

Digital Learning and Religious Moderation: An Educational Management Perspective

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Abstract: The rapid advancement of digital technologies is transforming educational paradigms worldwide. This article explores the relationship between digital learning and religious moderation from an educational management perspective, focusing on how these technologies can promote inclusivity, mitigate extremist ideologies, and enhance learning experiences. The literature review covered key concepts such as digital learning, educational management, and religious moderation, highlighting the dual-edged nature of digital technology in education. The research adopted a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. The study also found that digital learning has improved educational outcomes and personalised learning experiences, indicating high agreement between students and educators that digital learning has improved educational outcomes and personalised learning experiences. The qualitative analysis explores the themes of digital learning in religious education, focusing on access to diverse perspectives and interfaith understanding. The content analysis of digital religious education materials varies significantly, from promoting tolerance and understanding to emphasising religious distinctiveness. In conclusion, the themes revealed a dynamic yet challenging landscape for digital learning in religious education. The research suggests several recommendations, which include developing inclusive digital learning policies, promoting digital literacy skills, prioritising teacher training, and investing in high-quality digital learning materials that promote religious understanding, tolerance, and respect for diverse perspectives.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancements in digital technology have transformed the educational landscape, creating new avenues for learning, engagement, and dialogue among diverse student populations. As academic institutions integrate digital learning platforms into their curricula, it becomes essential to understand how these changes enhance educational management practices. Promoting inclusivity, tolerance, and critical thinking is crucial, especially in a digital context where students from varied backgrounds interact. Digital learning encompasses various teaching methods that leverage technology, including asynchronous and synchronous learning, gamification, and blended approaches (Davidson-Shivers & Rand, 2022; Sarker et al., 2019; Vetrivel et al., 2024). These modalities allow educators to cater to different learning styles and needs, fostering a more inclusive educational environment. Incorporating diverse perspectives, particularly religious and cultural viewpoints, is vital for fostering religious moderation. The flexibility of digital learning facilitates this integration, enabling discussions that can address misconceptions and promote understanding. The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated the adoption of digital learning worldwide, pushing educational institutions to pivot quickly to online platforms (Guppy et al., 2022; Rof et al., 2022). This unprecedented shift not only demonstrated the resilience of the education sector but also showcased the potential of digital learning to transcend geographical and cultural barriers. As students and educators adapted to remote learning, new

opportunities emerged for meaningful dialogue that can ultimately contribute to fostering religious moderation.

The growth of digital learning in educational settings can be attributed to several key factors. The increased availability of technology, such as smartphones, tablets, and laptops, has made it easier for students to access educational resources anytime and anywhere, democratising learning and allowing individuals from varied backgrounds to participate in educational experiences that may have previously been out of reach. Social media and online communities have created platforms for students to engage in discussions and collaborative projects that transcend traditional classroom boundaries, encouraging dialogue around sensitive topics such as religion (Cantwell & Rashid, 2015; Hayes, 2020). Digital learning enables the incorporation of interactive and engaging content that can help dispel stereotypes and biases, such as virtual reality and immersive simulations. From an educational management perspective, the implications of digital learning are profound, and leaders must be equipped to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by these technologies. Digital learning uses technology to enhance educational experiences through online courses, e-books, interactive software, and digital assessments (Karagöz et al., 2023). This approach has gained significant traction across various educational levels, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, accelerating the transition to remote learning. The global e-learning market is expected to reach \$375 billion by 2026, reflecting robust growth in online education offerings. Digital learning provides unprecedented access to resources, allowing learners from diverse backgrounds to engage meaningfully with content. By breaking geographical barriers and accommodating various learning preferences, digital learning promotes inclusivity and levels the playing field for all students. As educational institutions continue to adopt these methods, the importance of integrating effective digital learning strategies becomes increasingly apparent.

Educational institutions increasingly recognise digital literacy as a critical skill for the 21st century (Murray & Pérez, 2014). In response to the demands of the modern workforce, curricula are evolving to incorporate digital competencies alongside traditional subjects. This integration prepares students for future employment and empowers them to navigate the digital world responsibly. However, challenges persist, particularly regarding the digital divide, which highlights disparities in technology access. These disparities can impact the dissemination of information, enabling extremist views to proliferate in under-resourced communities while limiting access to resources that promote tolerance and understanding. Recently, religious moderation has gained prominence in discussions surrounding social cohesion, peacebuilding, and educational reform. Defined as a balanced approach to faith that promotes tolerance, respect, and understanding among diverse belief systems, religious moderation contrasts with extremism, which can lead to polarisation and societal division (Mala & Hunaida, 2023). In today's interconnected society, the significance of religious moderation is more critical than ever. It is rooted in principles of tolerance and coexistence, encouraging constructive dialogues rather than confrontational debates. By fostering an environment where individuals can express their faith without fear of persecution while respecting the beliefs of others, educational institutions can play a pivotal role in countering extremism and promoting a culture of understanding. Incorporating diverse academic perspectives, such as those from intercultural communication and peace studies scholars, can further enrich this discourse and underscore the vital link between digital literacy and promoting religious moderation.

The rise of religious extremism in various parts of the world highlights the urgent need for religious moderation, which often thrives in environments of ignorance, fear, and misinformation, leading to violence and social fragmentation. In contemporary society, religious moderation is crucial for fostering social cohesion by promoting mutual respect and understanding, bridging divides between religious and cultural groups (Dragolov et al., 2016). Educational institutions can serve as vital platforms for instilling these values in young minds, shaping a more harmonious society. For example, programs such as interfaith dialogue initiatives in schools have successfully brought together students from diverse backgrounds, allowing them to discuss their beliefs and experiences. These initiatives foster empathy and cooperation and serve as frameworks for conflict prevention by encouraging collaboration among different faith communities. Moreover, digital learning environments can equip students with the critical thinking skills to evaluate extremist ideologies. The Critical Thinking in Religious Education model demonstrates that targeted educational strategies can enable students to discern moderate and extremist

viewpoints (Ghosh & Chan, 2018). By fostering a culture of informed decision-making, educational management can significantly counter extremism and promote religious moderation.

Educational management is crucial in developing policies and frameworks prioritising religious moderation within digital learning environments. This involves integrating curricula emphasising critical thinking, empathy, and respect for diverse beliefs (Qadri et al., 2024). Educational institutions can mitigate the risks of extremism and polarisation by fostering an environment where students are encouraged to engage thoughtfully with differing viewpoints. To sustainably integrate these approaches, educational policies should be adaptable, allowing for the continuous evaluation and incorporation of emerging technologies. For instance, platforms like Kahoot! and Nearpod use gamification to create engaging learning experiences that promote understanding of religious diversity and moderation (Muniroh & Zubaidi, 2024). Such tools can enhance students' appreciation of different beliefs by making learning interactive and enjoyable. Furthermore, leveraging artificial intelligence in monitoring discussions can help identify and flag extremist content, enabling educators to intervene before harmful ideas spread. Initiatives like Google's Jigsaw, which focuses on countering hate speech online, demonstrate how technology can be harnessed for moderation. Collaborative projects that connect students from various backgrounds foster intercultural dialogue and learning, and educational managers should actively seek partnerships with organisations that promote interfaith dialogue, such as The Interfaith Youth Core. By leveraging digital platforms and fostering an inclusive academic environment, school leaders can effectively promote religious tolerance and understanding, ensuring that educational practices align with the goals of religious moderation.

This study explores the role of digital learning in promoting religious moderation within educational institutions. It enhances awareness and understanding of diverse spiritual beliefs through various digital learning platforms, including multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, and interactive forums. Such exposure can foster empathy and reduce the prejudices underlying religious extremism. Additionally, the study evaluates the effectiveness of integrating interfaith educational content into digital learning curricula. It also examines the role of educators in promoting religious moderation through these digital platforms. By investigating effective teaching strategies and pedagogical frameworks, such as Constructivist Learning Theory and Intercultural Competence, the study offers actionable insights for educational leaders. The findings will contribute to educational leadership and policy by providing evidence-based recommendations for curricula that emphasise tolerance and understanding. Overall, this research aims to create a foundation for fostering a more inclusive educational environment that addresses the challenges of religious extremism.

Theoretical Framework

The integration of digital learning within educational institutions presents both opportunities and challenges. Two guiding theories—Transformational Leadership and Change Management—are particularly relevant for this process, focusing on organisational behaviour and leadership dynamics in educational settings. Transformational leadership inspires and motivates followers to achieve exceptional outcomes by fostering a culture of innovation and inclusivity (Mogaji & Dimingu, 2024). This approach is essential in the context of digital learning, where leaders encourage educators and students to embrace technology as a means to enhance learning experiences. Transformational leaders create an environment where digital tools are integrated into the curriculum, promoting critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity (Adeoye et al., 2025). This enhances educational outcomes and cultivates an atmosphere conducive to religious moderation. Change Management involves strategies and practices that guide organisations through transitions, ensuring that objectives are met effectively (Rousseau & Ten Have, 2022). In educational contexts, this framework helps address the challenges associated with integrating digital learning and promoting religious moderation. For instance, a transformational leader might implement digital platforms that enable students from diverse backgrounds to engage in discussions about their religious beliefs and practices. This facilitates respectful dialogue, breaks down barriers, and fosters mutual understanding. Groff (2013) demonstrates that such leadership can significantly enhance interfaith dialogue and inclusivity in educational environments. By integrating these theories, educational leaders can effectively navigate the complexities of digital learning and foster a

culture of religious moderation, encouraging individuals to appreciate differences while seeking common ground.

Change Management is another critical theoretical framework relevant to educational management, focusing on how organisations can effectively manage change processes, ensuring smooth transitions and objectives are met (AlManei et al., 2018). Effective Change Management strategies can help address various challenges in digital learning and religious moderation by guiding stakeholders through the transition process (Aldogher et al., 2025). Key components of effective Change Management include clear communication, stakeholder engagement, adequate training and support, and continuous evaluation. Holistic approaches when integrating digital learning tools are essential, as they recognise the interconnectedness between various educational components, including curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and student engagement. Leaders championing digital learning initiatives can create a culture that values religious moderation by modelling inclusive behaviour and promoting empathy through digital interactions (Highton, 2021). They can use digital platforms to host webinars or forums that address religious extremism and promote peace, reaching a wider audience and ensuring messages of tolerance and understanding resonate throughout the school community.

Literature Review

Digital Learning

Digital learning uses technology to educate and learn. Interactive aspects, accessibility, personalisation, collaborative learning, various learning resources, data-driven insights, scalability, technology integration, and lifelong learning are used (Tatineni, 2020). Modern education using online courses, e-learning platforms, and multimedia materials defines digital learning. Teo and Divakar (2021) describe digital learning as using online courses, e-learning platforms, and audiovisual materials to improve learning. Digital learning, according to Tapalova and Zhiyenbayeva (2022), is an ecosystem that blends formal and informal learning to provide personalised routes and is accessible to varied learners. Digital learning transforms education by using technology to offer interactive, collaborative, and accessible learning experiences regardless of location, according to Alenezi (2023). Interactivity, accessibility, personalisation, collaboration, different learning materials, data-driven insights, scalability, technology integration, and lifelong learning define digital learning (Moreira, 2024). Quizzes, forums, and multimedia encourage student involvement. Accessibility lets students use educational materials 24/7, while personalisation lets them customise their learning experiences. Online chats, group projects, and peer-reviewed assignments improve collaboration and social learning. Digital learning uses videos, podcasts, essays, and interactive simulations to accommodate different learning styles. Analytics help instructors enhance curriculum and student assistance. Scalability lets various groups get an excellent education quickly and efficiently. Data analytics-driven adaptive learning systems optimise student learning paths by customising material and assessments (Gligorea et al., 2023). Using collaborative technology and platforms, social learning enhances learning via peer-to-peer engagement, debate, and cooperation. Job markets are also emphasising lifelong learning and professional growth. Online courses, webinars, and MOOCs allow professionals to improve their abilities and careers.

Digital education is quickly growing, incorporating numerous technologies into many areas of education. VR and AR provide immersive learning environments that mirror real-world settings, revolutionising education. This helps medical students practice procedures in VR (Jensen & Konradsen, 2018). Mobile learning, enabled by smartphones and tablets, helps students access educational materials anytime and anywhere via applications and mobile-friendly platforms that fit modern lives. Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams provide digital classroom instructors and students with scalability, storage, and collaboration features. Learning analytics helps instructors identify at-risk kids, adapt instructional tactics, and improve teaching efficacy by analysing student interactions in digital learning environments.

Religious Moderation

Religious moderation fosters tolerance, respect, and discussion across religions and cultures (Syafieh & Anzhaikan, 2023). Promoting peace and harmony in multicultural cultures where religious extremism and intolerance may cause conflict and division is essential. Religious moderation is being

proper to one's religion while acknowledging other faiths and customs. Dialogue and understanding are stressed to promote peaceful coexistence among people of different religions. Globalisation increases cultural and religious contact, which may lead to misunderstandings and conflicts, making religious moderation vital in a varied society. Studies show that religious tolerance and moderation reduce religious conflict (Subchi et al., 2022; Syafieh & Anzhaikan, 2023). This is important in education, where young people become leaders and citizens. Religious moderation in schools may foster cooperation and respect. Teachers shape students' attitudes and views. Hence, moderation must be stressed (Ertmer et al., 2012). Promoting religious moderation in schools is equally tricky. To combat extremism, especially in academia, religious moderation promotes tolerance and inclusion in varied environments. Religious moderation in education and Wasathiyatul Islam's role in social balance and fairness are stressed by Mubin et al. (2023). Education should be balanced, inclusive, and anti-extremist, according to Wasathiyatul Islam. This strategy promotes justice and equality across various student groups by removing extremism from learning. Wasathiyatul Islam prioritises inclusivity to make all pupils feel appreciated and contribute to a happy community. Wasathiyatul Islam fights extremism and promotes a moderate Islam. Students learn critical thinking and varied viewpoints using this strategy. Curriculum should promote tolerance and understanding rather than division and strife; hence, Wasathiyatul Islam must be included. Moderate teaching methods, like interactive and inclusive ones, promote collaboration. Wasathiyatul Islam moderates student-teacher interactions to foster respect and understanding. Teachers who follow these guidelines may inspire pupils. Wasathiyatul Islam tackles modern issues like extremism and bigotry. By incorporating these concepts throughout teaching, institutions may substantially influence a more moderate and tolerant future.

Multicultural education and tolerance among varied children need religious moderation (Wahid, 2024). Wahid (2024) studies how religious moderation promotes intercultural education and tolerance among pupils. It stresses religious moderation in schools to counteract bigotry and make schools more welcoming to children of different religions. According to the study, Islamic religious education instills tolerance and respect in children, which is essential for peaceful coexistence in a multicultural society. The descriptive-analytical study uses a literature review to understand multicultural education in Indonesia. It stresses the need for parents, students, and schools to work together to provide a welcoming atmosphere for all faiths and cultivate tolerance and outstanding character in pupils. Creating a welcoming academic environment helps children recognise diversity and feel like they belong, which fosters tolerance. According to the report, successful intercultural education encourages tolerance and character development, preparing children for a varied society. Schools should emphasise moderation in their curriculum, teaching, and student relationships to prevent intolerance. Nurmalasari and Fauzi (2024) found that religious moderation in curriculum creation helps educators. It stresses the significance of incorporating moderation into the elementary and higher education curriculum to combat prejudice and extremism. The survey also found that primary schools should emphasise religious instruction and create healthy attitudes and mutual respect. Teachers should demonstrate moderation regularly to benefit young learners. Senior high school curriculum should internalise moderation ideals via local cultural ways or knowledge. In higher education, especially religious studies, the curriculum should adapt to a generation hungry for knowledge and subtlety. The study reviewed literature on moderation values and stressed the necessity of evidence-based curriculum building using library research. The research concludes that successful curriculum development procedures should be personalised to each school level, emphasising instructors and local cultural circumstances.

Shofiyuddin et al. (2023) propose that moderate character attributes might increase college students' social harmony and reduce campus disputes. Shofiyuddin et al. (2023) thoroughly evaluate college student religious moderation studies. It emphasises how moderate character characteristics may help students develop compassion and optimistic thinking, which can improve the campus atmosphere and relationships. The study also shows that religious moderation may dramatically decrease campus social disputes, making campus life more amicable for diverse students. The research emphasises religious moderation's impact on pupils' character. Today's globalised world requires them to learn social skills to manage diversity. The results imply that higher education institutions should provide workshops, seminars, and events that promote religious tolerance and conversation among students of various

religions. The report notes that religious moderation promotes intercultural communication. Institutions may improve mutual respect and learning by encouraging students to discuss their opinions. Finally, this research examines student religious moderation and its role in character development, societal peace, and intercultural discourse.

The Intersection of Digital Learning and Religious Moderation

The intersection of digital learning and religious moderation highlights the potential of digital platforms to foster tolerance and understanding among diverse religious communities. Research indicates that these platforms can facilitate interfaith dialogue, promote educational initiatives, and counteract radical ideologies.

Ostrowski (2006) highlights the growing importance of interreligious dialogue due to global religious unrest and the integration of interfaith discussions into religious organisations' programming. Online platforms for interfaith dialogue can connect isolated individuals, allowing for broader participation beyond local communities. The anonymity of online interactions encourages open and honest conversations about sensitive topics related to faith. The internet provides access to a broad spectrum of individuals practising different religions, enriching the dialogue with varied perspectives. Participants can take their time responding to questions and reflecting on previous discussions, leading to deeper understanding and engagement. Religious institutions can benefit from using online platforms for interfaith dialogue by reaching out to their members and the larger population, sharing their beliefs, and contributing to a global effort to improve tolerance and understanding among religious practitioners. Integrating online interfaith dialogue into religious organisations enhances participation and fosters a more inclusive environment for discussing faith and differences, ultimately contributing to a more tolerant society.

Damanik et al. (2022) emphasise the importance of educational institutions as "laboratories of religious moderation," promoting balanced understanding and countering radicalism. They define religious moderation as a moderate understanding and practice of worship, emphasising Islam as a religion of compassion. Educational institutions play a crucial role in fostering religious moderation by instilling Qur'an-based values in students. To combat radical thoughts, Damanik advocates for strong educational policies that promote religious moderation, including training teachers to deliver moderate religious teachings and aligning extracurricular activities with tolerance and understanding values. The authors conclude that fostering religious moderation through education is essential for individual development and the stability of a pluralistic society. By embedding Qur'an-based values in the educational framework, schools can mitigate the risks of radicalism and promote a culture of peace and tolerance. Mahsusi et al. (2023) explore the issue of religious intolerance in Indonesia, focusing on the impact of offline learning activities. They argue that students returning to campus often lack understanding of religious tolerance, leading to increased intolerance. The research aims to implement religious moderation values through compulsory Indonesian language courses, fostering tolerance in a multicultural society. The study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, using direct-action research and the discovery learning model. The research found that students could identify and analyse values of religious moderation in the film "Tanda Tanya," with 78 students successfully analysing the film's meaning and 14 grasping the concept through the discovery learning model. The authors argue that religious moderation should be integrated into educators' learning materials and address the challenges of extremism and intolerance in educational institutions. Implementing religious moderation should be a continuous effort embedded in the academic framework to prepare students for real-life situations involving religious diversity.

Anwar's (2023) study explores religious intolerance in Indonesia, focusing on the impact of offline learning activities. The research suggests that students returning to campus often lack understanding of religious tolerance, leading to increased intolerance. The study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, involving 105 respondents from various academic backgrounds at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. The research found that students could identify and analyse religious moderation values in the film "Tanda Tanya," with 78 students successfully analysing the film's meaning and 14 grasping the concept through the discovery learning model. The study also highlights the historical context of religious conflict in Indonesia, particularly post-1998, and the importance of instilling tolerance from an early age. The author argues that religious moderation should be integrated into educators' learning materials. The paper also

addresses the challenges posed by extremism and intolerance in educational institutions, suggesting that these issues must be addressed through proactive educational strategies. The author proposes that implementing religious moderation should be a continuous effort embedded in the educational framework to prepare students for real-life situations involving religious diversity. The findings highlight the potential of educational interventions in promoting tolerance and understanding in a diverse society, contributing significantly to the discourse on religious moderation in Indonesia.

Case studies highlighting successful implementations

Digital learning and religious moderation offer unique opportunities for understanding and tolerance among diverse religious communities, as demonstrated by the successful implementation of digital platforms promoting moderate religious values. Lundby's (2006) study highlights the integration of digital technology in religious education in Norway, transforming traditional practices and enhancing youth engagement. The Church of Norway's faith-based education reform has successfully promoted moderate religious values through digital platforms, creating an engaging and relevant experience for children and youth. Digital platforms allow for a more interactive and participatory approach to learning about faith, recognising children and youth as active participants. The faith-based training program is designed to be culturally relevant, making the learning process more meaningful. The study also points out potential conflicts between adults teaching religious traditions and youth adept at digital communication, highlighting the need for addressing these conflicts to foster a more harmonious learning environment. The Norwegian government's funding for these digital education programs emphasises the importance of state support in successfully implementing such initiatives. The case study demonstrates that successful implementations of digital platforms to promote moderate religious values can be achieved through active youth participation, culturally relevant content, and effective mediation processes, all supported by government initiatives.

Royan's (2022) research emphasises the importance of digital platforms in promoting religious moderation in Muslim communities. It highlights the need to counter radical narratives and promote a balanced understanding of Islamic values, fostering a more inclusive religious identity. The study emphasises the need to address identity politics, which can erode religious authority and individualism. Successful implementation involves initiatives that promote pluralism and inclusivity, strengthening community ties and reducing tribalism. Educational programs focusing on the concept of Ummatan Wasathan can play a crucial role in revitalising religious moderation. These programs help individuals understand the importance of moderation in Islam and how it can be applied in their daily lives, especially in digital interactions. Community engagement, including workshops, seminars, and online forums, fosters a sense of belonging and collective responsibility towards maintaining a moderate religious identity. Sabri et al. (2022) emphasise the significance of Indonesian educational institutions in promoting religious moderation through tolerance and respect. They highlight the effectiveness of group discussions and collaborative learning programs in fostering positive social attitudes. The case study at MAS Al Huda, Pangkalan Susu, demonstrates the effectiveness of various educational strategies in implementing religious moderation and tolerance attitudes. Key strategies include comprehensive planning, diverse learning methods, natural setting observations, involvement of key figures, character development, discussion techniques, and monitoring and evaluation. At the same time, teachers use various methods to engage students and encourage respect for differing opinions. Natural setting observations provide real-time assessments of religious moderation practices, while key figures serve as role models, reinforcing values of moderation and tolerance. Discussion techniques encourage moderate responses to challenges, critical thinking, and balanced perspectives. Monitoring and evaluation are crucial for refining approaches to meet educational goals.

This research examines the relationship between digital learning and religious moderation in educational settings. It analyses the role of digital learning in promoting religious moderation, evaluates its impact on students' attitudes towards religious diversity, explores the challenges and opportunities of implementing digital learning for religious moderation, and assesses the role of educational management in facilitating digital learning initiatives. The research explores digital learning platforms, such as online courses, webinars, and interactive platforms, to create an environment conducive to religious tolerance, diversity, and understanding. It also evaluates the impact of digital learning on students' perceptions and

attitudes towards different religious beliefs through surveys and interviews. The research also assesses the role of educational management in facilitating digital learning initiatives, examining best practices to provide actionable recommendations for leaders. Digital platforms in educational institutions are transforming religious beliefs and practices, necessitating a focus on promoting religious moderation and fostering dialogue among students of different faiths. Addressing extremism and polarisation is crucial, as the rise of extremist ideologies threatens social cohesion. Digital platforms can teach religious moderation effectively, improving student engagement and learning outcomes. Policy implications include supporting digital literacy in religious education, creating guidelines for responsible use of digital resources, and developing robust strategies to mitigate risks while maximising digital learning benefits.

METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods research design to explore the impact of digital learning on religious moderation among students, particularly from an educational management perspective. The design of this study is presented in the flowchart in Figure 1. This approach was chosen to capture the breadth of general perceptions through quantitative data and the depth of individual experiences and insights through qualitative data. By integrating both methods, the study aimed to comprehensively understand how digital learning influences religious attitudes and practices in diverse educational settings. Stratified and purposive sampling techniques were used to ensure participant diversity across institution types, educational levels, and geographic regions. Stratified sampling allowed for representation based on specific characteristics, including public and private university affiliation, religious orientation, and location. Within these strata, purposive sampling was used to select individuals most relevant to the study's focus—educators involved in religious studies and students enrolled in such courses. In total, 60 participants were involved in the study: 40 students and 10 educators participated in the quantitative survey, while 10 additional educators and 20 students were included in qualitative data collection activities. Participants were recruited from various higher education institutions across Kwara State, Nigeria. All participants provided informed consent, and ethical considerations—including confidentiality and voluntary participation—were observed throughout the study. The respondents demographics are presented in Table 1.

The quantitative data were collected using a structured survey instrument. The questionnaire included both closed-ended and Likert-scale items designed to capture: Demographic information (e.g., age, gender, institution type), Access to and usage of digital learning platforms, Perceptions of digital learning's effectiveness, Views on religious tolerance and moderation, and Perceived impact of digital learning on learning outcomes and personalisation. For description of every indicator shown in Table 2. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores and standard deviations, to identify trends and patterns in participant responses. These analyses focused on accessibility, engagement, religious understanding, and critical thinking.

The qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and content analysis. Interviews were conducted with 10 educators and 20 students. These sessions explored participants' experiences with digital learning tools, challenges encountered, and perspectives on how these tools influenced religious education and interfaith engagement. Focus groups were formally organised, involving 3 separate sessions with student participants. Each session lasted approximately 60–75 minutes and focused on group dialogue about navigating digital religious content, interfaith discourse, and community responses to digital learning. Content analysis was conducted on digital educational materials currently used in religious studies courses, including online modules, video lectures, and discussion forums. These materials were assessed for their alignment with principles of religious moderation, including inclusivity, bias, and representation of diverse perspectives. Qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis, allowing key themes to emerge regarding access, content credibility, digital literacy, and the emotional or cognitive effects of exposure to diverse religious viewpoints. The findings from the quantitative and qualitative components were triangulated to enhance the study's validity and to highlight consistencies or discrepancies across data sources. This integration enriched the interpretation of how digital learning tools affect student engagement, critical thinking, and openness to

religious diversity.

Research Questions

1. How do students and teachers perceive the impact of digital learning platforms and resources on accessibility and effectiveness in their academic progress and engagement experiences?
2. How do students and teachers view the effects of digital learning on enhancing comprehension of religious and cultural beliefs and fostering acceptance and diversity within educational settings?
3. To what extent do educators and students agree that digital learning has improved learning outcomes and personalised educational experiences?

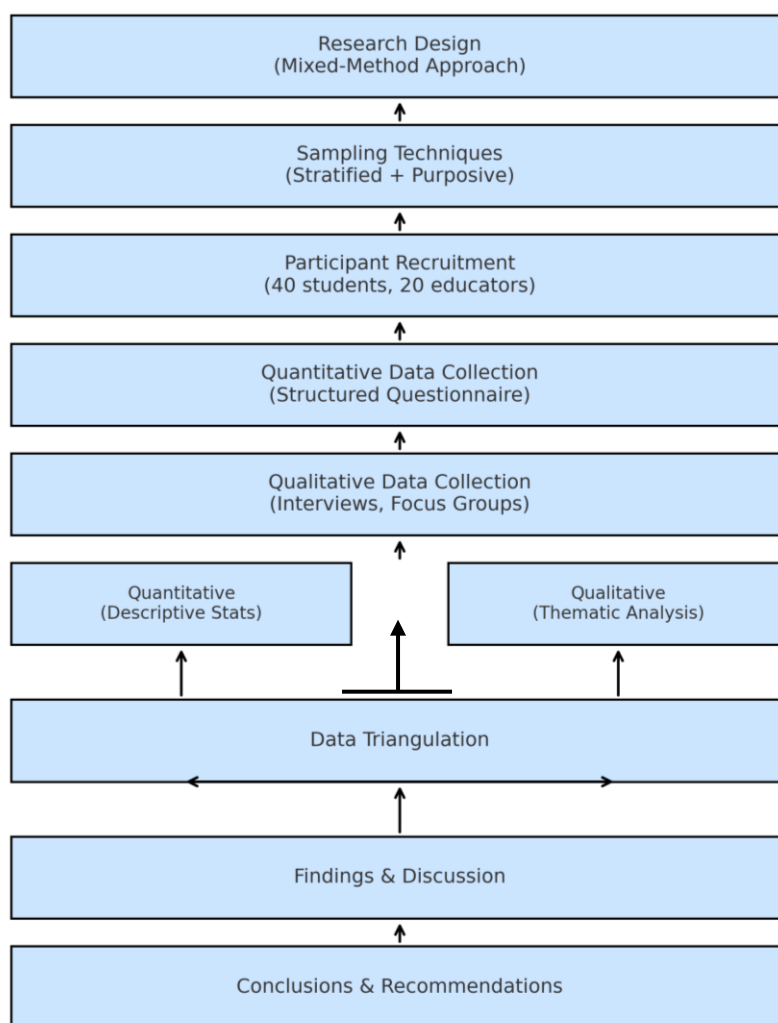


Figure 1. Research Process Flowchart

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Category	Description
Total Participants	60
Students	40 (Quantitative), 20 (Qualitative)
Educators	10 (Quantitative), 10 (Qualitative)
Gender (All Respondents)	Male: 32, Female: 28
Age Range (Years)	18–60
Institution Type	Public: 36, Private: 24
Geographic Distribution	Urban: 40, Rural: 20
Religious Studies Involvement	100% of respondents were involved

Table 2. Instrument Indicators

Instrument Section	Indicator Description
Demographics	Age, Gender, Institution Type, Location
Digital Learning Access	Availability of devices, internet usage, frequency of platform use
Engagement and Effectiveness	Participation in online activities, usefulness of assessments
Religious Moderation Perception	Attitudes towards tolerance, interfaith dialogue, and respect
Personalisation and Outcomes	Motivation, critical thinking, and learning customisation

RESULT

The study involved 60 students and 20 educators from Kwara State. It used quantitative survey (40 students and 10 educators) and qualitative data (20 students and 10 educators) collection methods to explore their experiences with digital learning tools, challenges, and thoughts on their impact on religious education.

Research Question One: How do students and teachers perceive the impact of digital learning platforms and resources on accessibility and effectiveness in their academic progress and engagement experiences?

Table 3 .The perceptions of students and educators regarding the accessibility, effectiveness, and impact of digital learning platforms and resources on the educational experience.

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD
1	I have access to online learning materials for my studies.	3.42	0.67
2	I use online platforms (e.g., virtual classrooms) for my learning.	3.28	0.67
3	I regularly participate in online discussions or forums related to my studies.	3.24	0.62
4	I find online assessments to be a helpful part of my learning process.	3.28	0.54
5	Digital learning has made it easier for me to find information and resources.	3.10	0.46
6	I have access to technology (e.g., computers, internet) that enables me to engage in digital learning.	3.06	0.47
Average Mean		3.23	

Table 3 above reveals the mean and standard deviation showing perceptions of both students and educators regarding the accessibility, effectiveness, and impact of digital learning platforms and resources on the educational experience. The respondents agreed that they access online learning materials for my studies (3.42), use online platforms (e.g., virtual classrooms) for my learning (3.28), regularly participate in online discussions or forums related to my studies (3.24), find online assessments to be a helpful part of my learning process (3.28), Digital learning has made it easier for me to find information and resources. (3.10) and access to technology (e.g., computers, internet) that enables me to engage in digital learning (3.06). The average mean of 3.28 is greater than the weighted mean of 2.50, which implies that the perceptions of both students and educators regarding the accessibility, effectiveness, and impact of digital learning platforms and resources on the educational experience were positive.

Research Question Two: How do students and teachers view the effects of digital learning on enhancing comprehension of religious and cultural beliefs and fostering acceptance and diversity within educational settings?

Table 4. Students and educators believe digital learning contributes to understanding diverse religious beliefs and fosters tolerance and inclusivity within educational settings.

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD
1	I believe that it is important to understand and respect different religious beliefs.	3.10	0.58
2	I feel comfortable engaging in conversations with people of different religious backgrounds.	2.32	0.59
3	I believe that digital learning has helped me learn more about different religions.	2.22	0.62
4	Digital learning has broadened my perspective on religious issues.	3.10	0.61
5	Digital learning can contribute to a more tolerant and inclusive society.	3.10	0.65
Average Mean		2.77	

Table 4 above reveals the mean and standard deviation showing ways both students and educators believe digital learning contributes to understanding diverse religious beliefs and fosters tolerance and inclusivity within educational settings. The respondents agreed that the following items are the ways I believe it is important to understand and respect different religious beliefs (3.10), and digital learning has broadened my perspective on religious issues (3.10). Digital learning can contribute to a more tolerant and inclusive society (3.10). The respondents disagree that they do not feel comfortable conversing with people of different religious backgrounds (2.32) and do not believe that digital learning has helped them learn more about different religions.

Research Question Three: To what extent do educators and students agree that digital learning has improved learning outcomes and personalised educational experiences?

Table 5. The extent to which educators and students agree that digital learning has improved educational outcomes and personalised learning experiences

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD
1	Digital learning has improved my understanding of the subject matter.	3.18	0.63
2	Digital learning has increased my engagement in learning.	3.20	0.61
3	Digital learning has motivated me to learn more effectively.	3.22	0.58
4	Digital learning has helped me develop my critical thinking skills.	3.14	0.50
5	Digital learning has provided me with more personalised learning experiences.	3.14	0.61
Average Mean		3.18	

Table 5 revealed the mean and standard deviation, showing the extent to which students and educators agree that digital learning has improved educational outcomes and personalised learning experiences. The respondents agreed that digital learning had improved my understanding of subject matter (3.18), Digital learning has increased my engagement in learning (3.20), digital learning has motivated me to learn more effectively (3.22), digital learning has helped me to develop my critical thinking skills (3.14), and digital learning has provided me with more personalised learning experiences (3.14). The average mean of 3.18 is greater than the weighted mean of 2.50, which implies that the extent to which students and educators agree that digital learning has improved educational outcomes and personalised learning experiences was high.

Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis involves interpreting the themes by exploring key insights and synthesising perspectives from both educators and students.

Theme 1: Access to Diverse Perspectives and Interfaith Understanding

Educators' Perspectives

Most educators acknowledged that digital tools expanded access to diverse religious perspectives. Online resources, videos, and interactive platforms allowed students to explore different faiths, which sparked discussions around religious diversity and promoted interfaith understanding. This aligns with

the idea that technology can democratise access to information, enabling students to experience a broader worldview than traditional textbooks. However, educators also expressed concern about the risk of misinformation. This highlights the importance of fostering critical thinking and media literacy skills, as students must learn to discern credible sources from biased or inaccurate content.

Students' Perspectives

Students reported a similar experience with digital tools, describing how exposure to diverse religious materials challenged their beliefs and encouraged reflection on their faith. This created a sense of openness and curiosity about other religions. However, students also shared concerns about the bias or inaccuracy of online content, echoing educators' worries. This suggests better resource curation and education on critically assessing religious materials.

Interpretation

The theme shows that while digital learning enhances exposure to diverse religious views, it also necessitates equipping students with critical thinking skills to evaluate content. Both educators and students recognise the transformative potential of digital tools in fostering interfaith understanding, but are wary of the risks associated with unchecked online content.

Theme 2: Challenges and Opportunities of Digital Learning in Religious Education

Educators' Perspectives

Many educators cited access to technology and reliable internet, especially in rural areas, as significant barriers to implementing digital learning in religious education. Another common challenge was finding appropriate digital resources, particularly for interfaith dialogue. This emphasises the need for better resources and professional development to help educators integrate digital tools. Teacher training in digital pedagogy could empower educators to navigate these challenges more effectively.

Students' Perspectives

Like educators, students in rural areas experienced difficulties accessing technology, and many reported struggling to find appropriate online materials. There was also a desire for more interactive and engaging digital learning experiences in religious studies. This indicates a gap between available resources and student expectations for engaging content, underscoring the potential for innovation in digital religious education materials design.

Interpretation

The theme underscores both the potential and limitations of digital learning in religious education. It points to the digital divide affecting educators and students, especially in rural areas. There is a clear need for improved access, teacher training, and interactive digital content that deeply engages students in religious education.

Theme 3: Impact on Religious Beliefs and Practices

Educators' Perspectives

Educators observed mixed effects on students' religious beliefs. While some believed that digital learning encouraged more critical thinking and independent exploration of faith, others noted that students struggled with reconciling their beliefs with the new information encountered online. This reflects the complex interaction between digital learning and deeply personal aspects like faith, where exposure to diverse ideas can provoke reflection and confusion.

Students' Perspectives

The students' experiences also varied, with some reporting a deepening of their faith through exploring online resources, while others found it challenging to integrate their beliefs with contradictory information. Exposure to diverse religious practices helped some students identify common values across faiths, facilitating interfaith empathy. However, navigating faith in the digital space also caused internal conflict for others.

Interpretation

The digital space provides a platform for personal spiritual growth and tension as students explore religious content. While some find more profound meaning and shared values across faiths, others grapple with reconciling new information with their pre-existing beliefs. This suggests that digital religious education needs to include support mechanisms to help students process this complex information.

Theme 4: Content Analysis of Digital Resources

Content Analysis

The analysis revealed that digital religious education materials adopted varying approaches, from promoting tolerance and understanding to emphasising religious distinctiveness. This range is significant because, depending on how religious content is framed, it can foster inclusivity or reinforce divisions. Educators must carefully select materials to avoid inadvertently perpetuating stereotypes or biases.

Potential Implications

The concern over potential biases within digital resources points to a more significant issue of how religious content is curated and presented. If specific resources emphasise division rather than shared values, they might unintentionally reinforce stereotypes, hindering interfaith understanding. These resources are critically evaluated to ensure they contribute positively to students' understanding of religious diversity.

Interpretation

Content analysis indicates that digital religious education materials vary significantly in their approach. This variation can have profound implications for students' learning experiences. Promoting moderation and inclusivity in resource design is essential to prevent reinforcing biases and fostering a more holistic understanding of different faiths.

Overall Analysis

The themes reveal a dynamic yet challenging landscape for digital learning in religious education. While digital tools provide unprecedented access to diverse perspectives and foster interfaith understanding, they also present challenges related to misinformation, the digital divide, and resource quality. Critical thinking, media literacy, and thoughtful content curation are strongly needed to ensure that digital religious education fosters inclusivity and reflection rather than division or confusion.

DISCUSSION

This study examined how digital learning impacts religious moderation in educational contexts. The findings from Tables 1–3 and the qualitative analysis reveal opportunities and challenges. Together, they provide a comprehensive picture of the potential for digital platforms to support religious understanding and the limitations that must be addressed through effective educational management. The analysis in Table 1 revealed a generally positive perception among students and educators regarding the accessibility and usefulness of digital learning tools. Respondents agreed that they had access to online learning materials, participated in virtual classrooms, and found online assessments beneficial to their learning. These findings are consistent with Yu et al. (2022), who reported that digital tools enhance student engagement, particularly for those facing geographical or physical barriers. However, some challenges remain. While students valued the flexibility of accessing resources, concerns were raised about feelings of isolation and limited engagement in online settings. This supports Kostaki and Karayianni's (2022) observation that digital platforms, although convenient, may reduce interpersonal interaction. Similarly, the importance of discussion forums aligns with Vygotsky's social constructivist theory (Topçiu & Myftiu, 2015), which emphasises learning through social interaction. Still, not all students feel comfortable contributing to online forums (Li et al., 2023), which may impact their participation and learning outcomes. Online assessments were positively viewed for providing immediate feedback, echoing the findings of Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006). However, concerns about integrity and content validity suggest the need for careful design and monitoring. Lastly, while digital tools improve access to information (Tahir et al., 2022), information overload and misinformation are significant risks, particularly in religious education contexts, where accuracy and sensitivity are crucial.

Findings from Table 2 showed mixed perceptions about digital learning's role in promoting tolerance and inclusivity. While most respondents believed in the importance of understanding different religious beliefs, fewer felt that digital tools directly improved their knowledge of other faiths or their comfort in interfaith discussions. These results align with Campbell (2021) and Wang (2024), who suggest digital media can broaden perspectives and challenge stereotypes. However, the hesitation to engage in interfaith dialogue suggests deeper barriers—possibly cultural discomfort, lack of facilitation or limited exposure to diverse content. Rockenbach and Townsend (2013) found that religious discussions often

require intentional support and safe learning environments, which are not always present in digital formats. The lack of perceived improvement in understanding other religions indicates a gap between access and effectiveness. Sigalov et al. (2023) argue that digital tools alone may not facilitate meaningful engagement with religious diversity without curated content and guided interaction.

Table 3 highlights a strong consensus that digital learning improves academic outcomes and supports personalised experiences. Respondents agreed that digital tools enhanced their understanding, increased motivation, and improved critical thinking. These findings are reinforced by Johnson et al. (2023) and Zhang and Hwang (2023), who emphasised the role of interactive technologies in boosting engagement and cognitive skills. However, the effectiveness of personalised learning varied. Some students appreciated the flexibility to learn at their own pace, but others felt their unique needs were not fully met. This echoes Smith et al. (2021), who found that digital formats often lack sufficient adaptation to diverse learning styles. The success of personalisation thus hinges on the thoughtful integration of adaptive learning systems into pedagogical practice (Yang et al., 2023).

The qualitative findings deepen our understanding of the statistical results and reveal critical nuances in how digital learning interacts with religious education. Educators observed that digital tools enabled exposure to diverse perspectives and interfaith content. This encouraged critical thinking and empathy, reinforcing the benefits noted in Mistur et al. (2022) and Moldavan et al. (2022). However, both students and teachers expressed concerns about bias, misinformation, and the emotional difficulty of encountering conflicting beliefs—issues previously highlighted by Balaman (2020) and Holtmann et al. (2022). Students' reactions ranged from increased openness and deeper faith to confusion and inner conflict. This spectrum underscores the dual-edged nature of digital exposure: it can foster empathy and dissonance, depending on students' readiness and support structures. These insights align with Smith (2023), who advocates for supportive frameworks in digital religious education. The content analysis revealed that digital materials vary widely, from inclusive and tolerant to exclusive and divisive. This confirms earlier findings by Carter and Caton (2022) and Shaheen et al. (2021), who noted that digital content framing significantly influences student perceptions. Therefore, resource curation is not just a pedagogical task but a moral imperative to ensure that digital education promotes shared values rather than deepening divides.

There is a strong alignment between the quantitative data and the qualitative themes. For instance, the reported improvements in critical thinking (Table 3) are echoed in the qualitative reflections on faith and interfaith engagement. Similarly, discomfort with interfaith dialogue (Table 2) is reflected in students' qualitative concerns about bias and emotional conflict. These overlaps validate the strength of the mixed-methods design and underscore the need for holistic educational strategies beyond mere technological access. The research proposes actionable recommendations for educators, policymakers, and educational managers to address challenges in religious education. These include digital literacy training, promoting inclusive digital religious education resources, creating moderated forums for interfaith dialogue, providing ongoing teacher professional development in digital pedagogy, bridging the digital divide, and introducing integrated support frameworks. These recommendations aim to equip students with critical evaluation skills, promote diverse perspectives, and ensure respectful engagement in interfaith dialogue. They also suggest partnering with technology providers to expand access to devices and internet connectivity, particularly in rural or underserved areas.

CONCLUSION

This research examined the impact of digital learning on religious moderation among students through the lens of educational management. The findings reveal that digital learning holds significant potential to promote religious moderation by enhancing access to diverse perspectives, encouraging critical thinking, and improving learning outcomes. Both quantitative and qualitative data demonstrate that when thoughtfully implemented, digital tools can broaden students' understanding of different religious beliefs, foster interfaith dialogue, and support the development of inclusive values. However, challenges such as unequal access to technology, inconsistent content quality, and limited teacher

training persist. These barriers can hinder the effective use of digital platforms for promoting religious tolerance and must be addressed to realise the full potential of digital education.

The practical implications of this research are far-reaching for educators, policymakers, and educational managers. To effectively harness digital learning for fostering religious moderation, institutions must prioritise equitable access to technology and the internet, especially in underserved areas. Policymakers should support infrastructure development and device provision to bridge the digital divide. Teachers must be equipped through continuous professional development to use digital tools critically and sensitively in religious education. Education systems should invest in curating and developing high-quality digital content that reflects values of inclusivity and respect. Partnerships with religious leaders and organisations can further support responsible and culturally contextualised use of digital media. Moreover, fostering digital literacy among students is essential to help them discern accurate information and engage respectfully with differing beliefs. This research makes a unique contribution to the literature by situating digital learning within the framework of educational management to explore religious moderation. This area has received limited empirical attention. By combining quantitative analysis with qualitative insights, this research advances understanding of how digital tools can support and challenge religious education. It offers comprehensive recommendations that integrate infrastructure, pedagogy, and policy considerations.

Future research should build on these findings by conducting longitudinal studies that explore how digital religious education shapes students' beliefs and behaviours over time. Specific questions could include: How does sustained engagement with interfaith digital content influence tolerance levels? What kinds of digital interventions most effectively reduce prejudices or extremist attitudes? Experimental designs evaluating different digital curricula could offer evidence-based strategies for intervention. Furthermore, research should explore how various demographic factors—such as age, religious affiliation, or geographic location—influence students' receptiveness to religious moderation in digital contexts. By addressing the identified challenges and expanding the evidence base, stakeholders can develop more effective educational practices that promote understanding, empathy, and coexistence in a pluralistic society. Integrating digital learning and religious moderation through thoughtful educational management can help build a generation equipped to navigate religious diversity and contribute to a more harmonious world.

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