

Puritan, Moderate, and Liberal Youth Muslim: Islamic Identity Typology Among Generation Z Students in Indonesian Universities

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this article is to examine the categorization of student's comprehension of religion within two Indonesian universities, namely Universitas Islam Bandung and Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, due to the presence in promoting Islamic values by offering Islamic religious education subject and religious mentoring programs in the curriculum that have a significant impact on student's religious beliefs. The research employed a cross-sectional survey with descriptive analysis and utilized a sample of 139 students from both universities. It identified three typologies of Islamic identities within the students: first, the Puritans, who are identical to the Indonesian Salafist local leader Yazid bin Abdul Qadir Jawas; second, the moderate Islam, influenced by Yusuf al-Qardhawi's teaching; and third, the liberal, associated with Ulil Abshar Abdala's Jaringan Islam Liberal movement. The findings are: The students enrolled in the Islamic Religious Education at Universitas Islam Bandung showed a predominant inclination towards the Puritans (50-53.3%), the moderate (30%), and the liberal (16.7-20%), respectively. Within Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia's student reveals a trend towards the Puritans (30-43.3%), the moderate (26.7- 50%), and the liberal (20-30%), respectively. This shows there is a strong inclination towards the Puritans within both universities, and it is recommended that both universities formulate policies and strategies for strengthening religious moderation.

Keywords: Youth Muslim, Puritanism, Religious Moderation, Liberalism

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of intolerance and radicalism is often pinned on religious affiliation as the "culprit" in these problems. Of course, this is very wrong and contrary to the mission of religion, which carries a message of peace.¹ On the other hand, accusations of infidelity (*takfir*) against fellow Muslims are thrown out of thin air because they are seen as being at odds with the understanding of their group.² Debates between the Puritans and the Moderates still ended in disagreements and were always confrontational.³ Meanwhile, Liberals launched sharp criticism of the revelation text, raising doubts about the originality of the revelation.⁴ Freedom of opinion and expression of ideas caused by democratic euphoria in every sect must be maintained in the context of religious social life and regulated so as not to cause ongoing conflict.⁵

In Arabic dialectics, the word Puritan is associated with the term Fundamentalist as a symbol of a true Muslim, while the opposition views people as extremists or fanatics.⁶ The emergence of the Puritanism movement aims to project the golden age of Islam (*salafus sholeh*) back into the context of today's social life, as is the typical slogan "return to the Koran."⁷ This Puritan group developed in Indonesia and manifested itself in a movement known as Salafi. Moderate Islam is a representation of the Middle Ages (*ummatan wasathan*), which opposes all forms of extremism in the form of oppression and persecution, which leads to radicalism in religion.⁸ Medium, from a Moderate Islamic perspective, means not radical and not liberal, prioritizing tolerant and balanced values.⁹ The Moderate Islamic Movement was then promoted by Muhammadiyah as Progressive Islam and Nahdhatul 'Ulama with the idea of Islam Nusantara.¹⁰ Liberal Islam has various meanings and promotes diversity and freedom.¹¹ Its presence aims to support the spirit of secularism, individualism, and the principles of freedom.¹² The principle of religious interpretation must be non-literal and in accordance with the dynamic breath of human civilization.¹³

In a religious context, these three schools of thought are able to provide color and change through social and psychological approaches to the fabric of society, especially the academic community. The ideology that is formed will then form a point of view and way of behaving that is classified as exclusive by the Puritan group, inclusive by the moderate group, or free will by the liberal group. If the discourse that occurs among these three groups is properly dialogued, it will trigger internal conflicts among religious communities, which will erode national commitment to diversity and the spirit of unity.

The issue of religious sects in the form of radicalism and liberalism is something that is attracting the attention of Indonesia's young generation, especially in this digital era. Generation Z, in the research results,¹⁴ is seen as an addicted generation to internet use. Generation Z also obtains information and knowledge from the internet.¹⁵ Radical religious ideology is explored through the use of social media that has emerged on the internet by terrorizing a group and recruiting members.¹⁶ Radicalism usually occurs in the younger generation due to theological factors, understanding of religious texts, and the doctrines of religious leaders, which influence their behavior.¹⁷ Apart from that, psychologically, the younger generation's psyche easily experiences anxiety, pressure, and mental disorders, which affect their mental health.¹⁸ The form of escape resulting from the shock felt is usually taken out of religion. Misunderstanding the religious context determines viewpoints and behaviors that are too anarchic or may become more liberal.

Among students, ideological factors are the main determinants that influence their religious behavior. Research¹⁹ shows the correlation between the choice of political ideology and the way an individual's religion is. In responding to conditions that have the potential to give rise to religious conflict, religious moderation is very necessary in the context of diversity in order to achieve religious

harmony.²⁰ Students in this age range are very vulnerable to being influenced by an ideology or doctrine of understanding that tends to lead to radical or intolerant beliefs, so there are concerns that they will give rise to negative excesses. This is also proven by the results of a survey by the National Counterterrorism Agency in which 39% of students indicated that they were interested in understanding radicalism.²¹ Universities need to refine and introduce the typology of Islamic thought to their students so that a correct worldview regarding the concept of Islam is *kaffah*.

Studying student perceptions is very important with the aim of gaining knowledge, participation, and stimulus from the surrounding environment.²² The content of perception is reflected in religious behavior or attitudes, both in individual and social life. In the context of an individual's life, the content of perception will instill beliefs and actualize behavior as an embodiment of the beliefs he holds. In the context of social life, it will motivate people to create religious norms as guidelines for religious life in society.²³ Understanding perceptions is very important in identifying and classifying the typology of students' religious thinking, as well as providing feedback in the form of strengthening corrective action on aspects that are considered wrong in religious ways.

The study of portraits of religious understanding has attracted the attention of researchers. For example, research explores the role of campus missionary institutions in shaping student's religious attitudes. Research findings²⁴ regarding the perceptions of student activists who are active in organizations found that 57% said they understood religious moderation, and 43% did not understand religious moderation. Another research²⁵ photographed the interpretation of Moderate Islam among students at Muhammadiyah Higher Education. The results of the research show that there is a conceptual-theoretical rejection among students of the terminology of Moderate Islam. This is allegedly due to the diversity of educational backgrounds and interactions with the surrounding community. Another research²⁶ focused on the level of understanding of religious moderation among Public Universities and State Islamic College students. The results of the research show that the level of comprehension category for Public university students is at a medium level of 66.25% and a high level of 33.75%. The level of understanding of religious moderation among State Islamic College students is 77.5% in the medium category and 21.25% in the medium level. The results of previous research from the data that has been presented provide the most important recommendation that there is a need for awareness to identify, confirm, and direct students according to the characteristics of the thinking they hold.

The urgency of this research is to capture a picture of students' understanding of religion at two universities, namely Universitas Islam Bandung and Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. The novelty of this research is that it maps and compares perceptions of three typologies of Islamic thought, consisting of Puritant, Moderate, and Liberal schools, and then finds conceptual implications. Previous research only described the understanding of religious moderation without identifying and comparing the viewpoints of other typologies of Islamic thought. Apart from that, it is hoped that this research will have conceptual implications in the form of material for stakeholders in higher education to consider in following up on policies to strengthen religious moderation in countering extremist movements so that they do not increasingly invade campus life.

Research Method

The approach used in this research was quantitative, using survey methods. The questionnaire in this survey research contained a typology of Islamic thought, which was then distributed to Universitas Islam Bandung and Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia students with the aim of classifying them as

belonging to the category of Puritan, Moderate or Liberal Islam based on the answers given by respondents. The indicators for each typology of Islamic thought in question were as follows:

No	Typology	Indicator
1	Puritan ²⁷	a. Orthodox b. Literal c. Single expression d. Purification
2	Moderate ²⁸	a. <i>Rabbāniyyah</i> b. <i>Akhlaqiyah</i> c. <i>Al-Wāqī'iyah</i> d. <i>Al-Insāniyyah</i> e. <i>Al-Tanāsuq</i>
3	Liberal ²⁹	a. Contextual bias b. Individual freedom c. Anti-theocracy d. Inclusive

This type of survey research uses cross-sectional research, where several samples are collected using purposive sampling techniques. The total number of samples was 139 students taken from Universitas Islam Bandung, which consisted of two classes, namely Islamic Religious Education A with 37 students and Islamic Religious Education B with 32 students. Also, samples were taken from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, which consisted of two classes, namely Management A with 34 students and Psychology B with 36 students.

No	Study Program	College	Number of Samples
1	Islamic Religious Education A	Universitas Islam Bandung	37
2	Islamic Religious Education B	Universitas Islam Bandung	32
3	Management A	Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia	34
4	Psychology B	Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia	36

Another data collection technique used was interviews with students to interpret the findings. The data analysis technique used is descriptive statistics to display the collected research data as it should. The questionnaire instrument used is a closed questionnaire, presenting choices related to statements that show a tendency towards liberal, moderate, and Puritan attitudes that have gone through validity and reliability tests, which are presented in the table below.

Item	R Calculate Validity	R Calculate Reliability	R Table	Validity and Reliability Question Items
Question 1	0.208	0.390	0.2441	
Question 2	0.335	0.393	0.2441	√
Question 3	0.391	0.403	0.2441	√
Question 4	0.007	0.364	0.2441	
Question 5	0.002	0.359	0.2441	
Question 6	0.928	0.424	0.2441	√
Question 7	0.224	0.394	0.2441	
Question 8	0.001	0.352	0.2441	
Question 9	0.836	0.418	0.2441	√
Question 10	0.955	0.404	0.2441	√
Question 11	0.021	0.372	0.2441	
Question 12	0.039	0.376	0.2441	
Question 13	0.150	0.391	0.2441	
Question 14	0.767	0.398	0.2441	√
Question 15	0.136	0.388	0.2441	
Question 16	0.001	0.360	0.2441	
Question 17	0.012	0.370	0.2441	
Question 18	0.146	0.388	0.2441	
Question 19	0.596	0.403	0.2441	√
Question 20	0.532	0.401	0.2441	√
Question 21	0.000		0.2441	
Question 22	0.429	0.395	0.2441	√
Question 23	0.488	0.398	0.2441	√
Question 24	0.421	0.405	0.2441	√
Question 25	0.071	0.382	0.2441	
Question 26	0.917	0.403	0.2441	√
Question 27	0.267	0.392	0.2441	√
Question 28	0.024	0.372	0.2441	
Question 29	0.401	0.397	0.2441	√
Question 30	0.649	0.406	0.2441	√
Question 31	0.116	0.386	0.2441	
Question 32	0.732	0.404	0.2441	√
Question 33	0.154	0.389	0.2441	
Question 34	0.015	0.368	0.2441	
Question 35	0.119	0.387	0.2441	
Question 36	0		0.2441	
Question 37	0.202	0.390	0.2441	
Question 38	0.488	0.398	0.2441	√
Question 39	0.189	0.390	0.2441	
Question 40	0.681	0.418	0.2441	√
Question 41	0.191	0.389	0.2441	
Question 42	0.123	0.390	0.2441	
Question 43	0.213	0.391	0.2441	
Question 44	0.017	0.371	0.2441	

From the results of the validity and reliability tests above, of the 65 questions, there were 30 that had R-calculated validity and R-calculated reliability values above the R table (0.241). Examples of instruments are presented in the table below, along with interpretations of the answers selected by respondents.

Interpretation of Religious Typology

Puritan				
No	Statement	Question Type		Answer Description
		Positive	Negative	
1	The additional title Sayyidina for the Prophet Muhammad is a form of respect.	√		Yes: Moderate No: Puritant
2	Celebrating Islamic holidays is a new worship practice that was exemplified by the Prophet.		√	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate
3	Imprisoning thieves is a violation of God's law.		√	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate
4	It is obligatory to obey Muslim leaders as long as they do not invite disobedience, even if they act unjustly.	√		Yes: Puritant No: Moderate
5	Reading prayers through loudspeakers is a heresy.		√	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate
6	The Qur'an is <i>kalamullah</i> , not a creature.	√		Yes: Puritant No: Liberal
7	Pilgrimages to the graves of saints are categorized as polytheism.		√	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate
8	Tawasul, through the medium of pious deeds, is a sunnah practice.	√		Yes: Puritant No: Liberal
Moderate				
9	Wearing the hijab for Muslim women is only a product of local Arab culture		√	Yes: Liberal No: Moderate
10	There is no need to give Christmas greetings to non-Muslims when celebrating it.	√		Yes: Puritant No: Moderate

11	Veiling is the correct way to cover the private parts of Islam.	√	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate
12	We must respect the worship of non-Muslims who are close to us.	√	Yes: Moderate No: Puritant
13	When you meet friends of different religions, there is no need to say hello.	√	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate
14	It is permissible to insult God outside of Islam because it is an idol that must be destroyed.	√	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate
15	Spread a smile to anyone, regardless of religion.	√	Yes: Moderate No: Puritant
16	Abandoning arguments is a solution to avoid hostility and maintain harmony.	√	Yes: Moderate No: Puritant
17	No insulting someone whose understanding of Islam differs from ours, including the practice of Pancasila.	√	Yes: Moderate No: Puritant
18	Disbanding non-Muslim worship rituals is a bad command of religion.	√	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate
19	Fasting throughout the day for the purpose of controlling lust is highly recommended by Islam.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Moderate
Liberal			
20	The opinions of the ulama are relatively true and still need to be criticized.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Moderate
21	The study of the Prophet Muhammad SAW must be studied critically so that it becomes a myth that is only admired.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant
22	Dressing in any style is permitted by religion as long as the aim is to serve Allah.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Moderate

23	Marriage between people of different religions is valid because all humans are equal before God.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant
24	Women need to be given the same rights as men in the public and government spheres.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant
25	A democratic system is the best solution to the political system in Indonesia.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant
26	Secularism is part of Islamic teachings.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant
27	Any thought that does not originate from the Koran and Sunnah is heretical and infidel.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant
28	Sunni and Shia are schools of Islamic thought that both call for truth.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant
29	The truth of each religion is relative because its interpretation may be right or wrong.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant
30	New jurisprudence is urgently needed to respond to the challenges of current humanitarian problems.	√	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant

Discussion

The findings of this research describe the results of student perceptions represented by four classes from two universities, namely Universitas Islam Bandung and Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. Universitas Islam Bandung respondents were taken from students of the Islamic Religious Education Study Program in two classes, namely Islamic Religious Education A and Islamic Religious Education B. Meanwhile, respondents from the Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia were selected from Psychology A and Management B. In general, Universitas Islam Bandung students' typology of religious understanding shows a relatively high Puritant category with an average percentage of 51.65%. The Moderate category is classified as moderate, with an average percentage of 30%. Meanwhile, the Liberal category is relatively low, with a percentage of 18.35%. This categorization can be seen in the following image:

Table 1. Universitas Islam Bandung Student Understanding of Religious Understanding Typology

Study Program	Class	Position Statement		
		Puritan	Moderate	Liberal
Islamic Religious Education	A	53,3%	30%	16,7%
Islamic Religious Education	B	50%	30%	20%
Average		51,65%	30%	18,35%

The typology of students' religious understanding at Universitas Islam Bandung shows that the Puritan category is moderate, with an average percentage of 36.65%. The Moderate category is classified as high, with a percentage of 38.35%. Meanwhile, the Liberal category is relatively low, with a percentage of 25%. For greater clarity, the percentage level of student religious behavior at Universitas Islam Bandung and Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia can be seen in the following table:

Tabel 2. Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia Student Understanding of Religious Understanding Typology

Study Program	Class	Position Statement		
		Puritan	Moderate	Liberal
Management	A	30%	50%	20%
Psychology	B	43,3%	26,7%	30%
Average		36,65%	38,35%	25%

Looking at the average scores in the two tables above, the tendency for religious understanding among Universitas Islam Bandung and Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia students is classified as Puritans. On this basis, it is necessary to instill awareness between Islamic and Indonesian ideas in order to create harmony and prevent the proliferation of intolerant attitudes and radicalism in higher education. A Moderate attitude must be had because it is in line with inclusive values that are able to accept individual or group differences in society.³⁰ Religious phenomena like this need to be addressed with wisdom in understanding the Islamic concept of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* in the midst of student life as a form of religious moderation. The three aspects of the typology of islamic thought in this paper will be described as follows:

Puritanism Framing

Puritanism is a very important aspect of thought that will be studied in this research. Puritanism has become a very sensitive issue in society and has raised pros and cons. His understanding is considered to impose too much on a new style of Islam with the branding of the purification of islamic teachings. Reasons like this sometimes cause chaos in society and conflict between groups.³¹ The characteristics or typology of Puritants in this research consist of four aspects, including orthodox, literal, single expression, and purification.³² These four aspects are illustrated in the statements answered by respondents as follows, adapted from the thoughts of :³³

No	Statement	Answer Description	Universitas Islam Bandung			Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia		
			Puritan	Moderate	Liberal	Puritan	Moderate	Liberal
1	The additional title <i>sayyidina</i> for the Prophet Muhammad is a form of respect	Yes: Moderate No: Puritan	11,5%	51,65%	-	0%	100%	-
2	Celebrating Islamic holidays is a new worship practice that was not exemplified by the Prophet	Yes: Puritan No: Moderate	44,5%	55,5%	-	44,5%	55,5%	-
3	Imprisoning thieves is a violation of God's law	Yes: Puritan No: Moderate	58%	42%	-	48,5%	51,5%	-
4	It is obligatory to obey Muslim leaders as long as they do not invite disobedience, even if they act unjustly	Yes: Puritan No: Moderate	56,5%	43,5%	-	54%	46%	-
5	Reading prayers through loudspeakers is a heresy	Yes: Puritan No: Moderate	53%	47%	-	47%	53%	-
6	The Qur'an is <i>kalamullah</i> and not a creature	Yes: Puritan No: Liberal	85%	-	15%	97%	-	3%
7	Pilgrimages to the graves of saints are categorized as polytheism	Yes: Puritan No: Moderate	93%	7%	-	9,5%	90,5%	-
8	<i>Tawasul</i> through the medium of pious deeds is a sunnah practice	Yes: Puritan No: Liberal	88,5%	-	21,5%	87%	-	13%

The responses given regarding puritan show that the level of puritanism is dominated by Universitas Islam Bandung students compared to Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia students. Among the religious expressions displayed are often slogans based on the Koran and Sunnah without the need to criticize or add new things to religion, even though they claim it is an act of worship. Students accepted this argument because religious enthusiasm must be accompanied by a strong foundation of revelation (Student 12). Student 8 added that "new things in religion fall into the category of heresy even if they are done out of love for religion."

"The way of religion should refer to what Allah has conveyed in the Qur'an and what the Prophet exemplified as sunnah. Celebrating major holidays in Islam, such as birthdays and rajabans, was never practiced by the Prophet in his life. The Muslims who celebrate this are more like a certain group". (Student 5)

The implications above show that the perceptions of students who are exposed to Puritanism are closely related to the concept of Islam itself. Seen from the student's own perspective, the characteristics of islamic teachings are dogmatic, rigid, and literal, especially material related to matters of worship and belief. This problem is seen as a matter of principle and should not be mixed with elements of local culture and developments in other social contexts. In student 18's understanding, specifically for material related to matters of worship, there is no need for additions and subtractions such as reading prayers through loudspeakers in mosques or adding the title *sayyidina* to the Prophet Muhammad because it is included in the *ghuluw* (excessive) category in religion. Student 39 also stated that the "determination of deeds of worship must be based on strong arguments, at least referring to friends' explanations as a supporting tool."

"Practicing Allah's religion does not require ghuluw by praying at the mosque, for example, or even visiting the grave of a saint, because this can lead to acts of shirk because it is considered asking for blessings from people who have died. This then causes a person's Islamic identity to fail in the sight of God (Student 16)".

The face of Puritanism can be pinned down as scripturalism, seeing that the literalist belief in the holy scriptures is the word of God and does not lack anything in the slightest. Puritans reject the truth that leads to a diversity of meanings and is relative because, in their view, there is no religious relativism.³⁴ Puritanism was developed by Salafis as an embryo of Wahhabi ideology, which is seen as intolerant of non-believers and often seen as apostasy for other Muslims who believe differently, especially regarding religious practices that are cultural in nature because they damage the purity of Islam.³⁵ Actions like this constitute justification for religious principles on behalf of their group.³⁶ However, the expansion of his preaching, which is spread through social media platforms, has attracted a lot of interest among young people because the analogies and argumentative answers given are able to arouse their minds.³⁷

Ritual matters that are heresy are considered because they do not have a strong foundation from revelation, which has the potential to disturb or even endanger their concentration in worshiping Allah. One form of ritual that is prohibited is visiting graves on the grounds of asking for blessings from the dead rather than asking God directly.³⁸ Doctrines about politics were also put forward, which emphasized that Muslims must obey every government decision and avoid chaos in the world of politics, even though every individual can make criticism of the authorities.³⁹ This is also an indication that the Puritan movement is not only in the religious realm but has also entered the political realm.⁴⁰ This dogmatic belief has become an absolute belief that is quite difficult to change. They view the value of these beliefs as final.⁴¹

The main source of reference for Salafis in understanding Islam refers to the Hambali school of thought as a source of pride for their knowledge. The paradox that then occurs is that they do not take opposing opinions but almost deify the opinion of Ibn Taymiyah, who lived centuries away from the time of the Salaf.⁴² Ibn Taimiyah believed in a new interpretation of religion (*ijtihad*) and considered himself a mujtahid while creating his own school of thought. This is what creates a gap in thinking for Salafis, who do not follow the four sects of imams. However, they were blindly fanatical towards their imam, Ibn Taimiyah, who unwittingly founded his own school of thought.

If explored more deeply, the Puritan paradigm of thought carries the principle of *tathbiq as-Shari'ah*, which places the text of verses and hadiths as being understood without reviewing historical situations and conditions, as well as the cultural thinking patterns of a human group itself.⁴⁴ Islam is understood statically and minimizes active human involvement in interpreting religious texts. Religious teachings only circulate around textualists, not looking at contextualization as a consideration in understanding texts.⁴⁵ Considerations of cultural assimilation and acculturation were not considered important, inspired by the massive Wahhabi movement against local traditions and culture.⁴⁶ Likewise, in Indonesia, this group is aggressive in criticizing and dismissing local ideologies that have a strong influence, namely Javanism. In his view, this falls into the category of Superstition, Bid'ah, and Churafat.⁴⁷ The Puritan group is trying to restore religious teachings that are currently developing, such as Islam, at the time of the Prophet and his companions. This is also a cause for concern for other Muslim communities that still adhere to a particular culture.⁴⁸ The ideology applied is that Islamic doctrine must be based on the Koran and Sunnah. If you deviate from these two sources, you will be considered heretical and guilty of heresy. They call themselves purificationists who aim to purify Islamic teachings without adding or subtracting them. The attitude shown is so clear in rejecting different opinions that they fall into group fanaticism without realizing it.

Moderate Framing

Religious moderation is described as the Islamic concept of *wasathiyyah*, a face of Islam that is friendly, tolerant, harmonious in life, and respects the rights of others. Indonesia's multicultural society is very suitable for implementing the concept of religious moderation; in fact, it has become a necessity.⁵⁰ Moderating religion requires clear characteristics in interpreting and implementing it. The indicators of religious moderation in the research consist of *rabbaniyyah* (theistic), *akhlaqiyyah* (ethical), *al-Waq'iyyah* (realistic), *al-Insaniyyah* (humanistic), and *al-Tanasuq* (orderliness). The five moderate indicators discovered by⁵¹ this is illustrated in the respondent's statement as follows:

No	Statement	Answer Description	Universitas Islam Bandung			Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia		
			Puritan	Moderate	Liberal	Puritan	Moderate	Liberal
1	Wearing the hijab for Muslim women is only a product of local Arab culture	Yes: Liberal No: Moderate	-	9.5%	90.5%	-	4.5%	95.5%

2	There is no need to wish non-Muslims a Merry Christmas when celebrating it	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate	58.5%	41.5%	-	83.5%	16.5%	-
3	Veiling is the correct way to cover the private parts in Islam	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate	52.25%	47.75%	-	68.5%	31.5%	-
4	We must respect the worship of non-Muslims who are close to us	Yes: Moderate No: Puritant	8%	92%	-	1.5%	98.5%	-
5	When you meet friends of different religions, there is no need to say hello	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate	8.5%	91.5%	-	0%	100%	-
6	It is permissible to insult God outside of Islam because it is an idol that must be destroyed	Yes: Puritant No: Moderate	17.5%	82.5	-	0%	100%	-
7	Spread a smile to anyone, regardless of religion	Yes: Moderate No: Puritant	5.5%	94.5%	-	0%	100%	-
8	Abandoning arguments is a solution to avoid hostility and	Yes: Moderate No: Puritant	7.5%	92.5%	-	17%	83%	-
9	Not insulting someone whose	Yes: Moderate	8.5%	91.5%	-	1.5%	98.5%	-

Responding to the results of filling out the questionnaire regarding religious moderation, this needs to be a resolution in religious as well as national discourse. Indonesia's multicultural condition seems to imply the importance of implementing the values of religious moderation. This cultivation of moderation makes it possible for ulama, or society in general, to be flexible without deviating from the basic principles of religion.⁵² This moderation emphasizes matters in Islam that have multiple interpretations so that they do not become debates that can create divisions among Muslims. On the other hand, maturity in religion can be seen when responding to differences in understanding and placing greater emphasis on the unity of the Islamic religion itself (Student 21). Another response regarding views of religious moderation among students can be seen in the following statement:

“Help each other not only among fellow Muslims but also with non-Muslims in terms of humanity without looking at race, ethnicity, nation, or religion. So there is no reason, when living in a multicultural country, not to help other people because they have a different religion from us. But we help on humanitarian grounds and as fellow countrymen”. (Student 7)

Indonesia, as a country with diverse ethnicities and cultures, must uphold tolerance and moderation to create religious harmony in Indonesia. Moreover, Muslims are the largest majority in this country, so the larger number is not used to discriminate between religious communities.⁵³ Because in reality, the majority should look after the minorities, not make fun of them or even prevent them from worshipping. However, it makes the minority feel safe being among the majority. A tolerant and moderate attitude among Muslims with different views must also be developed so that fellow Muslims do not disbelieve in each other.

Nahdhatul 'ulama, as part of the Islamic group, comes with the idea of Islam Nusantara as the embodiment of the concept of religious moderation, which upholds *insaniyah* values (human values), such as human equality before the law, protection of the powerless, and protection from injustice.⁵⁴ Islam Nusantara exists as a mediation between religion and culture by giving birth to a more contextual model of thinking. Departing from the Islamic teachings of rahmatan lil 'alamin, Islam Nusantara presents Islamic values so that they can be accepted by multicultural Indonesian society. Culture is used as a medium for preaching Islamic teachings.⁵⁵ The specific focus of Islam Nusantara is the Islamization of a culture so that it conforms to the spirit of *wasathiyyah* Islam and rejects all forms of Arabized Islam. In this way, Islam Nusantara builds a counter-narrative between Islam Nusantara, which is "moderate," and Wahhabi Islam, which is seen as "foreign."⁵⁶

The next attitude in interpreting moderation is showing affectionate behavior. This kind of view can be a way of compromising all differences, especially in Indonesia, which has diversity.⁵⁷ It has happened that after reformation, religious groups emerged that spread religious sentiments that tended to glorify the supremacy of certain religious views and rejected inclusive and tolerant religious practices. Religious moderation appears as a form of egalitarian humanity in that each group has the same goals.⁵⁸ Basically, moderation instills an attitude of mutual respect for differences, not being fanatical about a particular ideology or group but putting things in their proper place.

“The position of non-muslims, in this case minorities, also needs to protect their rights so that conflicts between religious communities do not occur. Lately, it is not uncommon to find on social media that religious ritual activities of people of other religions have to be expelled from the territory of the majority, in this case, Islam. So that they feel a sense of security, and the face of Islamic teachings does not seem radical or anarchic”. (Student 33)

In this case, the spectrum of religious moderation is a teaching that opposes conservative teachings or groups that are seen as worsening relations between religious groups by protesting against non-Muslims taking part in public spaces and criticizing liberals who are too free in interpreting the Koran. At the same time, religious moderation functions as a tool for strengthening the spirit of nationalism.⁵⁹ The labeling of moderate Islam implies a different understanding as an inclusive group with a frame of reference and religious behavior, as implied by Surah 2:143.⁶⁰ Religious moderation is an appropriate rebuttal for extremists who misinterpret the commandments of the Koran and Sunnah when they study them without guidance or are under the wrong guidance.⁶¹ A clear indicator of religious moderation is necessary to determine whether a deviant individual or group fall into the radical or liberal category.⁶²

The view of Islamic education experts and al-Qur'an exegesis experts is that religious moderation is not only limited to aspects of worship practices but is also comprehensive. The public is invited to be farsighted, open-minded, and objective when referring to Islamic sources.⁶³ Thus, the concept of Moderate Islam emerged as a response to the friction between two poles, namely Literalist Islam, which views everything as constant (unchangeable), and Liberal Islam, which puts forward a rationalistic narrative for the reason of adapting to the context of the times.⁶⁴ Moderate Islam represents the characteristics of Islamic teachings that are friendly, peace-loving, and open to the views of different groups but are still rooted in the foundation of revelation.

Liberalism Framing

Moderate Islam represents the characteristics of Islamic teachings. Liberalism is an ideology that developed in the Western world and expanded the idea of freedom of thought. Therefore, liberalism prioritizes the aspect of reason without correctly placing the text and context of the verse, which are friendly, peace-loving, and open to the views of different groups but are still rooted in the foundation of revelation.⁶⁵ His view of freedom rests on liberation theology as an open revolution that has a broad impact on social justice.⁶⁶ This includes ideas of liberation from oppression, gender equality, and humanitarian issues.⁶⁷ Someone is said to think liberally if they fulfill the following elements: contextual bias, individual freedom, anti-theocracy, and inclusiveness.⁶⁸ The statements were adapted from thoughts, according to,⁶⁹ as a liberal Islamic figure, attached to each of these indicators the following data:

No	Statement	Answer Description	Universitas Islam Bandung			Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia		
			Puritant	Moderate	Liberal	Puritant	Moderate	Liberal
1	The opinions of the ulama are relatively true and still need to be criticized	Yes: Liberal No: Moderate	-	33%	67%	-	22%	78%
2	The study of the Prophet Muhammad SAW must be studied critically so that it does not become just a myth to be admired	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant	26%	-	74%	18.5%	-	81.5%
3	Dressing in any style is permitted by religion as long as the aim is to serve Allah	Yes: Liberal No: Moderate	-	74%	26%	-	68.5%	31.5%

4	Marriage between different religions is valid because all humans are equal before God	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant	85%	-	15%	8.5%	-	91.5%
5	Women need to be given the same rights as men in the public and government spheres	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant	25.5%	-	74.5%	7.5%	-	92.5%
6	A democratic system is the best solution in the political system in Indonesia	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant	28%	-	72%	6%	-	94%
7	Secularism is part of Islamic teachings	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant	76.5%	-	23.5%	17%	-	83%
8	Any thought that does not originate from the Koran and Sunnah is heretical and infidel	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant	53%	-	47%	39%	-	61%
9	Sunni and Shia are schools of Islamic thought that both call for truth	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant	65.75%	-	34.25%	62.5%	-	37.5%
10	The truth of each religion is relative because its interpretation may be right or wrong	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant	49.5%	-	50.5%	68.5%	-	31.5%
11	New jurisprudence is urgently needed in responding to the challenges of current humanitarian problems	Yes: Liberal No: Puritant	18%	-	82%	10%	-	90%

If observed closely, liberal thinkers say that Islam must be seen as a dynamic and living religion, not a static, dogmatic religion. All religious texts that are not in line with reason need to be engineered so that they are in line with reason.⁷⁰ The rational offense advocated by liberals seems to be the strongest reference source for understanding religious texts and seems to legitimize the justification for their rational arguments (Student 53). It seems as if the ultimate truth comes from humans themselves. Not a few religious areas that are *qat'i* (strong) become *syak* (doubt).

"The issue of interfaith marriages is also seen as permissible, in their opinion, because all humans and religions are equal in the eyes of God and have human rights that are considered valid in the eyes of the law. Apart from that, so as not to appear discriminatory towards one particular teaching" (Student 47)".

Responding to the statement above, liberalism can be categorized as utilitarian or upholding the principle of rights that any party cannot contest.⁷¹ In Indonesia, the liberalism movement was transformed into the Liberal Islamic Network, whose opinions often invite controversy. The liberal ideology prioritizes freedom as protection against authoritarianism and dictatorship. The promotion of plurality and religious freedom became the main agenda of the movement.⁷² The emergence of Liberal Islam in Indonesia was caused by three main factors, namely: 1) internal factors, namely Muslims who were increasingly educated in social sciences and humanities; 2) the social adaptation factor, which is growing rapidly so that it has implications for how to understand the holy scriptures to be adapted to the social context; 3) external factors, namely Christians, who are increasingly developing and contextual in understanding their religious texts so that they are seen as liberation theology.⁷³

The Liberal Islamic Network ideas promoted by Ulil Abshar Abdalla aim to refresh Islamic thinking so that it is in line with the context of the times. Things that are deemed irrelevant must not be forced so that they are not used by the interests of certain parties. For example, the democratic system and Islamic values are in no way contradictory to Liberal Islamic Network. The suitability of the democratic system with Islamic values can be seen from the following aspects: first, deliberation, justice, and tolerance are included in the values of modern democracy; second, submission to the government in the Koran is in accordance with political participation in a democratic system; and third, Islam teaches its followers to be tolerant and uphold human rights. Islamic elements like this are found in democracy. This is different from Hizbut Tahrir, which rejects democracy because it believes Islam is a perfect system.⁷⁴

The performance of liberal Islam can be seen in the liberal democratic system, which emphasizes individual freedom from the democratic system in a country as a worldview. In its development, Islam's position must be subordinate to the values of Western civilization.⁷⁵ *Ta'ashub* of Western liberal liberalism is very relevant to Ibnu Khaldun's Theory of the Servant's Spirit, which states that those who were once colonized were amazed by the colonialists because they were seen as more advanced in any dimension. In Naquib al-Attas's perspective, it is called the Prisoner Mentality Theory: excessive fanaticism toward Western values that some groups adhered to after independence.⁷⁶ If there is a debate between the concept of Islamic teachings and the progress of modernity, then what is rejected is not modernity but the reinterpretation of Islamic teachings. This is the doctrine of liberal teachings.⁷⁷

The consequence of the *Ahlu Sunnah wal Jama'ah* group felt that the Islamic faith was threatened by the presence of Liberal Islam, which brought an excessive spirit of rationalism and modernism to society.⁷⁸ Observing the development of Liberal Islam in Malaysia is only seen as hiding in front of the word Islam with the aim of dividing Muslims. Thus, Liberal Islam must be abandoned.⁷⁹ Among the arguments that caused quite a stir was his opinion about justifying LGBT, which was considered just an

innate behavior that didn't need to be questioned or a disease that had to be cured. In fact, according to Ulil Absar Abdalla, one of the JIL figures, believes that LGBT is not contrary to human nature.⁸⁰ The polemic of Liberal Islamic thought needs to be contained so that it does not become a slander against the true entity of Islamic teachings. The meaning of revelation should not be haphazard based on logical arguments alone. It is necessary to pay attention to the historical aspects of the verses and the normativeness of the verses so that the religious substance is protected from group tendentiousness.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the religious understanding category of Universitas Islam Bandung and Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia students tends to be dominant in the high category of Purists. Moderate attitudes are relatively low, and liberal attitudes are low. Class A Islamic Religious Education students have a tendency towards Puritanism of 53.3%, Moderate understanding of 30%, and Liberalism of 16.7%. Meanwhile, class B Islamic Religious Education students have the same tendency to dominate Puritanism at 50%, Moderate understanding at 30%, and Liberalism at 20%. Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia class A Management study program students have a tendency toward Puritanical religious beliefs of 30%, Moderate beliefs of 50%, and Liberal beliefs of 20%. Class A students of the Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia Psychology study program have a tendency toward Puritanical religious beliefs at 43.3%, Moderate beliefs at 26.7%, and Liberal beliefs at 30%. Thus, a moderate understanding of religion needs to be improved so that there are no extreme tendencies on the right or left. The conceptual implication of this research is that it is necessary to develop strategies and policies for strengthening religious moderation in public universities so that students have moderate behavior.

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