



Implementation Of Moderate Islamic Values in Education at Stai Al-Falah Banjarbaru: An Analysis Through George Homans' Social Exchange Theory

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ABSTRACT

Purpose The discourse surrounding the application of religious moderation on campuses in Indonesia has often been limited to mere socialization efforts. However, fostering moderate attitudes requires more than just disseminating information; it demands an encouragement of appreciation and internalization. This study seeks to address the need for a deeper understanding of how religious moderation can be implemented sustainably in a campus setting, with a focus on STAI Al-Falah Banjarbaru, South Kalimantan. **Methodology.** The research adopts a qualitative, exploratory approach to identifying a new model for implementing religious moderation using George Homans' Social Exchange Theory as a framework. **Findings.** The findings reveal that STAI Al-Falah promotes moderate Islamic values through four educational pillars: *tawassuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), *ta'adul* (justice), and *tasamuh* (tolerance).

These pillars are integrated into the campus climate and the classroom learning system. The implementation model emphasizes the principles of reciprocity, where even small rewards are used to encourage adherence to these values. By fostering a culture of appreciation, the campus community is motivated to internalize and practice these principles, which form the core of the institution's educational vision. **Implications for research and practice.** This research presents a new model for creating a moderate Islamic environment, particularly in Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia. Future research should aim to refine and expand upon the Social Exchange model for applying Islamic moderation, as exemplified by STAI Al-Falah Banjarbaru.

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Introduction

Globally, Islam is often criticized for being a radical religion, though such accusations are unfounded and based on a few exceptions created by radical individuals and intolerant and extremist groups (Pratt, 2016). The Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, in recent years, has placed greater focus on religious moderation, which is being promoted through various government policies, as well as in universities, schools, and madrasas (Qoumas et al., 2024). In the Indonesian education sector, the discourse of moderate Islam has long been echoed. Religious, educational, and social institutions continue to promote the mainstreaming of a tolerant religious climate (Nasir & Rijal, 2021). This religious moderation mission is also being socialized and implemented in diverse ways, sometimes integrating local wisdom and adapting to various learning contexts. For instance, many universities have embedded religious moderation into their vision and mission, applying it to both education and campus life, with the goal of fostering a peaceful religious climate amidst Indonesia's diversity (Muhsin et al., 2024).

One such institution that has embraced religious moderation as a core element of its educational pillars is STAI Al-Falah Banjarbaru. This Islamic higher education institution upholds the values of Wasathiyah Islam—a peaceful and tolerant approach to differences. STAI Al-Falah integrates four key pillars of moderate Islam—*tawassuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), *ta'adul* (justice), and *tasamuh* (tolerance)—into both its learning processes and campus environment. What makes this implementation unique is the mutual relationship between the campus and its students, which fosters an environment where a moderate religious climate can thrive. This phenomenon serves as a valuable case study for the successful mainstreaming of Wasathiyah Islam in higher education. While the focus is on internal Islamic education, the application of moderation is crucial for cultivating tolerant Muslim communities.

The approach used by STAI Al-Falah is in line with George Homans' Social Exchange Theory, which posits that human behavior is shaped by exchanges with their environment. This theory believes that social interactions are driven by a cost-benefit analysis, where individuals always seek to maximize rewards and minimize costs in their relationships, similar to economic exchanges. Social behavior is viewed as an exchange process, where individuals engage in interactions to gain rewards (tangible or intangible) and avoid costs. In this context, it is important to encourage social interactions to be moderate and less concerned about gaining rewards in exchange. It is more important that individuals feel appreciated and rewarded by their acts and deeds, or what they contribute to the surroundings. This strategy is used by STAI Al-Falah to implement its religious moderation framework. However, despite such commendable efforts, the realization of religious moderation in educational institutions has often remained unachieved due to limited policies, regulations, and plans without concrete, impactful actions (Chotimah et al., 2024). This has raised concerns among various stakeholders, who urge these initiatives to be materialized more effectively.

The pursuit of religious moderation in educational institutions, particularly universities, is therefore essential as it serves as the foundation for formulating policies that promote tolerance and harmony (Jamaludin, 2022). The current study explores the implementation of moderate Islamic values through Homans' Social Exchange Theory and

other perspectives in religious education. Homans' theory emphasizes cost and reward in social interactions, which can be applied to Islamic economic transactions. The primary objective of this research is also to analyze the strategic steps taken by STAI Al-Falah Banjarbaru in integrating moderate Islamic values through its four educational pillars. Additionally, the study aims to examine how these pillars align with Social Exchange Theory, and how they contribute to shaping students' understanding and practice of religious moderation. By doing so, this research seeks to provide a new model for fostering a climate of moderation, especially in Islamic higher education institutions.

Literature Review

Recent studies have examined the contestation between conservative and moderate Muslims in promoting religious moderation in Indonesia. Moderate Islamic organizations like Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama face challenges from conservative groups promoting exclusivist interpretations of Islam (Jubba et al., 2022). Another study found that some students' interpretations of terms like jihad, caliphate, and bid'ah are influenced by radical Muslim groups, creating negative sentiments (Hanafi et al., 2022). However, research also shows that religious moderation can foster compassionate attitudes, positive thinking, and inclusivity among college students, potentially minimizing social conflicts (Shofiyuddin et al., 2024). From both, there are similarities and differences. The novelty of this research is to present the idea of presenting moderate Islam by testing theories that are not commonly used in the aspect of religious relations.

Recent studies have explored religious moderation in Indonesia from various perspectives. (Amri et al., 2024) propose an intersectional approach, examining the concept through daily interactions and state interventions. (Moh et al., 2023) highlight the importance of interfaith dialogue and the universal values of moderation across religions. These studies, while valuable, have predominantly addressed the challenges of extremism and radicalism.

Role of George Homans' Social Exchange Theory

George Homans' Exchange theory sees the world as an arena of exchange (Turner, 2021). All life processes that occur cannot be separated from exchanging rewards or gifts. Whatever the form of social behavior, such as friendship, marriage or divorce cannot be separated from exchange. There are several basic assumptions about George Homans' exchange theory, which are as follows: First, the theory posits that all humans are rational beings who calculate profit and loss. All humans are constantly engaged in choosing between alternative behaviors with choices reflecting cost and reward. Social action is seen as equivalent to economic action (Holladay, 2016). The actions taken are based on the calculation of profit and loss, a kind of social capital paradigm, which is based on non-material-oriented behaviors through relationships' influence on various transactions (Robison & Flora, 2003). Grzelak (2004) believed that such social orientations affect prosocial behaviors, with the strength of concern for outcomes being more important than the specific orientation. In the course of social interaction, actors consider the benefits that outweigh the costs. Therefore, the higher the reward obtained, the greater the likelihood

that a behavior will be repeated (Kubaneck et al., 2015) and vice versa. The smaller the reward obtained, the less likely the same behavior will be repeated.

Second, the theory postulates that social exchange behavior is oriented to goals that can only be achieved through interaction with others and such behavior must aim to acquire the means for achieving those goals (Holladay, 2016). The actors are goal-oriented; therefore, to achieve a specific goal, they must be oriented towards the acquisition of that goal. This acquisition of goal is only possible through interaction with others. The behavior to obtain this goal acts as a means for its achievement, such as friendship. In a friendship, for example, parties involved interact by orienting their behavior to achieve the goal. In this way, social exchange occurs. Third, the theory posits that an act of exchange will not occur if any of the parties involved do not benefit from an exchange transaction (Offer, 1997). The benefits of an exchange are not always extrinsic rewards in the form of money, goods or services, but can also be intrinsic rewards such as affection and honor. In other words, it is impossible for a social exchange to take place if only one-party benefits while the other party suffers a loss. If one party suffers a loss, then according to this theory, relationships such as friendship or marriage can dissolve.

George Homans' social exchange theory also cannot be separated from what Homans calls the Internal and External Systems. Internal systems include groups that consist of all members (Abrahamsson, 1970), such as those who form a friendship or are married. The Hawthorne studies, conducted at Western Electric Company, significantly influenced industrial sociology by revealing the importance of social interactions in worker productivity (Jones, 1990). These experiments, which began as simple investigations into environmental factors like lighting, evolved to explore complex social dynamics in the workplace (Jones, 1990). Norms are ideas that can be made, what should be done, and expectations that members or others can do in a particular environment. Adherence to these norms will result in rewards and punishments.

There are five forms of propositions that can explain social exchange, namely: success proposition, stimulus proposition, value proposition, deprivation-satiation proposition, and proposition of approval-aggression. The first type, success proposition means that the more often when a certain action is rewarded, there is a greater chance to perform that action. For example, a student gets high grades if he studies hard. Therefore, the more often he gets high grades, the more often he studies diligently. The second type, stimulus proposition, means that if in the past there was a special stimulus with which an individual received a reward, the person will take similar or the same action when that past stimulus reoccurs. A student, for example, achieves a good exam score by studying just a few days before the exam using a specific method. He will be stimulated to choose the same method in all forthcoming exams to get the same results. The third type, value proposition, means that the higher the value of an action, the happier an individual is to repeat that action. For example, when a student is faced with a choice between watching a concert performance or studying, he would choose the action that would produce the reward (value) he wants.

The fourth type, deprivation-satiation proposition, means that the more often a person receives a certain reward, the less valuable it becomes. For example, a student who has been getting high scores, but chooses to watch a concert because he gets fewer opportunities to watch a concert. This happens because he has reached a saturation point

with high scores. Unlike this scenario, if he has never gotten a high score or this opportunity is the first time, he would rather choose to study for the exam. The fifth type, proposition of approval-aggression, means that if a person's actions do not get the expected reward or if he receives unwanted punishment, he will get angry and show aggressive behavior. The results of this behavior will be more valuable to him, and vice versa. For example, if the student chose to watch the concert, but failed to get a ticket, he was certainly not rewarded for his choice to watch the concert. As a result, he would be frustrated and disappointed. He would show his disappointment and even hostility. Conversely, seeing his aggression and disappointment, if the manager of the concert gave him the opportunity to sit in a special class, his angry response would be seen as valuable because due to that anger he could watch the concert.

Through the lens of George Homans' Social Exchange Theory and its propositions, several research studies have been carried out. Motivated by such a wide acclaim of this theory, an in-depth exploration might help to understand whether the theory can be applied to cultivate a moderate religious climate through four educational pillars of an educational institution in the Indonesian context, namely *tawassuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), *ta'adul* (justice), and *tasamuh* (tolerance).

Four Pillars of STAI Al-Falah Education

STAI Al-Falah as an Islamic educational institution in its fundamental essence has a pillar as a foothold in carrying out all academic processes on campus. The pillar is divided into four fundamental parts of STAI Al-Falah, namely *tawassuth*, *tawazun*, *ta'adul*, and *tasamuh*. *Tawassuth* linguistically means the middle or putting a case between two poles in various problems and avoiding excessive leaning either to the left or to the right. *Tawassuth* can also be interpreted as a middle or moderate attitude that does not tend to be radical or liberal. not extreme or which means it refers to the meaning of behavior or actions that are reasonable and not deviant, tend towards dimensions or middle ground, moderate views, and willing to consider the views of others. moderation can be interpreted as a process of changing the attitude of individuals and groups. The balancing of attitudes to suit conditions so as not to contradict religious principles and community traditions. Moderation can also be interpreted as an attitude or behavior that is moderate or not excessive. Moderate, especially in Islam, covers all areas of Muslim life ranging from creed to *muamalah*. In the context of various problems such as in terms of religion, state and even in the field of education *tawassuth* or moderate attitude is very important to be accommodated, especially in the world of education to provide a balanced understanding and not leaning towards radical or liberal.

Tawazun linguistically stands for balanced or balancing between two sides or two things so that it does not lean to one or the other side. In general, *tawazun* is included in the elements of Islamic moderation as explained by Hasim Kamali in his book *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam* the Qur'anic Principle of Wasatiyyah, in Hasim Kamali's book said that Moderation, or wasatiyyah (Arabic synonyms: *tawassuṭ*, *i'tidāl*, *tawāzun*, *iqtisād*), is closely aligned with justice, and it means opting for a middle position between extremities. Moderation is often used interchangeably with "average," "core," "standard," "heart," and "non-aligned." The opposite of wasatiyyah is *taṭarruf*, which denotes "inclination toward the peripheries" and is known as "extremism," "radicalism," and "excess in the

explanation *Tawazun* can be a synonym or can be interpreted as an element of the concept of moderation in Islam.

Ta'adul can be interpreted as justice in this case it can also be interpreted as being able to stand upright, which means that it can determine its own choice not to lean too much in one direction. *ta'adul* is one of the elements of the ASWAJA concept which can be continuous with the concept of moderation in this case the *ta'adul* pillar can be a fundamental element of an impartial neutrality attitude, its relation in the field of education is that as an educational institution it cannot provide a necessity to stand or lean towards one but can be neutral to be able to provide justice or accommodation of various sciences.

Tasamuh or tolerance is to free a person or group of people to carry out their beliefs or manage their lives and choose their respective destinies without looking down on others. *tasamuh* is also a concept from the ASWAJA school which is now an indicator in the implementation of Religious Moderation, contextually tolerance or *tasamuh* is a fundamental pillar of a plural State of ethnicity, race, and religion, and demands to be able to coexist in harmony with groups or individuals, such as mutual respect, respect is the key to forming harmony aimed at maintaining solid unity and social structure. In the context of tolerance education, it will immediately become a staple material to be taught as the key to maintaining unity amid differences. In addition, tolerance is now one of the indicators of religious moderation, making educational institutions, especially those based, contain the concept of *tasamuh* into the fundamental elements of the implementation of education in the institution.

Research Method

Research design

This study adopts a qualitative approach with field research. The research is designed as an exploratory case study, focusing on the unique implementation of moderate Islamic values at STAI Al-Falah, which is analyzed through the lens of George Homans' Social Exchange Theory. This qualitative approach accommodates an in-depth exploration of the institution's efforts to cultivate a moderate religious climate through its four educational pillars—*tawassuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), *ta'adul* (justice), and *tasamuh* (tolerance).

Sampling

The subjects of this study were selected using purposive sampling to ensure relevance. Key participants included the Chairman of STAI Al-Falah Banjarbaru, faculty members directly involved in the educational process, and several students from various programs. These participants provided valuable insights into both the strategic implementation of religious moderation and the effectiveness of this approach in shaping students' understanding and practice of moderate Islamic values.

Data collection

Data collection was conducted through a triangulation method, combining non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis to ensure a

comprehensive understanding of the subject. Observation was focused on capturing the campus atmosphere, including interactions among students and faculty, and how the four pillars were integrated into daily activities on campus. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with key stakeholders, including the Chairman of STAI Al-Falah, faculty members, and students. These interviews aimed to gather insights into how moderate Islamic values are perceived, implemented, and appreciated within the institution, with particular attention to the role of reciprocity as proposed by Social Exchange Theory. Additionally, relevant institutional documents, such as curriculum guidelines, policies, and official reports, were analyzed to provide a broader structural context of how religious moderation is formally embedded in the institution's framework.

Data analysis

For data analysis, the study followed Miles and Huberman's framework, which consisted of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the first stage, data was categorized and simplified into relevant themes, particularly focusing on the application of the four pillars and their alignment with Social Exchange Theory. The next stage involved displaying the data through matrices and narrative descriptions to facilitate an understanding of how moderation is practiced on campus. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns and themes that emerged from the data, which were then verified to ensure accuracy and reliability.

To enhance the credibility of the findings, the study employed several strategies. Triangulation of multiple data sources—observation, interviews, and documentation—allowed for cross-verification of findings. Member checking was also conducted by providing participants with an opportunity to review the transcripts and analyses to ensure that their perspectives were accurately represented. Furthermore, the research design and findings were subjected to peer review to ensure methodological rigor and reduce bias. Ethical considerations were an integral part of the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality was strictly maintained. The research adhered to ethical standards in observing public spaces within educational institutions, ensuring that no harm was caused to participants or the institution during data collection.

Result And Discussion

Implementation of STAI Al-Falah Education Pillars on Campus Climate

The educational pillars of STAI Al-Falah which include 4 things *tawassuth*, *tawazun*, *ta'adul*, and *tasamuh* are fundamental elements in carrying out the learning implementation process therefore every learning process will not be separated from these four fundamental things, both in terms of making the learning curriculum even to the material delivered by the lecturers (lecturers) will also contain these fundamental concepts. Broadly speaking, the four pillars of education will build moderate thinking for academics within the scope of STAI Al-Falah. Because of this, the climate created on campus is very moderate.

In the interviews with STAI Al-Falah students, it was revealed: "*students never received a radical understanding of religion on the STAI AL-Falah campus, but instead they received teaching about tolerance in religion.*" The learning process carried out by STAI Al-Falah is a

form of implementation of the four pillars of education. One of the steps it takes is for lecturers to provide learning about tolerance, especially in tolerance, the concept of tolerance in education is very important. This will have a very urgent impact in the form of creating a moderate climate among academics on campus. Tolerance is characterized by respect for differences and giving space to others to believe, express their beliefs, and express opinions, as well as respect for equality and willingness to cooperate (Ehwanudin et al., 2021). In surah Al-Maidah verse 8 explained, namely

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

[O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice. And let not the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do.]

This verse implies that if a person is fair, he will certainly be tolerant of religious differences and will not impose his will so that people outside his religion should embrace his religion. Respecting the choice of others to embrace religion according to their conscience is part of the reflection of someone in Islam who fully understands freedom of religion and loves peace. The concept of tolerance taught by the STAI Al-Falah lecturer is also one of the four indicators of the implementation of religious moderation.

Furthermore, not only teaching about religious tolerance, students are also given knowledge from various points of view in order to provide more insight to students so that they can get an open view, we can see this in the following statement made by one of the STAI Al-Falah students: "In the learning process, we are given various understandings and perspectives to be able to further open our horizons and understanding of various religious issues so that we do not have only one view of these problems." Providing various kinds of knowledge in terms of flow, views and madhabs is a form of concrete steps to be able to open students' thinking and flexibility in acting or responding to a difference in religious matters. In addition, a person's moderate attitude will arise if the person has an open mind, it should be open-mindedness owned by students obtained by them from the delivery of material from lecturers. With an open mind that departs from broad insight, it can make students more respectful of the flow or views of others, besides that what is quite important is that they can respect and even accommodate local wisdom. This shows that, in the learning process the lecturers never provide a doctrine to follow a particular school or opinion, this was explained by students during interviews. "We have never been taught or even indoctrinated by lecturers to only hold one particular understanding or sect." In general, and comprehensively, it can be illustrated that the learning process on the STAI Al-Falah campus is very moderate, which has been exemplified in the opinions of the informants in the interview.

Implementation of STAI Al-Falah Education Pillars in Learning

The educational pillars owned by STAI Al-Falah are the basic reference in carrying out various campus activities, one of which is learning or lecturing. Learning activities that refer to this pillar are the implementation of the Tri Darma of Higher Education, namely in terms of education. By referring to the 4 pillars of education, the learning process carried out at STAI Al-Falah will contain moderate values. Of course, this is done in order to create

students and educators who are able to become pioneers in moderate behavior. Learning at STAI Al-Falah is inseparable from its 4 pillars of education which include *tawassuth*, *tawazun*, *ta'adul*, and *tasamuh*.

The Chairman of STAI Al-Falah Banjarbaru claims: "In the learning process, the implementation of the existing educational pillars at STAI Al-Falah is realized through the *Aswaja* course (*ahlus sunnah wal jama'ah*). The teaching of this course certainly cannot be separated from the principles of the 4 pillars." Not only from one *Aswaja* course, the application of the pillars of education is also seen during the learning of other courses. Another informant, a STAI Al-Falah student added the following remark:

"Lecturers at STAI Al-Falah when giving lectures always remind us of the afterlife issues, such as the importance of worship, asking for forgiveness from Alla Swt. and others. But in addition, we are also reminded of the interests of the world, such as studying diligently in order to be successful and able to achieve goals."

Seeing this learning process, it can be said that lecturers at STAI Al-Falah apply the pillars of *tawassuth* education or take the middle path. Not too excessive in religion and not too negligent in religious teachings. This attitude can be seen when the lecturer reminds his students to be able to take a middle way attitude between two opposite poles, in this case between the interests of the world and the hereafter. By applying this *tawassuth* value, it is hoped that Muslims will not only become a people who are safe in the hereafter but also become a people who have an advanced civilization as built during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Without the value of *tawassuth* like this, of course Muslims will become static who will not progress. Even Yusuf Qardhawi stated that a life that only seeks the hereafter and forgets the world is destructive and naïve (Maimun & Mohammad Kosim, 2019). This is in accordance with QS. Al-Qashash verse 77 as follows:

وَأَتَّبِعْ فِيهَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ٧٧

[And seek (the reward) of the Hereafter with what Allah has bestowed upon you, but do not forget your share in this world and do unto others as Allah has done unto you, and do not cause corruption in the earth]

Learning at STAI Al-Falah, especially in religion courses, can be said to be very scientific. Not only learning *naqli* arguments but also learning *aqli* arguments. Against a verse, students are not only told to believe in faith but also stimulated to think rationally. From activities like this it will open the horizons of thinking to continue to develop the signs hidden in the verse of the Qur'an. Related to this, one of the STAI Al-Falah lecturers commented:

"I usually assign students to analyze a verse of the Qur'an. Examining in the sense of looking for its interpretation and then linking it to the research of scientists who prove the truth... For example, the verses about science."

Learning activities by balancing between *naqli* arguments and *aqli* arguments are an implementation of the value of *tawazun*. *Tawazun* can also be interpreted as a proportional relationship between everything (Zainuddin et al., 2016). With a *tawazun* attitude in

understanding the argument, of course Muslims will be born as believers as well as thinking people.

In addition to *tawassuth* and *tawazun*, *ta'adul* values are also present in every learning process at STAI Al-Falah. One of the lecturers at STAI Al-Falah said:

"In giving assessments to students, our leaders always give directions to always be fair. This is done in order to instill moderation behavior in the learning environment. Regardless of status and even kinship between students and lecturers who teach. So that all students will get the same attention. The value given is also in accordance with their respective efforts."

This is then reinforced by the statement of students at STAI Al-Falah:

"One of the lecturers here is a close relative of mine. He happens to be the lecturer in one of the courses. One time I did an exam assignment not seriously because I was busy with organizational activities. After I checked the grade, it turned out that my grade was not up to A. I think this is proof of his fairness. Friends who do their assignments well will get good grades too".

It is said to be *ta'adul* because one of the indicators of *ta'adul* behavior in learning activities on campus is where lecturers or teachers are fair with students. Treating every student equally regardless of social status or family relationship, so that the student will get a grade according to his ability.

Learning conducted at STAI Al-Falah also uses various opinions or points of view. This means that lecturers do not force students to differ in opinion, especially in matters of *furu'iyah amaliyah*. One of the informants pleaded in the interview:

"In learning fiqh, for example, my lecturer taught many recitations. As in the recitation of the iftitah prayer. Likewise with the position of takbir during prayer, reading basmalah during prayer and others. His message is to never blame other people's practices or opinions if we have not learned them."

This method shows that lecturers at STAI Al-Falah strongly emphasize the value of *tasamuh* in learning. In other words, lecturers have an attitude to give space and not interfere with other people's rights to believe and express their beliefs. He is willing to accept religious practices, especially religious practices that accommodate local culture and traditions. Especially in South Kalimantan, where most of the population is Muslim and cannot be separated from local culture and traditions. This kind of behavior is called *tasamuh*. So that with this attitude, harmony within Muslims will always be maintained.

Social Exchange Model in Realizing the Moderate Attitude of Students at STAI Al-Falah

The four pillars of education applied at STAI Al-Falah are an important asset in shaping the attitude of students who are moderate in religion. As explained above, the four pillars of education which include *tawassuth*, *tawazun*, *ta'adul*, and *tasamuh* have been integrated into the climate and learning on the campus of STAI Al-Falah Banjarbaru. The campus has made an interesting strategy that can familiarize its students to be moderate, especially in the campus environment itself. For example, in realizing a moderate campus climate, STAI Al-Falah strives to make rules to a special curriculum that aims to motivate students to apply moderate understanding. The existence of the "*Aswaja (Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah)*" course is also one proof that the campus prioritizes the principles of *Wasathiyah* Islam.

However, the procurement of one of these specific courses does not mean trivializing other understandings, it's just that understanding in *Aswaja* is considered more friendly and appropriate for students at STAI Al-Falah. Because in assessing an understanding of moderate status or not, it does not lie in the identity of a particular group or sect but how this understanding can create peaceful and soothing religious relations. In addition, moderate understanding can also blend different understandings regardless of the identity of a particular group or school of thought if the understanding does not contradict the Qur'an and the authentic Sunnah. This characteristic of understanding must be maintained, because an understanding based on religion is influential in determining a person's style of thinking.

Not only that, STAI Al-Falah has also implemented the four pillars that are used as a vision into learning or lectures. Evident from the research that has been done, STAI Al-Falah lecturers and students apply aspects of moderate Islam that uphold the principles of religion that are tolerant, fair, and balanced. The reflection of this Wasathiyah Islam gives birth to a campus community that is broad-minded about diversity itself which has an impact on a more polite attitude and is not easily prejudiced against different groups. Among the attitudes that can be generated is being able to prioritize the principle of togetherness and the reality of differences that must be recognized and respected. The reality is that in general, the themes of religious moderation are only "echoed" but cannot be absorbed and lived even concretely implemented in the field. In practice, the attitude of moderation is only an appeal that is shouted through certain pulpits and declarations. In fact, religious moderation needs to be strengthened by various real efforts that give output to the birth of a moderate attitude itself.

STAI Al-Falah developed a "social exchange" model aligned with George Homans' exchange theory. The theory developed by Homans views the world as an exchange in which rewards and benefits are present. If analyzed, STAI Al-Falah applies to a moderate climate within the campus, ensuring balanced reciprocity with students. For example, the campus organizes scientific writing competitions on religious moderation, incorporating the four pillars of campus education. In return, the winners are awarded scholarships and prizes as a form of appreciation. Indirectly, simple activities like this can encourage students' thinking toward moderation, as their ideas are highly valued by the institution. In this case, Homans sees an exchange that shows "rewards" or appreciation as a response to the ideas they put forward. Homans refer to this as the success proposition, which holds the principle that the more frequently a particular action receives the expected reward, the greater the likelihood that the action will be repeated.

The form of appreciation given by the campus rejects the concept of religious moderation being merely a topic for declarations in speeches or lectures. True moderation requires concrete evidence realized through habitual practices. A simple analogy would be a smart pet that can follow its owner's commands through training rewarded with treats. Previous studies suggest that a habit is more easily formed when there is a reward (Yanti et al., 2023). However, once again, the matter of rewards or appreciation is not about indulgence but serves as feedback to establish the habit. In addition, in the learning process, STAI Al-Falah consistently appreciates students with broad insights. For example, during exams, students' diverse answers are graded according to the quality of their responses, regardless of whether their views align with those of the lecturer. However, this is provided

that the students' answers do not contradict the core principles used as a reference. If the answer stays within legitimate and proven foundations, the lecturer awards the highest marks without any indication of bias. This approach positively impacts students' motivation to develop their critical thinking without feeling constrained by their lecturer's opinions. They are free to express their thoughts, but within the correct and proven boundaries. This way, students can understand the reality of genuine differences, and from these differences, they learn to respect one another, even though each person still must make their own choices. Likewise, lecturers indirectly learn to appreciate their students' opinions. This reciprocal relationship results in the value proposition.

According to Homans, the value proposition states that the higher the value of an action, the more a person enjoys performing that action. Under these conditions, students will develop deeper thinking, not fixed on a single viewpoint, and can appreciate differing opinions because every answer given is valued and assessed well if it does not deviate from fundamental values. As a result, the declaration of moderate attitudes desired by STAI Al-Falah is not merely in the form of boring lectures or socialization but is effectively embedded in every learning activity. This is because religious moderation requires actions, not just words. Both parties, in this case the campus and the campus community, can benefit from each other. The campus can achieve its educational pillars by fostering moderate individuals. Similarly, the campus community, including students, benefits because their efforts in adopting moderate attitudes receive positive appreciation.

This phenomenon aligns with the assumption of social exchange theory, which states that an exchange transaction only occurs when the parties involved gain benefits from the exchange. At the very least, the campus can train students to adopt moderate attitudes while at the campus, preparing them for their roles in society. The exchange of benefits between both parties provides significant value to the efforts of fostering moderate attitudes among the campus community at STAI Al-Falah. In his theory, Homans states that humans are rational beings who prioritize profit and loss. The social exchange model implemented by STAI Al-Falah can at least confirm this theory, as receiving benefits from one's behavior tends to encourage the repetition of that behavior. This condition aligns with previous studies that show repeated behavior becomes more ingrained and easier to remember. However, in the matter of fostering a moderate attitude, this is not always the case but rather a form of habituation to develop a solid understanding and stance. Being a moderate individual must reflect patience and calmness in accepting all differences. The campus' actions are also a preventive effort believed to be an effective step, as demonstrated by previous studies. Cultivating a moderate understanding and attitude is easier through preventive measures.

Conclusion

This study has examined the strategies implemented by STAI Al-Falah Banjarbaru in applying the four pillars of moderate Islam—*tawassuth*, *tawazun*, *ta'adul*, and *tasamuh*—through its campus climate and learning processes. The model developed by the institution is based on a mutually beneficial relationship among the campus community, supported by a structured system of rewards and incentives, which aligns with George Homans' Social Exchange Theory. Rather than merely relying on verbal socialization of moderate

Islamic values, STAI Al-Falah has adopted a tangible approach through consistent appreciation and reinforcement of positive behaviors that reflect the institution's vision of moderation. This approach has proven effective in embedding the principles of moderation into the daily lives of students, lecturers, and staff, transforming these values into ingrained habits rather than dictated doctrines.

The findings of this research contribute to the growing body of literature on religious moderation in higher education. While previous studies have primarily focused on the ideological contest between conservative and moderate Islamic groups, or the challenges posed by radicalism in academic settings, this study offers a unique perspective by exploring the practical application of religious moderation through the lens of social exchange. The integration of Homans' theory provides a new dimension to understanding how institutional strategies can foster a sustainable moderate Islamic environment. Compared to prior research, which often emphasizes ideological conflict or policy-level interventions, this study highlights the importance of everyday interactions and the reciprocal dynamics within an educational institution in promoting moderate values. The application of reward-based systems to encourage moderate behaviors offers a model that could be replicated or adapted in other Islamic educational institutions across Indonesia.

The primary implication of this research is the proposal of a new approach to fostering religious moderation, where incentives and mutual exchanges are used to create a positive environment for the internalization of moderate Islamic values. Further studies could build on these findings by testing the effectiveness of this model in different institutional contexts, or by refining the social exchange framework to address specific cultural or regional variations in Indonesia. Additionally, future research could explore how this model could be adapted to engage more directly with external community relations, expanding the reach of moderate Islamic education beyond the campus.

In conclusion, the success of STAI Al-Falah Banjarbaru in implementing moderate Islamic values suggests that creating a supportive campus climate and using structured, reciprocal relationships can significantly enhance the internalization of moderation within educational settings. These findings not only provide practical insights for educational institutions but also contribute to broader efforts to promote tolerance and harmony within diverse societies.

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