



Religious Digital Resilience: A Conceptual Model for Strengthening Religious Moderation among Generation Z through Islamic Education

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of social media has fundamentally transformed how Generation Z acquires, constructs, and disseminates religious knowledge. On the one hand, social media provides significant opportunities to promote religious moderation through digital da'wah, educational content, and interactive learning environments. On the other hand, algorithm-driven platforms, information overload, and weak source verification have intensified the spread of religious extremism, intolerance, and digital misinformation. These challenges require Islamic education to move beyond the transmission of religious knowledge by strengthening digital literacy, critical thinking, and digital resilience among learners. This study aims to analyze Islamic education strategies for strengthening religious moderation on social media to address digital radicalism and misinformation among Generation Z. The study employed a conceptual review method through a critical synthesis of peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and policy documents related to religious moderation, Islamic education, digital literacy, and digital radicalization. The findings indicate that strengthening religious moderation requires the integration of four interconnected components: religious moderation values, digital literacy, adaptive Islamic pedagogy, and a collaborative ecosystem involving schools, families, religious organizations, government institutions, and digital platforms. Based on this synthesis, the study proposes the Religious Digital Resilience Model as its primary conceptual contribution, explaining how these components collectively develop Generation Z's capacity to access, verify, evaluate, and disseminate religious information critically, ethically, and responsibly. The proposed model extends the discourse on religious moderation from a normative framework toward a transformative educational approach integrating theological, pedagogical, and digital dimensions.

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan media sosial telah mengubah cara Generasi Z memperoleh, mengonstruksi, dan menyebarluaskan pengetahuan keagamaan. Di satu sisi, media sosial membuka peluang yang luas bagi penguatan moderasi beragama melalui penyebaran konten edukatif dan dakwah digital. Di sisi lain, karakteristik algoritma, tingginya arus informasi, serta lemahnya verifikasi sumber meningkatkan risiko penyebaran radikalisme, intoleransi, dan disinformasi keagamaan. Kondisi tersebut menuntut pendidikan

Islam untuk mengembangkan strategi pembelajaran yang tidak hanya berorientasi pada penguasaan materi keagamaan, tetapi juga pada pembentukan literasi digital, kemampuan berpikir kritis, dan ketahanan digital peserta didik. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis strategi pendidikan Islam dalam memperkuat moderasi beragama di media sosial sebagai upaya menanggulangi radikalisme dan disinformasi digital pada Generasi Z. Penelitian menggunakan metode kajian konseptual melalui sintesis kritis terhadap literatur ilmiah bereputasi, buku akademik, serta dokumen kebijakan yang relevan mengenai moderasi beragama, pendidikan Islam, literasi digital, dan radikalisme digital. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa penguatan moderasi beragama akan lebih efektif apabila mengintegrasikan empat komponen utama, yaitu nilai-nilai moderasi beragama, literasi digital, pedagogi pendidikan Islam yang adaptif, dan ekosistem kolaboratif antara sekolah, keluarga, organisasi keagamaan, pemerintah, serta platform digital. Artikel ini menawarkan Religious Digital Resilience Model sebagai kontribusi konseptual yang menjelaskan hubungan antarkomponen dalam membangun kemampuan Generasi Z untuk mengakses, memverifikasi, mengevaluasi, dan menyebarluaskan informasi keagamaan secara kritis, etis, dan bertanggung jawab. Model ini memperluas perspektif moderasi beragama dari pendekatan normatif menuju pendekatan transformatif yang mengintegrasikan dimensi teologis, pedagogis, dan digital.

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has fundamentally changed the ways in which people access, produce, and disseminate religious information. Social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and X (formerly Twitter) are no longer merely spaces for communication; they have evolved into influential arenas for identity formation, the construction of religious authority, and the development of Islamic understanding, particularly among Generation Z. As digital natives, members of Generation Z conduct a substantial proportion of their social and learning activities within digital ecosystems, making social media one of their primary sources of religious knowledge. This development creates significant opportunities for disseminating moderate Islamic values; at the same time, however, it expands the space for radicalism, hate speech, intolerance, extremist propaganda, and religious disinformation, all of which can circulate rapidly through the algorithmic structures of digital platforms (Cinelli et al., 2021; UNESCO, 2023).

This phenomenon has become increasingly complex because social media algorithms tend to prioritize content that generates high levels of user engagement rather than information quality and validity. Consequently, provocative, emotional, controversial, and extreme narratives can gain wider visibility more easily than moderate and educational religious messages. This situation is further intensified by the emergence of echo chambers, filter bubbles, and religion-based misinformation, which contribute to social polarization and constrain opportunities for constructive dialogue (Cinelli et al., 2021; Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral, 2018). In Indonesia, the exceptionally high use of social media among adolescents and university students has increasingly shifted access to religious information toward digital content rather than formal learning processes in schools and Islamic educational institutions.

At the same time, advances in digital technology have transformed traditional patterns of religious authority. Whereas Islamic knowledge was previously acquired primarily through teachers, religious scholars (ulama), and educational institutions, social media has introduced a wide range of new religious actors who do not necessarily possess adequate scholarly competence. The phenomenon of digital religion has made religious authority more open and accessible while simultaneously increasing its vulnerability to partial, textualist, and even extremist interpretations. This condition heightens the risk of misunderstanding religious teachings, particularly among Generation Z, whose patterns of information consumption are characterized by rapid content consumption, a preference for short-form visual content, and relatively limited information verification practices (Campbell, 2021; OECD, 2021).

Within Indonesia's highly diverse religious, cultural, and ethnic landscape, strengthening religious moderation has become a strategic component of national development. The Ministry of

Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia positions religious moderation as an approach to fostering religious life that is just, balanced (*wasathiyah*), tolerant, respectful of diversity, and committed to national values. Religious moderation does not imply reducing an individual's commitment to religion; rather, it refers to understanding and practicing religious teachings proportionately in ways that promote peaceful, inclusive social relations and respect for differences (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019; 2023). Strengthening religious moderation in digital spaces has therefore become increasingly urgent as social interactions mediated through social media continue to intensify.

Various international reports indicate that social media has become a major instrument for disseminating extremist propaganda and disinformation. UNESCO (2023) emphasizes that improvements in digital literacy must be accompanied by stronger critical-thinking skills so that users can identify misinformation, disinformation, visual manipulation, and digital propaganda. The World Economic Forum (2024) has even identified misinformation and disinformation as among the most significant short-term global risks because of their potential to undermine social stability, democracy, security, and societal cohesion. In religious contexts, invalid or misleading information frequently exploits identity-based sentiments to construct narratives of hatred and exclusivism, thereby increasing the risk of digitally mediated radicalism.

Islamic education occupies a strategic position in addressing these challenges. Its role extends beyond the transmission of religious knowledge (transfer of knowledge) to encompass character formation (transfer of values), the development of critical-thinking skills, the strengthening of digital literacy, and the internalization of the principles of *wasathiyah* (moderation), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), *i'tidal* (justice and proportionality), and *musyawarah* (deliberation) as foundations for moderate religious life. In the digital era, the function of Islamic education needs to be expanded through the integration of educational technologies, strengthened information literacy, media education, and the development of learners' digital competencies, enabling them not only to critically evaluate information but also to produce constructive and positive content on social media (Ismunandar & Zahara, 2025).

A growing body of research has examined the relationship among religious moderation, social media, and Generation Z. Ramadhan, Basid, and Faizin (2023) explain that Generation Z has considerable potential to become an agent for disseminating religious moderation in digital spaces, although this generation continues to face the challenge of substantial exposure to extremist narratives. Kuswana (2024) demonstrates that moderate Islamic organizations in Indonesia have begun utilizing social media as part of their digital counter-radicalism strategies, although their effectiveness remains influenced by content creativity, communication patterns, and the characteristics of younger audiences. Takdir (2025) further argues that strengthening religious literacy in combination with digital literacy can enhance Generation Z's resilience to radicalization. Nevertheless, much of the existing research remains focused on the implementation of specific programs, institutional case studies, or descriptive analyses of social media. Studies that integrate religious moderation, Islamic education, digital literacy, disinformation, and pedagogical strategies within a single comprehensive conceptual framework remain relatively limited.

This gap highlights the need to develop a conceptual framework capable of explaining the interrelationships among the characteristics of social media, Generation Z's digital behavior, the threats posed by radicalism and disinformation, and Islamic educational strategies for building digital resilience grounded in religious moderation. A conceptual approach is particularly important because it enables the synthesis of theories and perspectives from Islamic education, digital communication, media literacy, educational psychology, and religious moderation studies. Such an interdisciplinary synthesis can provide a more comprehensive conceptual model and establish a theoretical foundation for subsequent empirical research.

Based on these considerations, this article aims to develop a conceptual analysis of Islamic educational strategies for strengthening religious moderation on social media as an effort to counter radicalism and digital disinformation among Generation Z. The article proposes a conceptual synthesis that integrates the principles of religious moderation, digital literacy, Islamic pedagogy, and the characteristics of social media into a strategic framework. This framework is expected to provide a useful reference for educational policy development, teaching and learning practices, and future research addressing the challenges of religious life in the digital era.

METHOD

This study employs a conceptual research approach aimed at developing a theoretical synthesis of Islamic educational strategies for strengthening religious moderation on social media as an effort to counter digital radicalism and disinformation among Generation Z. Unlike empirical research, which primarily relies on the collection of field data, conceptual research focuses on the critical analysis, integration, and development of ideas derived from established theories, previous research findings, and relevant scholarly concepts to construct a more comprehensive conceptual framework.

The data sources consist of scholarly literature drawn from reputable national and international journal articles, academic books, conference proceedings, reports published by international organizations, and policy documents related to religious moderation, Islamic education, digital literacy, social media, digital radicalism, disinformation, and the characteristics of Generation Z. The literature search was conducted through major academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, Crossref, Dimensions, ERIC, Google Scholar, and the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). Search terms included *religious moderation*, *Islamic education*, *social media*, *digital literacy*, *digital misinformation*, *radicalization*, *Generation Z*, and *wasathiyah*, along with their Indonesian equivalents. Priority was given to publications from 2020 to 2025 to capture recent conceptual and scholarly developments, while selected seminal works were included where necessary to provide relevant theoretical foundations.

The literature was purposively selected according to four criteria: (1) direct relevance to the research focus; (2) publication in reputable scholarly journals or by credible academic institutions; (3) presentation of concepts, theories, models, or findings that could contribute to the development of the conceptual framework; and (4) relevance to the context of Islamic education and the dynamics of social media use among Generation Z. Popular sources, publications that had not undergone peer review, and materials lacking substantial relevance to the research topic were excluded as primary sources of analysis.

The literature was analyzed using qualitative content analysis combined with thematic analysis. The analytical process consisted of five stages: (1) identifying and selecting relevant literature; (2) classifying concepts according to the major themes of religious moderation, Islamic education, social media, digital radicalism, disinformation, digital literacy, and Generation Z; (3) examining relationships among concepts to identify similarities, differences, and developments in scholarly perspectives across the literature; (4) synthesizing multiple theoretical perspectives into an integrated conceptual framework; and (5) formulating conceptual propositions concerning Islamic educational strategies for developing digital resilience grounded in the values of religious moderation.

To enhance the rigor and validity of the conceptual analysis, the study employed source triangulation by comparing findings and theoretical perspectives across different disciplines, including Islamic education, religious studies, digital communication, media literacy, educational psychology, and public policy. In addition, each concept was examined comparatively by considering the consistency of scholarly arguments, empirical relevance, and recent theoretical

developments. This process was intended to ensure that the resulting synthesis was supported by a robust academic foundation.

The primary outcome of this study is a conceptual framework that explains the relationships among the characteristics of social media, exposure to digital radicalism and disinformation, the values of religious moderation, and Islamic educational strategies for strengthening critical thinking, digital literacy, and the ideological resilience of Generation Z. The proposed framework is expected to provide a theoretical foundation for future empirical research and to inform the development of Islamic education policies that are adaptive and responsive to the challenges of the digital era.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social Media as a New Space for Shaping Generation Z's Religiosity

The development of digital technology has shifted the formation of religious knowledge from conventional authoritative spaces toward social media ecosystems. For Generation Z, social media serves not merely as a means of interaction but as a primary space for accessing, interpreting, and disseminating religious information. From the perspective of digital religion, religious practices in the digital era no longer follow a linear pattern of knowledge transmission from teacher to student; instead, they have become increasingly circular, participatory, and strongly influenced by platform characteristics, algorithms, and emerging forms of religious authority in digital spaces (Campbell, 2021; Ismunandar & Zahara, 2025). Social media has therefore become a new arena for shaping religious identity and perspectives, particularly among younger generations immersed in a visual, fast-paced, and interactive culture.

The significance of this phenomenon is evident in Indonesia's high levels of internet and social media penetration. Data from APJII indicate that national internet penetration has exceeded 79% of the population, while DataReportal (2025) reports more than 139 million active social media users, with younger age groups constituting the dominant users (APJII, 2024; DataReportal, 2025). These figures demonstrate that social media is not merely a supplementary component of Generation Z's lives but has become an integral part of their everyday learning environment. In this context, religious information is increasingly consumed through short-form videos, excerpts from religious lectures, infographics, and viral narrative clips rather than through longer and more systematic formal learning resources (Febriani & Ritonga, 2022; Jalaluddin et al., 2024). Table 1 provides a concise overview of Indonesia's current digital ecosystem.

Table 1. Overview of Indonesia's Digital Ecosystem

Indicator	Current Condition
Internet penetration	>79% of the population (APJII, 2024)
Active social media users	>139 million (DataReportal, 2025)
Dominant user group	18–34 years old (DataReportal, 2025)
Commonly used platforms	YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook (DataReportal, 2025)
Consumption patterns	Fast-paced, visual, interactive (Febriani & Ritonga, 2022; Jalaluddin et al., 2024)

On the one hand, social media expands access to *da'wah*, Islamic literature, and cross-community discussions. Several studies indicate that Generation Z tends to respond positively to religious messages that are concise, relevant, and contextual. Consequently, religious moderation content presented through visual and dialogical formats is more likely to resonate with younger

audiences than conventional one-way preaching formats (Muzayanah et al., 2025; Nursalim, 2025; Ramadhan et al., 2023; Anwar, 2025). Research on the use of digital spaces to strengthen religious moderation also suggests that digital platforms can foster moderate attitudes when supported by appropriate programs. Younger generations tend to demonstrate greater openness to tolerance and engagement across differences when exposed to constructive religious messages through digital media (Muzayanah et al., 2025; Ramadhan et al., 2023). Social media therefore provides a strategic opportunity for Islamic education to reach learners more broadly while accommodating the learning preferences of Generation Z.

Nevertheless, social media also presents serious risks because it operates through algorithmic mechanisms that tend to reinforce users' existing preferences. The phenomena of echo chambers and filter bubbles can repeatedly expose users to perspectives consistent with their existing beliefs while reducing their encounters with alternative viewpoints (Cinelli et al., 2021; Khusairi, 2024). In religious contexts, this condition can accelerate polarization, reinforce exclusivist attitudes, and facilitate the circulation of intolerant narratives or oversimplified interpretations of religious teachings. Recent studies on digital spaces and religious moderation emphasize that an abundance of information does not automatically lead to better understanding; instead, it may increase the risk of cognitive and informational biases when users lack adequate information literacy (Ismunandar & Zahara, 2025; Khusairi, 2024). This argument is consistent with research on disinformation demonstrating that false, sensational, and emotionally charged information tends to spread more rapidly than accurate information (Vosoughi et al., 2018).

These transformations have also reshaped patterns of religious authority. On social media, religious legitimacy is not always determined by scholarly credentials or established chains of knowledge transmission (*sanad*); rather, it is often influenced by follower counts, engagement levels, and the visual appeal of content. Consequently, Generation Z encounters religious content of highly varying quality, ranging from credible educational materials to provocative narratives presented in the name of religion (Campbell, 2021; Missier, 2025; Nursalim, 2025). UNESCO emphasizes that effective governance of digital platforms must be accompanied by strengthened media and information literacy to enable users to verify the content they encounter (UNESCO, 2023). Within the context of Islamic education, this underscores the importance of *tabayyun*—the critical verification of information—as a core literacy competency that should be cultivated from an early stage.

Despite these challenges, social media can serve as an effective instrument for strengthening religious moderation when managed through appropriate educational approaches. Recent studies suggest that Generation Z has the potential to become producers of moderate religious content rather than merely passive consumers, provided that young people are given opportunities to learn, practice, and create religious messages in creative and responsible ways (Jalaluddin et al., 2024; Muzayanah et al., 2025; Ramadhan et al., 2023). Digital media-based learning models that integrate the values of *wasathiyah*, adaptive pedagogy, and educational technology are also relevant to fostering moderate religious attitudes among Generation Z (Ismunandar & Zahara, 2025; Schmid et al., 2021). Social media therefore performs a dual function: it provides an expanded space for moderate Islamic education while simultaneously constituting an environment vulnerable to radicalism and disinformation.

Based on this synthesis of the literature, the central issue lies not in social media itself but in how these platforms are used and in the level of users' literacy and critical competencies. Strengthening religious moderation among Generation Z should therefore integrate moderate Islamic values, digital literacy, and information evaluation skills. Islamic education can no longer be limited to the transmission of normative religious knowledge; it must also cultivate learners who are capable of navigating digital environments critically, ethically, and productively. This synthesis

provides an important foundation for the subsequent discussion of digital radicalism, disinformation, and more operational strategies for Islamic education.

Digital Radicalism and Disinformation as Challenges for Islamic Education

The transformation of social media has significantly altered the patterns through which religious ideologies are disseminated. Whereas radicalism previously developed primarily through face-to-face interactions or closed networks, extremist narratives, hate speech, and religious disinformation can now spread rapidly through open, interactive, and algorithm-driven digital platforms. Within such digital environments, religious content is no longer produced exclusively by academic authorities or established religious institutions but also by ordinary users who may lack adequate methodological competence and recognized religious authority. This development has transformed social media into an increasingly complex arena in which competing religious narratives are produced, circulated, and contested (Campbell, 2021; Suhendi, 2025; Takdir, 2025).

Digital radicalism does not always manifest itself through explicit calls for violence. Radicalization often develops gradually through content that constructs an “us versus them” dichotomy, reinforces exclusivist attitudes, and oversimplifies complex religious issues. Social media algorithms can intensify this process by continuously recommending similar content based on users’ search histories and patterns of interaction. As a result, users may be repeatedly exposed to the same narratives while becoming increasingly isolated from alternative perspectives (Cinelli et al., 2021; Khusairi, 2024). From the perspective of Islamic education, this phenomenon is particularly significant because repeated exposure to biased narratives may shape the ways in which Generation Z understands religion, encouraging partial and emotionally driven interpretations.

In addition to digital radicalism, an equally serious challenge is digital disinformation. Within religious contexts, disinformation extends beyond fabricated news to include Qur’anic verses or hadith quotations taken out of context, interpretations lacking sound scholarly methodology, manipulated visual materials, and provocative narratives presented in the name of religion. UNESCO emphasizes that digital ecosystems accelerate the circulation of misinformation and disinformation because every user can simultaneously become a producer and distributor of information without the editorial mechanisms traditionally associated with conventional media (UNESCO, 2023). Research on the diffusion of false information has similarly demonstrated that emotionally charged and sensational content tends to spread more widely and rapidly than accurate information (Vosoughi et al., 2018). Religious disinformation therefore constitutes a serious threat to the development of a sound and well-informed understanding of Islam among Generation Z.

In the Indonesian context, these challenges are particularly relevant given the high intensity of social media use among younger age groups. APJII reports that national internet penetration has exceeded 79% of the population, while DataReportal indicates a substantial number of active social media users, predominantly within the 18–34 age group (APJII, 2024; DataReportal, 2025). The prevalence of short-form videos and interactive visual content enables Generation Z to consume information rapidly but simultaneously increases the risk of overlooking source verification. This condition is consistent with research indicating that younger generations require stronger digital and information literacy competencies to distinguish credible information from misleading content (Febriani & Ritonga, 2022; Muzayanah et al., 2025; Nursalim, 2025).

A growing body of research suggests that strengthening religious literacy can enhance young people’s resilience to extremist narratives. Takdir (2025) emphasizes that religious literacy, when combined with intergroup dialogue and the constructive use of social media, can strengthen Generation Z’s resilience to radicalization. Other studies have demonstrated that moderate Islamic organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah have begun developing digital counter-radicalism strategies, although their effectiveness largely depends on content creativity, communication consistency, and the ability to engage younger audiences (Kuswana, 2024). At the

level of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), the promotion of moderate Islam through social media has also been shown to play an important role in strengthening resistance to extremist ideologies (Muqit et al., 2024).

From the perspective of Islamic education, digital radicalism and disinformation demonstrate that educational objectives can no longer be limited to the mastery of religious knowledge. Islamic education must also cultivate responsible, critical, and ethical digital competencies. The principles of religious moderation, including *tawasuth* (the middle path), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *i'tidal* (justice and fairness), *tawazun* (balance), and *musyawarah* (deliberation), need to be integrated with digital literacy so that learners can develop a comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings and critically verify information before sharing or disseminating it (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019; Khusairi, 2024). Such integration is consistent with the broader objectives of Islamic education, which seek to cultivate individuals who are spiritually grounded while remaining socially and intellectually responsible.

Based on the synthesis of the literature, digital radicalism and disinformation are rooted in several interconnected problems: insufficient digital literacy, limited critical-thinking skills, shifting patterns of religious authority, and the influence of social media algorithms. Islamic educational strategies should therefore be directed toward developing digital resilience, understood as learners' capacity to access, analyze, evaluate, and utilize religious information critically, ethically, and responsibly. Digital resilience thus serves as a crucial bridge between strengthening religious moderation and preventing radicalism and disinformation in digital spaces. It also provides a conceptual foundation for the Islamic educational strategies discussed in the following section.

Islamic Educational Strategies for Strengthening Religious Moderation on Social Media

The preceding conceptual findings indicate that digital radicalism and disinformation are shaped not only by technological developments but also by insufficient digital literacy, weakened critical-thinking skills, and changing patterns of religious authority in digital spaces. Islamic educational strategies should therefore focus on strengthening learners' competencies so that they can develop a comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings while critically evaluating religious information circulating on social media. Accordingly, Islamic education should no longer be understood merely as a means of transmitting knowledge but as a process of cultivating character, critical reasoning, and responsible digital citizenship (Suhendi, 2025; Takdir, 2025).

The first strategy involves integrating religious moderation with digital literacy into the learning process. The values of *tawasuth* (the middle path), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *i'tidal* (justice and fairness), and *tawazun* (balance) need to be internalized through learning activities that encourage students to verify information, assess source credibility, and understand the context of information before sharing it. This approach is consistent with UNESCO's Media and Information Literacy framework, which identifies the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create information as a core competency for individuals in digital societies (UNESCO, 2023). From the perspective of Islamic education, digital literacy is not merely a technical skill but also represents the practical implementation of *tabayyun*, the Islamic principle of critically verifying information before accepting or disseminating it.

The second strategy is strengthening digital pedagogy that is responsive to the characteristics of Generation Z. This generation tends to respond more positively to visual, interactive, collaborative, and contextual learning than to conventional one-way lectures. Educational short-form videos, infographics, podcasts, microlearning, digital case studies, and project-based learning therefore represent more relevant approaches to internalizing the values of religious moderation. Ismunandar and Zahara (2025) demonstrate that integrating *wasathiyah* values with the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework can enhance learner engagement while strengthening the understanding of religious moderation through digital media.

This argument is also supported by Schmid et al. (2021), who emphasize that the integration of technology and pedagogy becomes more effective when learning is designed meaningfully and centered on learners' needs and experiences.

The third strategy involves strengthening a collaborative ecosystem among schools, families, religious institutions, and digital communities. Religious moderation education is more likely to be effective when it extends beyond the classroom and is reinforced through a consistent social environment. Teachers serve as facilitators of critical learning, families provide guidance in the responsible use of digital media, and religious organizations contribute by producing credible and accessible educational content tailored to Generation Z (Kuswana, 2024; Muqit et al., 2024). Through such collaboration, religious moderation moves beyond normative discourse and becomes a sustainable social practice embedded within the broader digital ecosystem.

Based on this synthesis, effective Islamic educational strategies for addressing digital radicalism and disinformation cannot be limited to the transmission of religious moderation content. Rather, these strategies must integrate moderate Islamic values, digital literacy, innovative pedagogy, and multi-stakeholder collaboration within a unified learning ecosystem. The integration of these four components provides the foundation for developing religious digital resilience, defined as Generation Z's capacity to access, verify, interpret, and disseminate religious information critically, ethically, and responsibly. This concept constitutes the principal conceptual contribution of the article because it extends religious moderation beyond a set of normative values and conceptualizes it as a practical competency that learners need to navigate the complexities of contemporary digital environments.

A Conceptual Model Integrating Islamic Education, Religious Moderation, and Generation Z's Digital Resilience

The synthesis of the literature indicates that most existing studies continue to examine religious moderation, digital literacy, and digital radicalism separately. Studies on religious moderation generally focus on strengthening *wasathiyah* values, while digital literacy research predominantly emphasizes technical competencies related to accessing and evaluating information. Meanwhile, studies of digital radicalism tend to examine patterns through which extremist ideologies spread across social media without comprehensively integrating the pedagogical dimensions of Islamic education. This fragmentation highlights the need for a conceptual framework capable of explaining the relationships among these components in a more systematic and integrated manner (Campbell, 2021; Suhendi, 2025; Takdir, 2025).

Based on this synthesis, this article proposes the Religious Digital Resilience Model (RDRM). The model comprises four interconnected components: (1) religious moderation values, (2) digital literacy, (3) Islamic educational pedagogy, and (4) a collaborative ecosystem. These four components operate synergistically to strengthen Generation Z's capacity to recognize, critically evaluate, and respond to various forms of radicalism and disinformation in digital spaces (Ismunandar & Zahara, 2025; Muzayanah et al., 2025; Schmid et al., 2021).

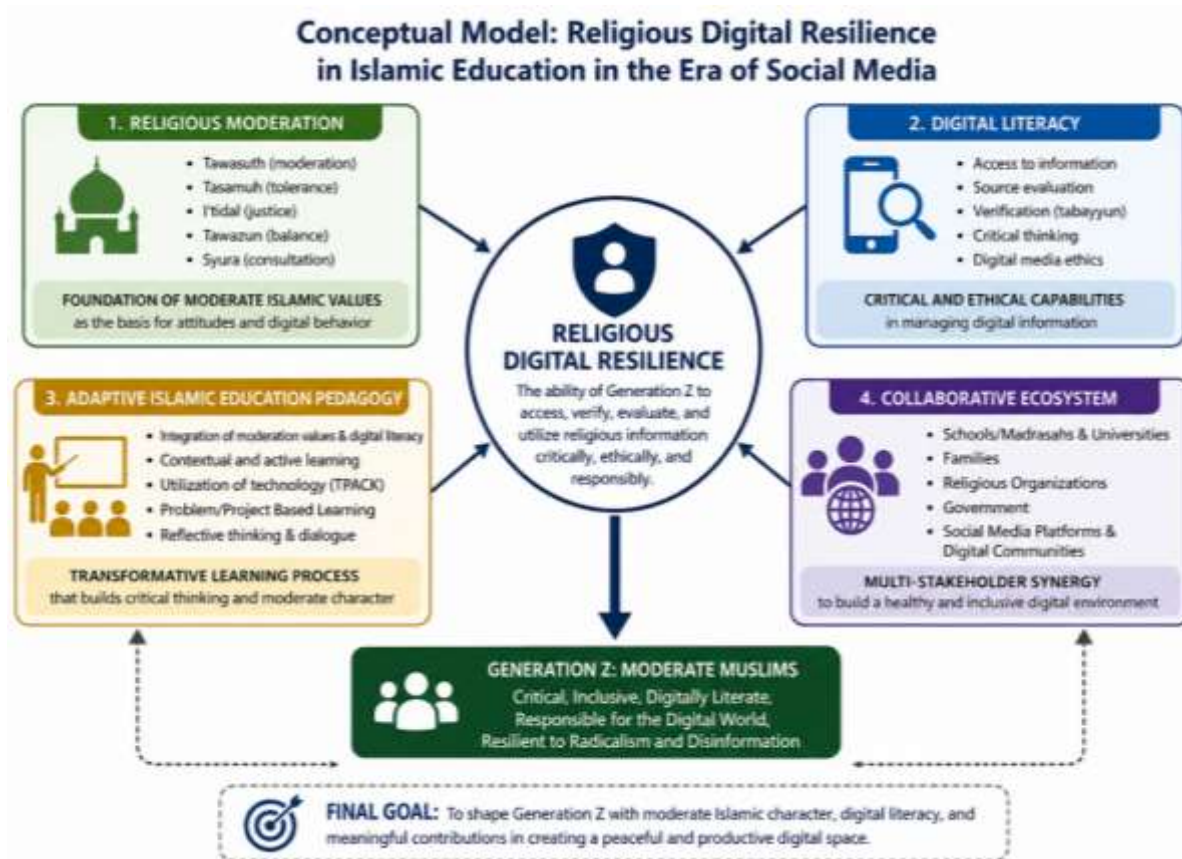


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Religious Digital Resilience in Islamic Education for Strengthening Religious Moderation among Generation Z

Source: Authors' synthesis based on Campbell (2021), UNESCO (2023), Koehler et al. (2014), Kementerian Agama RI (2019), Ramadhan et al. (2023), and Ismunandar and Zahara (2025).

Figure 1 illustrates that religious digital resilience is developed through the integration of four key components. Religious moderation values serve as the ethical foundation for shaping learners' character. These values are reinforced through digital literacy, which develops the capacity to access, verify (*tabayyun*), evaluate, and critically utilize information. The internalization of these competencies is subsequently facilitated through adaptive Islamic educational pedagogy supported by educational technologies, while the sustainability of their implementation is strengthened through a collaborative ecosystem involving schools, families, religious organizations, government institutions, and digital platforms. The synergy among these four components produces religious digital resilience, defined as Generation Z's capacity to respond to digital radicalism and disinformation in a moderate, critical, and responsible manner (Khusairi, 2024; Roozenbeek et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2023).

The first component comprises religious moderation values, including *tawasuth* (the middle path), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *i'tidal* (justice), *tawazun* (balance), and *syura* (deliberation). These values provide an ethical foundation for understanding Islamic teachings comprehensively and proportionately. In the context of social media, religious moderation values function as moral guidelines when learners receive, interpret, and disseminate religious information, thereby helping to minimize intolerant, exclusivist, and provocative attitudes (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019; Muqit et al., 2024).

The second component is digital literacy, which encompasses not only the ability to use digital technologies but also the capacity to identify credible sources, verify information (*tabayyun*), recognize digital manipulation, and critically evaluate arguments. UNESCO (2023) emphasizes that digital literacy constitutes a core competency for twenty-first-century societies because it contributes to rational and responsible decision-making. From the perspective of Islamic education, digital literacy provides an important means of implementing the principle of caution and verification when receiving information while simultaneously preventing the dissemination of religious hoaxes and disinformation. Recent findings also suggest that Generation Z's social and cognitive competencies do not automatically ensure resilience to misinformation, highlighting the need for structured media literacy programs, fact-checking practices, and the systematic development of critical reasoning skills (Mercer & Archivido, 2026; Supriyanto et al., 2025).

The third component is adaptive Islamic educational pedagogy, which refers to a learning process that integrates digital technology with student-centered approaches. Strategies such as problem-based learning, project-based learning, reflective discussions, digital case analysis, and multimedia-based learning provide opportunities for learners to develop critical-thinking skills while internalizing the values of religious moderation. This approach is consistent with the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, which emphasizes the importance of integrating content knowledge, pedagogy, and technology in twenty-first-century learning (Koehler et al., 2014; Schmid et al., 2021). Within a social media landscape increasingly personalized by algorithms, adaptive pedagogy must also address recommendation biases that may intensify users' exposure to extremist narratives (Chang et al., 2025).

The fourth component is the collaborative ecosystem, which refers to the synergy among schools, families, religious organizations, government institutions, and digital platform providers. Strengthening religious moderation cannot be assigned exclusively to educational institutions because Generation Z's digital behavior is shaped across multiple social environments. Multi-stakeholder collaboration is therefore essential for providing credible religious content, expanding digital literacy education, and creating healthier and more inclusive digital spaces. This collaborative approach is also consistent with UNESCO's (2023) recommendation for digital governance based on a multi-stakeholder approach. Furthermore, digital citizenship education needs to incorporate social and emotional competencies so that learners are less susceptible to content that promotes polarization and emotional contagion (Tabatabaei et al., 2024).

The integration of these four components generates religious digital resilience, defined as an individual's capacity to access, critically examine, verify, interpret, and disseminate religious information responsibly in accordance with moderate Islamic values. Digital resilience functions not only as a protective mechanism against exposure to radicalism and disinformation but also as a means of empowering Generation Z to become producers of positive content that contributes to an inclusive, peaceful, and diversity-respecting digital culture. The proposed conceptual model therefore expands the perspective of Islamic education from a predominantly normative orientation toward a transformative approach that comprehensively integrates theological, pedagogical, and digital dimensions (Roozenbeek et al., 2022; Supriyanto et al., 2025).

The conceptual model implies that the effectiveness of strengthening religious moderation in the digital era should not be measured solely by learners' increased understanding of moderate Islamic values. It should also be reflected in their ability to think critically, practice *tabayyun*, reject extremist narratives, and utilize social media as a constructive space for *da'wah*, education, and collaboration. Islamic education can thus function as an agent of transformation that cultivates a generation characterized by religious moderation while simultaneously equipping learners with the digital competencies required to navigate the challenges of the twenty-first-century information society.

Conceptual Implications for the Development of Islamic Education in the Digital Era

The synthesis of the literature indicates that the major challenges facing Islamic education in the digital era are no longer limited to the transmission of religious knowledge. They also involve the capacity to develop learners who are digitally literate, capable of critical thinking, and able to respond wisely to religious, cultural, and social diversity. Strengthening religious moderation should therefore be positioned as an integrated competency within the learning process, rather than merely as supplementary content. This approach is consistent with the twenty-first-century learning paradigm, which emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge, higher-order thinking skills, communication, collaboration, and responsible digital citizenship (OECD, 2021; UNESCO, 2023).

The first implication concerns Islamic education curriculum development. Religious moderation values need to be integrated with digital literacy, media ethics, and the principle of *tabayyun* within learning outcomes. Such integration enables learners not only to understand the concepts of *tawasuth*, *tasamuh*, *i'tidal*, and *tawazun* but also to apply them when receiving, evaluating, and disseminating religious information on social media. Consequently, Islamic education becomes more contextual and relevant to the realities of Generation Z's digital lives.

The second implication concerns the transformation of educators' competencies. Teachers and lecturers can no longer function as the sole sources of knowledge; rather, they need to serve as facilitators who guide learners in developing critical reasoning toward digital information. Strengthening digital pedagogical competence, effectively utilizing educational technologies, and facilitating discussions based on contemporary issues are therefore essential prerequisites for implementing adaptive Islamic education (Koehler et al., 2014; Schmid et al., 2021). This approach also supports the development of learning environments that are dialogical, reflective, and oriented toward problem solving.

The third implication is the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration in building a healthy digital ecosystem. Strengthening religious moderation cannot be undertaken by educational institutions alone but requires synergy among families, religious organizations, government institutions, digital literacy communities, and social media platform providers. Such collaboration is necessary to expand the production and dissemination of credible religious content, strengthen digital literacy education, and improve preventive mechanisms against the spread of radicalism and disinformation. This collaborative approach is consistent with the recommendations of UNESCO (2023) and the World Economic Forum (2024), which emphasize digital governance as a shared responsibility among multiple stakeholders.

Conceptually, this article proposes that the success of religious moderation in the digital era should be assessed not only through learners' understanding of moderate Islamic values but also through the development of religious digital resilience. This concept positions Islamic education as a strategic instrument for cultivating a Generation Z capable of critical thinking, practicing *tabayyun*, rejecting extremist narratives, and utilizing social media as a space for education, dialogue, and the dissemination of peaceful and inclusive Islamic values. The proposed conceptual framework can provide a foundation for future empirical research across different levels of education to examine the relationships among religious moderation, digital literacy, and resilience to digital radicalism and disinformation.

CONCLUSION

Social media has emerged as a new space for shaping Generation Z's religious knowledge, attitudes, and practices. On the one hand, social media provides extensive opportunities for disseminating moderate Islamic values through various forms of digital learning and more adaptive approaches to *da'wah*. On the other hand, algorithmic mechanisms, the overwhelming flow of information, and the increasing accessibility of content production have heightened the risks of

radicalism, intolerance, and religious disinformation. Based on the findings of this conceptual study, these challenges indicate that strengthening religious moderation can no longer rely solely on normative approaches. Rather, it needs to be integrated with the development of digital literacy, critical-thinking skills, and media ethics as essential twenty-first-century competencies within Islamic education.

This article proposes the Religious Digital Resilience Model (RDRM) as a conceptual synthesis integrating four key components: religious moderation values, digital literacy, adaptive Islamic educational pedagogy, and a collaborative ecosystem. The integration of these four components provides a conceptual framework that positions Islamic education as a strategic instrument for cultivating Generation Z's capacity to access, verify, evaluate, and disseminate religious information critically, ethically, and responsibly. This conceptual contribution extends the perspective of religious moderation beyond the reinforcement of normative values toward the development of learners' capacities to navigate the complexities of dynamic digital environments.

The implications of this study highlight the importance of transforming Islamic education curricula by integrating religious moderation, digital literacy, and technology-enhanced learning that is responsive to the characteristics of Generation Z. Furthermore, strengthening educators' competencies and fostering collaboration among educational institutions, families, religious organizations, government institutions, and digital platform providers are essential prerequisites for building a safe and inclusive digital ecosystem oriented toward the promotion of national and humanitarian values. Given the conceptual nature of this study, future research should empirically examine the proposed model using quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods approaches across different levels of education. Such research is needed to provide more comprehensive evidence regarding the effectiveness of Islamic educational strategies in strengthening religious moderation and enhancing Generation Z's resilience to digital radicalism and disinformation.

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