsequently interpreted through the Iceberg Model and Theory U. The findings indicate that the participating institutions adopted different approaches to implementing religious moderation. One institution demonstrated stronger formal institutional support through documented policies, dedicated organizational structures, and structured training programs, whereas the other institutions relied more on community engagement and everyday interactions within religiously diverse environments. Despite these differences, all institutions faced structural challenges, including limited inclusive facilities and insufficient institutional mechanisms to sustain interfaith engagement. The study concludes that effective implementation of religious moderation requires the integration of formal institutional governance with community-based learning and continuous organizational reflection. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of religious moderation as an institutional process and provide practical insights for strengthening governance and inclusive campus culture in religious higher education.

Keywords: *Iceberg Analysis, Religious Higher Education, Religious Moderation, U Theory*

Abstrak

Studi ini meneliti implementasi kebijakan moderasi keagamaan di tiga institusi pendidikan tinggi keagamaan negeri di Indonesia melalui lensa konseptual Model Gunung Es dan Teori U. Tujuannya adalah untuk mengeksplorasi praktik-praktik yang terlihat dan struktur kelembagaan yang mendasarinya, pola perilaku, dan model mental

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yang membentuk implementasi moderasi keagamaan. Desain studi kasus ganda kualitatif digunakan antara Juli dan September 2024. Studi ini melibatkan 200 partisipan yang dipilih secara purposif, terdiri dari mahasiswa, dosen, dan staf administrasi dari tiga institusi yang berpartisipasi. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi non-partisipan, analisis dokumen, dan kuesioner deskriptif yang digunakan untuk mendukung triangulasi data. Data kualitatif dianalisis secara induktif menggunakan analisis tematik dan selanjutnya diinterpretasikan melalui Model Gunung Es dan Teori U. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa institusi yang berpartisipasi mengadopsi pendekatan yang berbeda dalam mengimplementasikan moderasi keagamaan. Satu institusi menunjukkan dukungan kelembagaan formal yang lebih kuat melalui kebijakan yang terdokumentasi, struktur organisasi yang khusus, dan program pelatihan yang terstruktur, sedangkan institusi lain lebih mengandalkan keterlibatan masyarakat dan interaksi sehari-hari dalam lingkungan yang beragam secara keagamaan. Terlepas dari perbedaan-perbedaan ini, semua institusi menghadapi tantangan struktural, termasuk fasilitas inklusif yang terbatas dan mekanisme kelembagaan yang tidak memadai untuk mempertahankan keterlibatan antaragama. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa implementasi moderasi keagamaan yang efektif membutuhkan integrasi tata kelola kelembagaan formal dengan pembelajaran berbasis komunitas dan refleksi organisasi yang berkelanjutan. Temuan ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang moderasi keagamaan sebagai proses kelembagaan dan memberikan wawasan praktis untuk memperkuat tata kelola dan budaya kampus inklusif di pendidikan tinggi keagamaan

Kata Kunci: *Analisis Gunung Es, Pendidikan Tinggi Keagamaan, Moderasi Keagamaan, Teori U*

مستخلص

تتناول هذه الدراسة تطبيق سياسات الاعتدال الديني في ثلاث مؤسسات حكومية للتعليم .الديني العالي في إندونيسيا، وذلك من خلال منظورَي نموذج جبل الجليد ونظرية يو وتهدف إلى استكشاف الممارسات الظاهرة والهياكل المؤسسية الكامنة، والأنماط السلوكية، والنماذج الذهنية التي تُشكّل تطبيق الاعتدال الديني. وقد استُخدم تصميم دراسة حالات متعددة نوعية خلال الفترة من يوليو إلى سبتمبر 2024. وشملت الدراسة 200 مشارك تم اختيارهم عمدًا، من بينهم طلاب ومحاضرون وموظفون إداريون من المؤسسات الثلاث المشاركة. جُمعت البيانات من خلال مقابلات شبه منظمة، وملاحظات غير مشاركة، وتحليل الوثائق، واستبيان وصفي لدعم عملية تثليث البيانات. حُللت البيانات النوعية استقرائيًا باستخدام التحليل الموضوعي، ثم فُسرت لاحقًا من خلال نموذج جبل الجليد ونظرية يو. تشير النتائج إلى أن المؤسسات المشاركة تبنت مناهج مختلفة لتطبيق الاعتدال الديني. فقد أظهرت إحدى المؤسسات دعمًا مؤسسيًا رسميًا أقوى من خلال سياسات موثقة، وهياكل تنظيمية متخصصة، وبرامج تدريبية منظمة، بينما اعتمدت المؤسسات الأخرى بشكل أكبر على المشاركة المجتمعية والتفاعلات اليومية في بيئات ،متنوعة دينيًا. على الرغم من هذه الاختلافات، واجهت جميع المؤسسات تحديات هيكلية بما في ذلك محدودية المرافق الشاملة وعدم كفاية الآليات المؤسسية لدعم الحوار بين الأديان. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن التطبيق الفعال للاعتدال الديني يتطلب دمج الحوكمة المؤسسية الرسمية مع التعلم المجتمعي والتأمل التنظيمي المستمر. وتساهم هذه النتائج في فهم أعمق للاعتدال الديني كعملية مؤسسية، وتقدم رؤى عملية لتعزيز الحوكمة وثقافة .الحرم الجامعي الشاملة في التعليم العالي الديني

الكلمات الرئسية: تحليل جبل الجليد، التعليم العالي الديني، الاعتدال الديني، نظرية يو

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A. Introduction

Higher Education Institutions are not merely institutions for transmitting knowledge, they are cultural and ethical incubators where future leaders are shaped.[1] In pluralistic societies, higher education has a profound responsibility to prepare students not only for professional success but also for active, empathetic citizenship in diverse environments.[2] This calls for an educational model that integrates critical inquiry with values such as tolerance, respect for difference, and religious moderation. Especially in religious universities, education must go beyond dogmatic instruction and instead foster spaces where dialogue, inclusivity, and mutual understanding are embedded in both formal curricula and campus life.[3]

Religious moderation, in this sense, is not an isolated goal but a reflection of how education in universities should be: inclusive, dialogical, ethically grounded, and socially responsive.[4] A truly moderate university environment enables students to engage meaningfully with diverse worldviews, cultivates an academic culture free from exclusion or bias, and supports the development of personal values aligned with social harmony.[5] However, realizing this vision in practice remains a challenge. Observations from three state religious higher

[1] Malgorzata Ciesielska and Dariusz Jemielniak, "Qualitative Methodologies in Organization Studies," *Qualitative Methodologies in Organization Studies* 2, no. December (2017): 1–264, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65442-3; Ajimon George, "Beyond Degrees: Redefining Higher Education Institutions as Ethical AI Hubs," *AI and Society*, no. 0123456789 (2025), https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-025-02303-z; Kamilla Kohn Rådberg and Hans Löfsten, "The Entrepreneurial University and Development of Large-Scale Research Infrastructure: Exploring the Emerging University Function of Collaboration and Leadership," *Journal of Technology Transfer* 49, no. 1 (2024): 334–66, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10961-023-10033-x.

[2] Dalila P. Coelho et al., "Towards the Transformative Role of Global Citizenship Education Experiences in Higher Education: Crossing Students' and Teachers' Views," *Journal of Transformative Education* 23, no. 2 (2022): 149–64, https://doi.org/10.1177/15413446221103190; Chala Mosisa Hunduma and Yilfashewa Seyoum, "Multicultural Education and Global Citizenship: Literature Review," *Multidisciplinary Reviews* 7, no. 10 (2024), https://doi.org/10.31893/multirev.2024223; Veronica O'Toole Joanne O'Flaherty, "The Role of Emotion in Higher Education: Exploring Global Citizenship Education," *Irish Educational Studies* 43, no. 4 (2024): 645–63, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/03323315.2022.2135565.

[3] Nur Ali et al., "Interreligious Literacy Learning as a Counter-Radicalization Method: A New Trend among Institutions of Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia," *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 32, no. 4 (2021): 383–405, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410.2021.1996978; Husnul Amin, "Value-Based Frameworks and Peace Education in Faith-Neutral, Faith-Based and Faith-Inspired Schools in Islamabad: A Comparative Analysis," *Journal of Peace Education* 21, no. 1 (2024): 54–81, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2023.2289655; Anne Suryani and A. Bukhori Muslim, "Religious Tolerance, Intellectual Humility, and Democratic Education," in *Embracing Diversity: Preparing Future Teachers to Foster Religious Tolerance*, 2024, 13–34, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-1616-6_2.

[4] Emiliano Bosio, "Global Citizenship Education as a Reflexive Dialogic Pedagogy," *Citizenship Teaching & Learning* 18, no. 2 (2023): 177–94, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1386/ctl_00119_1; Fida Sanjakdar and Jessica Premier, "Teaching for Social Justice in Higher Education: Reflexive and Critical Auto-Ethnographic Narratives of Hope, Resilience, and Change," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 127 (2023): 104114, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2023.104114; Lauren Stentiford and George Koutsouris, "What Are Inclusive Pedagogies in Higher Education? A Systematic Scoping Review," *Studies in Higher Education* 46, no. 11 (2021): 2245–61, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2020.1716322.

[5] Benjamin P. Correia-Harker et al., "Students' Perceptions of and Engagement with Worldview Diversity in College," in *Educating About Religious Diversity and Interfaith Engagement* (Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2019), 18; Annick De Witt et al., "Designing Transformative Interventions for a World in Crisis: How the 'Worldview Journey' Invites for Personal, Cultural, and Systems Transformation," *Environmental Science and Policy* 162, no. June (2024): 103896, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2024.103896; Ying Zhang et al., "Appreciation of Differences: Promoting Diversity and Flourishing among College Students," *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education* 16, no. 5 (2024): 1969–85, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1108/JARHE-09-2023-0439.

education institutions in Indonesia, highlight inconsistencies between stated values and lived experiences. Policies exist, but their translation into everyday campus realities is often hindered by structural fragmentation, low interdepartmental coordination, and a lack of student-centered engagement.

These realities raise fundamental questions: How deeply are the values of religious moderation internalized within the university ecosystem? Are they present only in documentation, or do they shape behavior, structures, and decision-making processes? Existing research has tended to address moderation primarily from the lens of curriculum and pedagogy, particularly within Islamic Religious Education.[6] While these contributions are valuable, they overlook the systemic and cultural aspects that define how education actually functions in a university setting. This study identifies a significant analytical gap: the absence of a comprehensive institutional evaluation that examines both the visible and invisible forces shaping religious moderation in higher education.

To address this gap, the study applies the Iceberg Model, which distinguishes surface-level events from deeper structural and mental forces, and U Theory, which explores processes of institutional change from reactive to generative mindsets.[7] These frameworks enable a multi-layered diagnosis of university systems by asking not only what is happening, but why it is happening. By examining events, behavioral patterns, system structures, and mental models, this research offers a robust framework to understand and improve how religious moderation is conceptualized and practiced in universities.

The urgency of this research lies in aligning how universities operate with how education in universities should be: transformative, inclusive, and peace-oriented. When educational institutions fail to embody moderation in practice, they risk becoming spaces where intolerance is normalized and diversity is marginalized.[8] On the other hand, when universities

[6] Jasminto Jasminto and Siti Rofi, "Moderation, Character, and Pesantren Traditions: Actualization of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's Ideas in Islamic Religious Education," *Urwatul Wutsqo: Jurnal Studi Kependidikan Dan Keislaman* 14, no. 1 (2025): 159–79; Asnal Mala and Wiwin Luqna Hunaida, "Exploring the Role of Religious Moderation in Islamic Education: A Comprehensive Analysis of Its Unifying Potential and Practical Applications," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 11, no. 2 (2023): 173–96, https://doi.org/10.15642/jpai.2023.11.2.173-196; Masripah and Yufi Mohammad, "The Synergy of Moderate Islam and Curriculum Reform in Character Education," *Sinergi International Journal of Education* 3, no. 2 (2025): 82–93; Ahmad Munjin Nasih et al., "Strengthening Strategy to Religious Moderation at Indonesian Universities," *Journal of Ecohumanism* 3, no. 7 (2024): 3122–30.

[7] Yusuf Hanafi et al., "Devising an Impactful Religious Moderation Workshop for Teachers and Principals: The Practice of Ice Berg Analysis and U Theory Perspective," *Journal of Community Service and Empowerment* 5, no. 1 (2024): 45–53, https://doi.org/10.22219/jcse.v5i1.30085.

[8] Diana Cherian Ahuwalia et al., "From Oppressive to Affirmative: Situating the Health and Well-Being of LGBTIQ+ People as Impacted by Systemic and Structural Transitions in Russia, Turkey, Pakistan, and India," *Journal of Social Issues* 80, no. 3 (2024): 1056–78, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12644; Bryan Bonaparte, "Seeing Compassion Through Students' Eyes," *Developing Pedagogies of Compassion in Higher Education* 15 (2024): 21–35, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-67543-0_2; Elisa Fiore, "Navigating Danger through Nuisance: Racialized Urban Fears, Gentrification, and Sensory Enskilment in Amsterdam," *City and Society* 36, no. 1 (2024): 23–34,

consciously shape their policies, pedagogy, and campus life around the principles of moderation, they can cultivate future leaders who are not only competent, but also committed to building a just and pluralistic society.[9]

Thus, this study aims to analyze the implementation of religious moderation policies in Indonesian religious higher education institutions by integrating the Iceberg Model and Theory U as complementary analytical frameworks. The Iceberg Model provides a diagnostic perspective by examining four interconnected layers of institutional reality—events, behavioral patterns, systemic structures, and mental models—thereby revealing both visible practices and the underlying factors shaping organizational behavior. Building upon this diagnosis, Theory U offers a transformative perspective for interpreting institutional readiness and capacity for change, ranging from reactive responses to generative and sustainable transformation. Through the integration of these two frameworks, this study examines how religious moderation is institutionalized and identifies pathways for strengthening inclusive and transformative governance in higher education.

Conceptually, this study assumes that the implementation of religious moderation is an institutional phenomenon operating at multiple levels. The Iceberg Model is employed to identify the visible manifestations and hidden structures influencing institutional practices, while Theory U explains how institutions progress from awareness toward transformative action. The integration of these frameworks enables a comprehensive analysis that not only diagnoses existing institutional conditions but also identifies opportunities for organizational learning and sustainable transformation in higher education.

This study contributes both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it extends the literature on religious moderation by conceptualizing it as an institutional phenomenon shaped not only by individual attitudes but also by interconnected behavioral patterns, organizational structures, and underlying mental models. By integrating the Iceberg Model with Theory U, the study provides a comprehensive analytical framework that enables both the diagnosis of institutional conditions and the interpretation of organizational readiness for transformative change. Practically, the findings identify concrete institutional factors—including governance

https://doi.org/10.1111/ciso.12470; Arif Mahmud, "Exploring the Experiences of Muslim Doctoral Students in UK Higher Education: Challenges, Implications, and Pathways Toinclusivity," *Studies in Higher Education* 50, no. 4 (2025): 848–63, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2024.2357718.

[9] Tian Khusni Akbar, Deni Setiyawan, and Sovi Sulhana, "An Analysis of Multicultural Values : Empirical Study on Students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Gombong," *EDUSOSHUM Journal of Islamic Education and Social Humanities* 5, no. November (2025): 240–55; Kwasi Dartey-Baah, Justice Nyigmah Bawole, and Adam Abdul Mumin, "Towards Ethical Universities in West Africa: Integrating Communal and Global Ethics into Academic Institutions," *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 2025, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-025-09620-4; Martin Scanlan, *Navigating Social Justice: A Schema for Educational Leadership* (United States of America: Harvard Education Press, 2023).

structures, interfaith engagement mechanisms, leadership commitment, and community contexts—that can guide university leaders and policymakers in strengthening sustainable religious moderation policies. These contributions are significant because they move beyond curriculum-centered discussions and offer a systemic perspective for embedding religious moderation into higher education governance and institutional culture.

B. Research Method

1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative multiple-case study design to explore the implementation of religious moderation across three state religious higher education institutions in Indonesia.[10] A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study sought to understand participants' experiences, institutional practices, and the underlying organizational processes shaping religious moderation within their real-life contexts. To strengthen the credibility of the findings, qualitative data were complemented with descriptive questionnaire data that provided an overview of participants' perceptions and involvement in religious moderation. Rather than serving as the primary source of analysis, the questionnaire data were used to support triangulation and facilitate comparisons across institutional contexts. The study was informed by the Iceberg Model and Theory U as complementary conceptual frameworks for interpreting the findings.

2. Participants

Participants in this study consisted of students, lecturers, and administrative staff from three state religious higher education institutions in Indonesia, hereafter referred to as University A, University B, and University C to preserve institutional anonymity. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their active involvement in institutional life and their familiarity with university policies and practices related to religious diversity and inclusion. This sampling strategy enabled the study to capture diverse perspectives from different institutional roles while ensuring the relevance of participants' experiences to the research objectives. A total of 200 participants took part in the study. The distribution of participants across institutional roles and universities is presented in Figure 1.

[10] Akbar, Setiyawan, and Sulhana, "An Analysis of Multicultural Values : Empirical Study on Students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Gombong"; Dartey-Baah, Bawole, and Mumin, "Towards Ethical Universities in West Africa: Integrating Communal and Global Ethics into Academic Institutions"; Scanlan, *Navigating Social Justice: A Schema for Educational Leadership*.

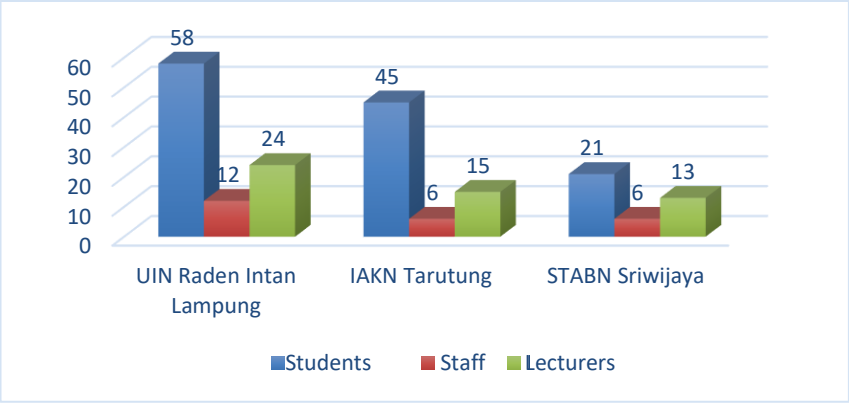


Figure 1. Comparison of Student, Staff, and Lecturer Respondents

3. Data Collection

Data were collected between July and September 2024 through semi-structured interviews, a structured questionnaire, non-participant observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews encouraged participants to describe their experiences, perceptions, institutional practices, and beliefs regarding religious moderation. The structured questionnaire was administered to obtain descriptive information regarding participants' involvement in religious moderation activities, perceptions of institutional support, and campus practices. Questionnaire findings were used descriptively to complement the qualitative evidence rather than for statistical hypothesis testing. Non-participant observations focused on everyday campus interactions, organizational activities, and institutional environments, while document analysis examined official policies, strategic plans, moderation programs, curriculum documents, training materials, and other relevant institutional documents. The interview guides, observation sheets, and document analysis checklists were designed to facilitate rich and flexible data collection rather than to confirm predetermined analytical categories. The use of multiple data sources enabled methodological triangulation, thereby enhancing the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. During data analysis, themes were identified inductively through thematic analysis and were subsequently interpreted through the conceptual lenses of the Iceberg Model and Theory U to examine institutional events, behavioral patterns, systemic structures, and mental models associated with the implementation of religious moderation.

4. Data Analysis

Data analysis was guided by the Iceberg Model and U Theory frameworks. [11] The analysis involved categorizing interview and observation data into the four analytical layers:

[11] Derek Cabrera and Laura Cabrera, "What Is Systems Thinking?," *Learning, Design, and Technology*, no. October (2023), https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17461-7_100; Andrew A. Hanna et al., "The Emergence of Emergent Leadership: A Comprehensive Framework and Directions for Future Research," *Journal of Management* 47, no. 1 (2021):

visible events, patterns of behavior, systemic structures, and mental models; thematic coding to identify recurring patterns, contradictions, and unique institutional dynamics in the implementation of religious moderation; cross-case comparison among the three universities to highlight contextual similarities and differences; and the U Theory lens was used to interpret institutional readiness for transformation, identifying points of resistance, reflection, and renewal in policy implementation.

5. Discussion Approach

The discussion section was structured to move beyond surface-level observations and provide deeper insight into institutional functioning. The Iceberg Analysis served as a narrative structure for presenting findings, from visible policy outputs to the hidden mental frameworks that shape behavior.[12] Meanwhile, U Theory informed the interpretation of change potential, helping to identify where universities were stuck in reactive modes and where they were advancing toward more generative and inclusive educational practices. This layered approach to discussion allowed the study to present a holistic view of how religious moderation is understood, internalized, and enacted in different university contexts.

C. Discussion

1. Events

The surface-level events observed across the three Religious Higher Education Institutions, UIN Raden Intan Lampung, IAKN Tarutung, and STAB Negeri Sriwijaya, demonstrate how religious moderation policies are implemented in response to rising religious polarization, intolerance, and socio-political change. While all three institutions are bound by the same directive (Circular Letter B-3663.1/DJ.1/BA.02/10/2019 regarding the establishment of Houses of Religious Moderation), their contextual responses vary significantly.

UIN Raden Intan Lampung shows a more structured and institutionalized approach, with formalized policies, programs, and institutional units. IAKN Tarutung and STAB Negeri Sriwijaya, though lacking such systemic organization, demonstrate community engagement through social programs and local religious harmony initiatives. These events signal an adaptive response to external pressures, yet they are shaped by deeper structural and cognitive factors, which are explored in the next sections.

76–104, https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206320965683; C. Otto Scharmer, *Theory U: Leading from the Future as It Emerges*, 2nd Editio (1333 Broadway: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc, 2016).

[12] Cabrera and Cabrera, "What Is Systems Thinking?"

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Based on the Work Program of Religious Higher Education Institutions that adheres to the principles of religious moderation, the analysis of the three universities is presented in Table1.

Table 1. A Comparison of the Implementation of Religious Moderation Programs in Three Religious Institutions

No	Program	Institution		
		University A	**University B**	**University C**
1.	Religion	Islam	Christian	Buddhist
2.	Students of Other Faiths	Yes	Yes	Yes
3.	Religious Moderation Policies	The university has a systematic written policy document on religious moderation, a dedicated institution overseeing religious moderation efforts, and regularly conducts workshops for university members.	The university has staff responsible for ensuring the implementation of religious moderation on campus and in the surrounding community; however, the system is not yet well-structured, resulting in inadequate documentation and formal records.	The university has a dedicated unit to accommodate religious moderation activities; however, it has not yet reached its full potential in organizing programs and producing comprehensive written policy documentation.
4.	Guidance and Educational Program	There are religious diversity development programs for university staff, lecturers, and students.	There are religious diversity development programs for some staff and lecturers, but none yet for university students.	Religious diversity development programs are available for some staff and lecturers, but none have been implemented for university students.
5.	Facilities and Environment	The university has not yet provided worship facilities for other religions on campus.	The university has not yet made available worship facilities for other religions within the campus environment.	The university has not yet provided worship spaces for other religions on campus.
6.	Facilities and Environment	There are policies and procedures in place to protect lecturers, staff, and students from religion-based discrimination.	Policies and procedures are in place to protect lecturers, staff, and students from religious-based discrimination.	There are established policies and procedures to protect lecturers, staff, and students from discrimination based on religion.
7.	Student Involvement	Students are actively involved in diversity initiatives and religious moderation programs both within the university and in the surrounding community.	Students have not yet been actively engaged in diversity activities and religious moderation programs within the university and its surrounding environment.	Students have not yet been actively involved in diversity activities and religious moderation programs within the university and its surrounding community.
8.	Practice of Religious Moderation in the Surrounding Environment	Students, lecturers, and staff tend to live in predominantly Muslim communities and are rarely involved in events that include other religions.	Students, lecturers, and staff live in diverse communities, which leads to frequent involvement in events that include people of different religions.	Students, lecturers, and staff live in diverse communities, allowing them to frequently participate in events involving other religions.

2. Patterns of Behavior

The findings suggest that institutional interventions have contributed to different levels of engagement with religious moderation across the participating universities. At University A, formal training programs and structured institutional policies appear to strengthen students' cognitive understanding of religious moderation. However, this institutional emphasis has not been fully translated into meaningful interfaith experiences because opportunities for interaction remain limited within a relatively homogeneous social environment. From the perspective of the Iceberg Model, this indicates that while observable behaviors have been shaped through institutional initiatives, deeper systemic conditions and everyday social interactions continue to constrain the internalization of moderation values. This finding supports previous studies showing that formal educational programs alone are insufficient to cultivate sustainable intercultural competence unless they are accompanied by authentic opportunities for dialogue and collaborative engagement across diverse communities.[13]

In contrast, students at University B and University C, though less formally trained, engage in interfaith interactions more organically due to the pluralistic nature of their environments. Staff and faculty behavior also varies, with University A showing greater institutional alignment through coordinated training. Meanwhile, staff at University B and University C adopt more personalized approaches, often influenced by lived experiences rather than institutional mandates. This pattern reveals an important distinction: exposure to diversity in daily life may foster lived moderation more effectively than formal training alone, especially when institutional structures are weak. The findings indicate varying levels of student engagement in religious moderation activities across the three participating universities, as presented in Figure 2.

The interview findings indicate that students actively sought information about religious moderation despite the absence of formal workshops on campus. Many participants engaged in training activities organized outside the university while first becoming familiar with the concept through campus-led awareness campaigns. Rather than serving as an end in itself, participation in these activities functioned as a mechanism for exposing students to the core values of religious moderation, including tolerance, inclusivity, mutual respect, and dialogue

[13] Michael Byram and Manuela Wagner, "Making a Difference: Language Teaching for Intercultural and International Dialogue," *Foreign Language Annals* 51, no. 1 (March 2018): 140–51, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12319; Agus Hari H Wibowo et al., "Designing and Assessing Experiential Learning Pedagogy for an Intercultural Communicative Competence Training Module: A Quasi-Experimental Study," *Frontiers in Education* Volume 9- (2024); Elba Gutiérrez-Santiuste and Maximiliano Ritacco-Real, "Intercultural Communicative Competence in Higher Education through Telecollaboration: Typology and Development," *Education and Information Technologies* 28, no. 11 (2023): 13885–912, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-023-11751-3.

across religious differences. This finding is consistent with the theory of religious moderation, which emphasizes that moderate attitudes are developed through continuous learning, social interaction, and meaningful engagement with diversity rather than solely through formal institutional programs. Therefore, students' active participation in learning opportunities both within and beyond the university reflects an ongoing process of internalizing religious moderation values.[14] This aligns with the perspective advanced by Majemu (2024), who argues that religious moderation plays a crucial role in strengthening interfaith dialogue and supporting peacebuilding processes across diverse societies.[15] Religious moderation encourages the exchange of information and cross-religious understanding, not only through formal programs but also via ongoing social interactions and dialogue within communities.

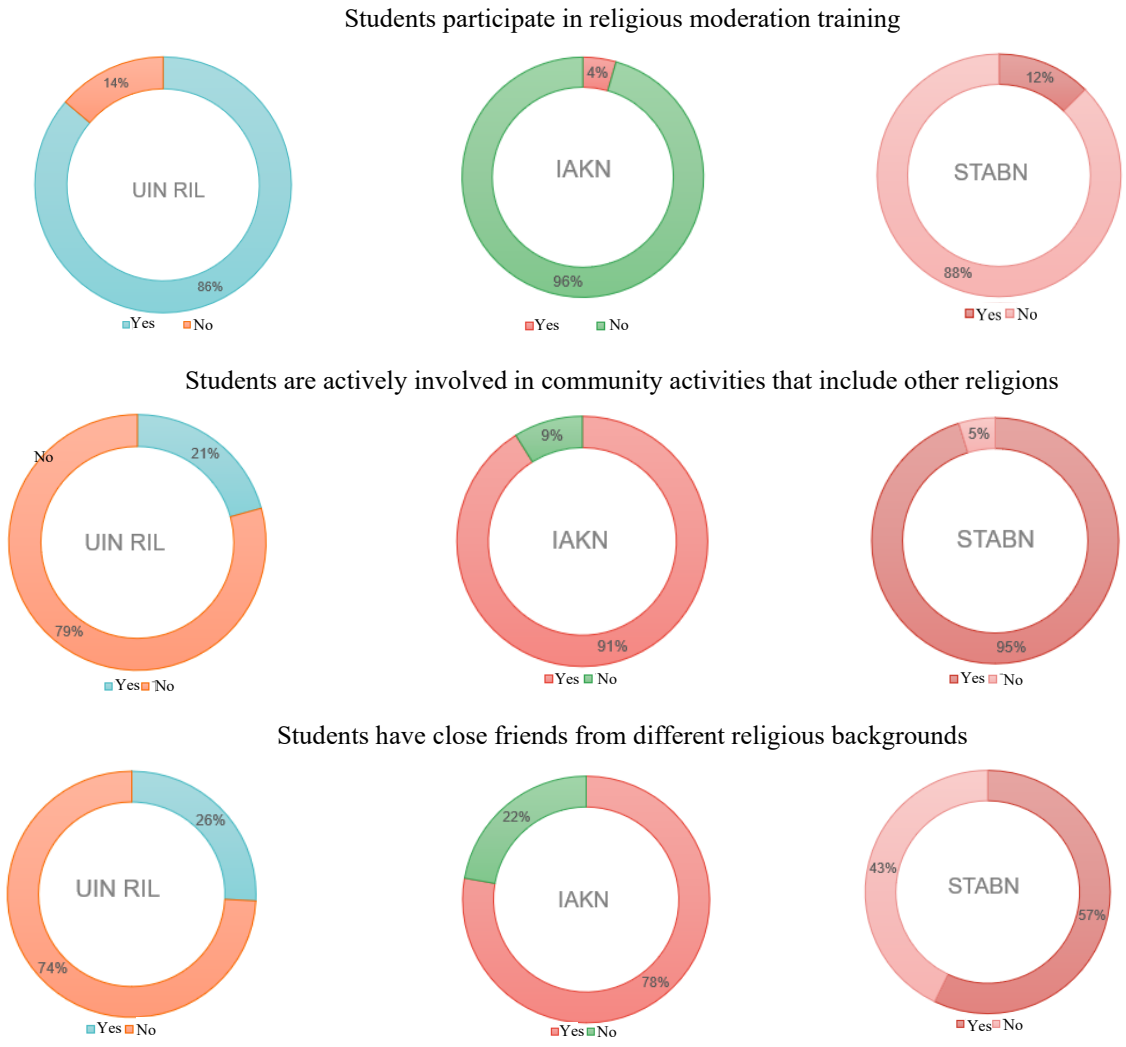


Figure 2. Student Involvement in Religious Moderation

[14] Ahmad Zainul Hamdi et al., *Modul Pelatihan Bagi Para Pelatih (Training of Trainers) Penguatan Moderasi Beragama Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama, 2021), https://doi.org/10.1002/pfi.4150240105.

[15] Shefiu Abdulkareem Majemu, "Strengthening Interfaith Dialogue through Religious Moderation Discourse: An African Perspective," *International Journal of Civilizations Studies & Tolerance Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2024): 76–85, https://doi.org/10.54878/2apnq261.

Interviews with students from University B and University C indicated that many participants actively sought information about religious moderation despite the limited availability of formal training on campus. As one student explained:

> "Although our university did not organize a specific workshop on religious moderation, I joined several interfaith activities organized by external organizations to better understand the concept." (Student, University B)

> Another participant stated:
> "I first learned about religious moderation through campus campaigns. Later, I looked for additional opportunities outside the university because I wanted to understand how moderation is practiced in real life." (Student, University C)

These statements suggest that students' engagement with religious moderation extended beyond formal institutional programs, indicating that self-directed learning and community participation also contributed to the internalization of moderation values.

Based on survey results involving staff members from the three universities, with a total of 24 participants (12 from UIN Raden Intan Lampung, 6 from IAKN Tarutung, and 6 from STABN Sriwijaya), the findings are presented in Figure 3.

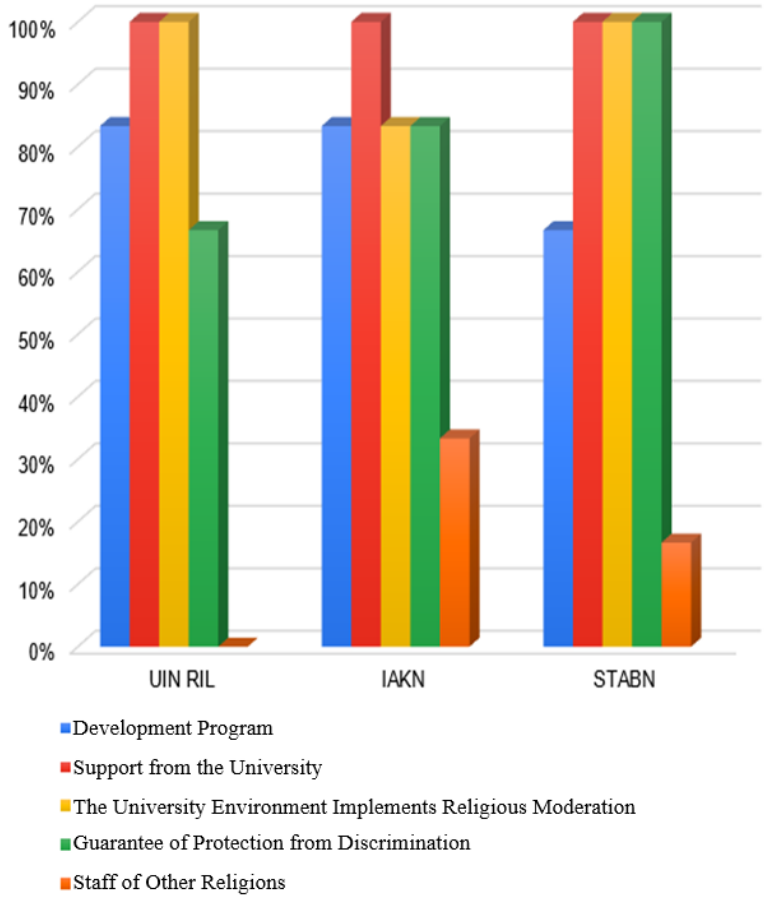


Figure 3. Religious Moderation in Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTK) According to Staff

Figure 3 summarizes descriptive questionnaire responses and qualitative findings from staff across the three participating institutions regarding institutional support for religious moderation. Across the five dimensions examined—guidance, institutional support, implementation of religious moderation, protection from discrimination, and the presence of staff from different religious backgrounds—University A demonstrated a stronger institutional commitment than the other participating institutions. This finding was also reflected in interview data, which indicated that staff perceived religious moderation to be more systematically integrated into institutional policies and daily administrative practices. In contrast, although Universities B and C offered fewer formal guidance programs, staff members demonstrated a strong understanding of religious moderation through everyday institutional interactions. A notable difference was observed in workforce diversity, where Universities B and C employed staff from different religious backgrounds, whereas University A did not.

This finding is consistent with theories on organizational commitment to religious moderation, which emphasize the importance of institutional support and inclusive workplace environments in fostering religious harmony. According to the Organizational Culture Theory, the presence of clear guidance, supportive leadership, and inclusive policies creates a culture that encourages moderate religious attitudes and reduces discrimination.[16] The recruitment of staff from diverse religious backgrounds further aligns with principles of Religious Pluralism Theory, which advocates for acceptance and inclusion of different religious identities within institutions to promote social cohesion and mutual respect.[17]

The differences observed among the three institutions reflect varying stages of institutionalization of religious moderation practices, highlighting that formal structures and policies strongly influence how effectively religious moderation is implemented and perceived within academic environments.

Based on the survey conducted among lecturers from the three universities, with a total of 52 participants (24 from University A, 15 from University B, and 13 from University C), the results are presented in Figure 4.

[16] Organizational Behaviour, "Organization Culture Theory : From Organizational Culture of Schein to Appreciative Inquiry of Cooperrider & Whitney," *Elixir Org. Behaviour* 92, no. March (2016): 39002–8.
[17] Diana L. Eck, "Prospects for Pluralism: Voice and Vision in the Study of Religion," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 75, no. 4 (2007): 743–76, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfm061.

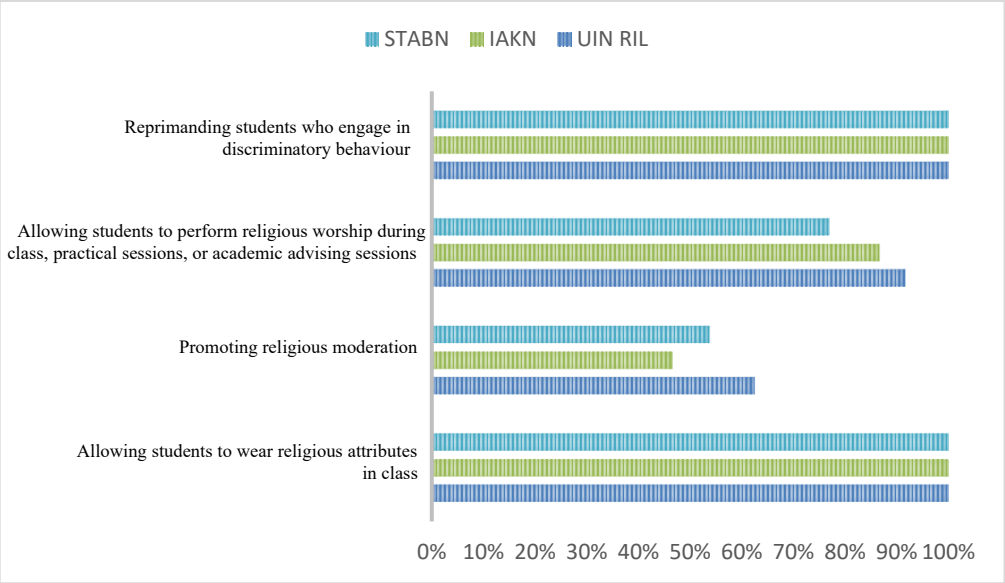


Figure 4. Comparison of Lecturers' Perspectives on the Implementation of Religious Moderation

Based on Figure 4, lecturers across the three participating universities reported integrating religious moderation into their academic responsibilities. This pattern was also reflected in the interview findings. One lecturer explained:

> "I always give students time to perform their prayers before continuing the class. Respecting their religious obligations is part of creating an inclusive learning environment." (Lecturer, University A)

Similarly, another participant stated:

> "We rarely organize formal campaigns, but we try to demonstrate religious moderation through our daily interactions with students and colleagues from different backgrounds." (Lecturer, University C)

These statements suggest that religious moderation is practiced not only through formal institutional programs but also through everyday academic interactions that foster tolerance, inclusivity, and mutual respect.

3. System Structures

Document analysis revealed that University A has established a dedicated religious moderation unit, supported by institutional policies, strategic plans, and formal implementation guidelines. These findings were corroborated by interviews with university administrators, who explained that the unit coordinates training activities and institutional programs related to religious moderation. These findings indicate that University A possesses a stronger institutional framework for implementing religious moderation than the other participating institutions. From the perspective of New Institutionalism Theory, the presence of formal

organizational structures and policy mechanisms reflects institutional efforts to embed religious moderation as a legitimate organizational value.[18]

In contrast, Universities B and C do not have dedicated institutional units for religious moderation. Instead, the findings indicate that religious moderation is primarily sustained through everyday interactions within socially and religiously diverse campus communities. Although these informal practices foster mutual respect and interfaith engagement, participants also noted the absence of formal institutional mechanisms to coordinate and evaluate moderation initiatives. From the perspective of the Iceberg Model, these institutions demonstrate strong behavioral patterns of religious moderation; however, the underlying systemic structures remain less developed. This suggests that while diversity in daily interactions encourages the internalization of moderation values, stronger organizational support is required to sustain these practices over time.[19]

Four structural determinants were identified as central: (1) the residential environment, (2) the workplace environment, (3) government (MoRA) support, and (4) the existence of a dedicated moderation unit. Among these, the residential environment exerted the most substantial influence. This finding corresponds with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, updated and expanded in recent developmental research, which posits that multiple nested environmental systems, from immediate settings like home and work to broader institutional and policy contexts, influence social behavior.[20] The strong impact of the residential environment suggests that sociocultural contexts are vital to fostering religious moderation, indicating that system design should consider more than just bureaucratic arrangements.

Several practical policy implications can be derived from these findings. First, universities should establish multi-faith reflection and worship spaces that can accommodate students and staff from different religious backgrounds. Second, religious moderation units should be strengthened through annual operational plans, dedicated budgets, and measurable performance indicators. Third, interfaith dialogue programs should be integrated into student orientation activities, community service programs, and extracurricular activities. Fourth,

[18] W. Richard Scott, *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests, and Identities* (London: SAGE Publication, Inc., 2013).

[19] Rene Dubos, *Social Capital: Theory and Research* (London: Routledge, 2017).

[20] S. M. Constantino et al., "Cognition and Behavior in Context: A Framework and Theories to Explain Natural Resource Use Decisions in Social-Ecological Systems," *Sustainability Science* 16, no. 5 (2021): 1651–71, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-021-00989-w; Candace K. May, "Complex Adaptive Governance Systems: A Framework to Understand Institutions, Organizations, and People in Socio-Ecological Systems," *Socio-Ecological Practice Research* 4 (2022): 39–54, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/s42532-021-00101-7; Jonathan R. H. Tudge et al., "Uses and Misuses of Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory of Human Development," *Journal of Family Theory & Review* 1, no. 4 (2009), https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-2589.2009.00026.x.

universities should develop inclusive campus guidelines that explicitly regulate protection against religious discrimination and provide reporting mechanisms for intolerance-related incidents. Finally, collaboration with local religious organizations and community leaders should be institutionalized to create sustainable platforms for interreligious engagement both within and outside campus environments.

4. Mental Models

Document analysis indicated that University A has established institutional policies, strategic plans, and a dedicated organizational unit to support the implementation of religious moderation. This finding was reinforced by interviews with administrators and lecturers, who described religious moderation as an integral component of university governance and academic activities. One administrator explained that moderation initiatives were systematically integrated into staff development and student programs. These findings suggest that religious moderation at University A is institutionalized through formal organizational mechanisms and coordinated policy implementation. From the perspective of the Iceberg Model, these formal arrangements represent the visible manifestation of deeper systemic structures and institutional mental models. Similarly, Neo-Institutional Theory explains how formal policies and organizational routines contribute to embedding shared norms and sustaining institutional legitimacy.[21]

Interview data and field observations indicated that participants at University B described religious moderation as being practiced primarily through everyday interactions within a religiously diverse community rather than through formal institutional programs. One participant explained that opportunities for dialogue with people from different religious backgrounds were a natural part of campus life and contributed to mutual understanding and respect. These findings suggest that religious moderation at University B is embedded in daily social relationships and sustained through continuous interaction within a pluralistic environment. From the perspective of the Iceberg Model, these observable practices reflect deeper mental models that emphasize openness, dialogue, and respect for diversity. Theory U further suggests that such continuous interactions create opportunities for reflection and collective learning, enabling religious moderation to emerge as an evolving institutional practice rather than solely as a policy-driven initiative.[22]

[21] Royston Greenwood et al., *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Insistutionalism* (London: SAGE Publication, Inc., 2017); Ahmed Mirza, "The Association of Formal and Informal Institutions With Total Entrepreneurial Activity: A Neo-Institutional Theory Approach" (University of Glasgow, 2023).

[22] Cathrine Filstad, Trude Høgvold Olsen, and Anja Overgaard Thomassen, "When Sensemaking Remains Local: Implications for Distributed Sensemaking in Reform Implementation," *Journal of Workplace Learning* 35, no. 3 (2023),

University C internalizes religious moderation through Buddhist teachings of harmony and peace. Rather than disseminating the concept through formal programs, the institution emphasizes contemplative approaches and role-modeling as effective methods for fostering moderation. This reflects Organizational Culture Theory in recent perspectives that emphasize the role of shared symbolic practices and leadership in embedding core values.[23]

These findings affirm that while external structures and behaviors are important, internal mental models profoundly influence how institutions conceptualize and apply religious moderation. When mental models align with inclusive values and daily lived realities, the implementation of moderation policies becomes more authentic and sustainable.

5. Institutional Transformation Through Theory U Perspective

From the perspective of Theory U[24], the findings suggest different patterns of institutional engagement with religious moderation across the three participating universities rather than distinct developmental stages. Based on interview data, document analysis, and field observations, University A appears to exhibit characteristics associated with the Seeing and Sensing phases of Theory U. Participants described the existence of formal policies, a dedicated religious moderation unit, and structured training initiatives that demonstrate institutional awareness and coordinated efforts to strengthen religious moderation. However, interview participants also identified several structural challenges, including the limited availability of inclusive worship facilities and relatively few opportunities for direct interfaith interaction among students. These findings suggest that, while the university has established important organizational mechanisms, further institutional learning and reflection are required before the transformative characteristics associated with the Presencing phase can be inferred.

Interview data and field observations indicated that participants at University B frequently interacted with peers from different religious backgrounds as part of their everyday campus and community life. Several participants described these interactions as opportunities to develop mutual understanding, respect, and openness toward religious diversity. These findings suggest that religious moderation is primarily cultivated through lived social experiences rather than formal institutional programs. From the perspective of Theory U, these practices can be interpreted as reflecting characteristics associated with the Sensing phase,

https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1108/JWL-03-2022-0032; Sally Maitlis and Marlys Christianson, "Sensemaking in Organizations: Taking Stock and Moving Forward," *Academy of Management Annals* 8, no. 1 (2014), https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5465/19416520.2014.873177.

[23] Daoud Abdellatef Jerab and Tarek Mabrouk, "The Role of Leadership in Changing Organizational Culture," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2023, 1–13, https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4574324; Joanne Martin, *Organizational Culture: Mapping the Terrain* (London: SAGE Publication, Inc., 2017).

[24] Scharmer, *Theory U: Leading from the Future as It Emerges*.

where institutions and their members become more aware of their social context through observation, dialogue, and shared experiences. Although participants demonstrated increasing openness and reflective learning, the available evidence does not suggest that the institution has fully achieved the transformative conditions associated with the Presencing phase.

University C similarly occupies a transitional position between Sensing and Presencing. Religious moderation is internalized through Buddhist values of harmony, compassion, and peaceful coexistence. While formal governance structures are less developed, moderation practices are embedded in daily interactions and institutional culture. This suggests that transformation is occurring primarily through cultural and relational mechanisms rather than bureaucratic structures.

Overall, none of the institutions can yet be categorized as fully reaching the Co-Creating and Co-Evolving stages of Theory U. Achieving these stages requires stronger institutional collaboration, the provision of inclusive facilities, systematic interfaith engagement programs, and continuous evaluation mechanisms that translate moderation values into sustainable organizational practices

D. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that religious moderation is shaped by a complex interaction of visible institutional practices and deeper cultural structures. Through the Iceberg Model, the findings reveal that differences among University A, University B, and University C are not limited to programs and policies but extend to behavioral patterns, organizational structures, and underlying mental models. University A exhibits stronger formal institutionalization of religious moderation, while University B and University C rely more heavily on community-based and experiential approaches. From the perspective of Theory U, the three institutions have progressed beyond the initial Downloading stage and demonstrate varying levels of Sensing and Presencing. However, none have fully reached the Co-Creating and Co-Evolving stages where religious moderation becomes a fully integrated and continuously adaptive institutional culture. Structural limitations, particularly the absence of inclusive worship facilities and limited institutionalized interfaith engagement, remain significant challenges.

Therefore, universities should strengthen religious moderation through the development of inclusive worship facilities, institutionalized interfaith dialogue programs, stronger moderation units, and clear anti-discrimination policies. These measures are expected to support the transition from reactive implementation toward transformative and sustainable

institutional practices of religious moderation. Future research should expand the scope of investigation by involving a larger number of religious higher education institutions across different regions of Indonesia and employing longitudinal designs to examine institutional transformation over time. Further studies may also develop quantitative indicators to measure institutional progression within the stages of Theory U and evaluate the effectiveness of specific religious moderation policies in fostering inclusive and sustainable campus cultures.

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