

The Development of Inclusive Islamic Thought in the Muhammadiyah Tradition, An Analysis of the Concepts of Tajdid and Religious Moderation

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the development of inclusive Islamic thought within the Muhammadiyah tradition through an examination of the concepts of tajdid and religious moderation, both of which play an essential role in fostering a form of religiosity that is compassionate, humanistic, and responsive to social change. The research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical design, as this approach is suitable for exploring meanings, experiences, and interpretations of key figures related to the dynamics of Islamic thought that cannot be explained through quantitative methods. The research was conducted in Yogyakarta, a central intellectual hub and historical locus of Muhammadiyah's development. Four informants were selected purposively due to their extensive knowledge, organizational experience, and direct involvement in advancing the ideas of tajdid and religious moderation. The findings reveal that Muhammadiyah has successfully integrated universal human values into the practice of religious moderation, although gaps remain between the normative concept and its implementation at the community level. The study recommends strengthening value-based education, developing more inclusive da'wah strategies, and improving moderation literacy among younger generations to ensure that progressive Islamic thought can be implemented more optimally in social life.



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INTRODUCTION

The development of contemporary Islamic thought demonstrates increasingly complex dynamics in responding to global social, cultural, and political transformations. Within the Indonesian context, Muhammadiyah stands as one of the modern Islamic movements consistently combining adherence to the purity of religious teachings with openness toward civilizational progress (Zakaria, 2025). Muhammadiyah's intellectual tradition is grounded in the concept of tajdid, which encompasses both purification and renewal. At the same time, the organization has cultivated an inclusive and moderate Islamic discourse capable of addressing the challenges posed by Indonesia's pluralistic society (Riani & Putri, 2025). This development not only affirms Muhammadiyah's role as a socio-religious movement but also positions it as a platform for articulating progressive ideas that place human values at the ethical foundation of religious life (Nur, 2023).

In recent decades, the discourse on religious moderation has gained prominence in global Islamic studies. The rise of religious extremism, identity polarization, and widespread intolerance has highlighted the need to reaffirm inclusive values within Islamic understanding (Istighosah, 2025). Muhammadiyah offers a significant contribution through its interpretation of moderation, which does not merely emphasize balanced attitudes but also integrates principles of social justice, human dignity, and intergroup dialogue (A. Aziz, 2024). Accordingly, inclusive Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah is not confined to normative discourse; instead, it is actively manifested in its educational programs, da'wah initiatives, and community empowerment efforts (Hilman et al., 2025).

The background of this study originates from the observable gap between the idealized doctrine of religious moderation promoted in formal discourse and the forms of religiosity practiced among community members (Zain et al., 2023). Although Muhammadiyah has long advanced the concept of progressive Islam as a moderative framework, its implementation at the grassroots level continues to face various challenges (Maisyanah et al., 2023). On one hand, some groups still interpret religion exclusively and rigidly, leading to resistance toward the narrative of moderation. On the other hand, the influence of social media and unverified digital information contributes to biases, prejudices, and the reinforcement of narrow religious identities (Aprianur et al., 2025). The discrepancy between the ideal of Islamic inclusivity and the socio-religious reality creates an urgent need for deeper scholarly examination (Kosim et al., 2024).

The central problem in this research concerns how the concepts of *tajdid* and religious moderation within the Muhammadiyah tradition can be reinterpreted to bridge the gap between religious texts and societal context (Wardi et al., 2023). While *tajdid* is fundamentally a renewal movement, it is often perceived only as a purification effort, overshadowing its progressive dimension. In Muhammadiyah's intellectual perspective, *tajdid* involves a creative reading of contemporary challenges without neglecting Islam's foundational principles (Maisyanah et al., 2023). The research gap becomes evident in the scarcity of studies connecting *tajdid* with models of religious moderation grounded in universal human values, even though such an approach may enhance public acceptance of inclusive religious practices (Gharaibeh, 2024).

The state of the art of previous research indicates that most studies on Muhammadiyah's thought focus on theological reconstruction and legal methodologies, yet rarely address their relevance to formulating contextual moderation models (Ashraf, 2023). Other studies examine religious moderation institutionally but fail to comprehensively relate it to the evolving social dynamics shaping religious interpretation (Nisa, 2025). Moreover, research on inclusive Islam remains fragmented and lacks a conceptual mapping that integrates universal human values with Muhammadiyah's intellectual heritage (Najah & Wahyuni, 2024). This condition highlights the necessity for a more integrative analysis combining both normative and practical dimensions (Suaidi et al., 2025).

The novelty of this study lies in its formulation of a model of Islamic moderation grounded in universal human values and linked to the Muhammadiyah concept of *tajdid*. This approach offers a new perspective by emphasizing that moderation is not merely finding a middle ground but is rooted in the ethical imperative to uphold human dignity (Miftah & Erzad, 2024). Through an integration of primary Muhammadiyah sources and insights from key figures obtained via literature review and in-depth interviews, this study presents a more comprehensive understanding of inclusive Islam in the Indonesian context (Zulkarnain et al., 2025).

Based on this background, several key questions are formulated: how the concept of *tajdid* is understood and developed within Muhammadiyah's intellectual tradition; how values of religious moderation are applied in relation to societal contexts; and how a moderation model based on universal human values can be constructed through the Muhammadiyah framework (Rofiah & Jasminto, 2023). These questions aim to identify the organization's contribution to fostering a more inclusive and compassionate religious ecosystem (Haq et al., 2023).

The purpose of this research is to analyze the development of inclusive Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah through a detailed examination of *tajdid* and religious moderation, and to formulate a model of moderation centered on universal human values (Firmansah, 2025). Moreover, this study aims to reveal the relevance of these concepts in addressing contemporary social issues such as intolerance, polarization, and declining solidarity in religious life (Zuhri et al., 2023).

The theoretical significance of this study is to enrich modern Islamic thought, particularly on the dynamics of renewal and religious moderation. Academically, it contributes to the development of Islamic studies in higher education through the integration of textual and contextual approaches (King, 2024). Practically, the findings can serve as a reference for designing *da'wah* programs, educational modules, and social advocacy initiatives promoting inclusivity and respect for diversity (Anggraeni et al., 2023).

This study acknowledges several limitations, including data availability and reliance on narratives from Muhammadiyah figures (Sagap et al., 2023). As a qualitative study, its findings are contextual and not intended for broad generalization. Nonetheless, the research offers an important foundation for future studies (Setiawan & Maryam, 2024).

Future research may explore comparative perspectives with other Islamic organizations or employ quantitative approaches to measure societal acceptance of inclusive Islam (Ainiyah et al., 2025). Thus, this study not only enriches academic discourse but also opens pathways for strengthening the practice of religious moderation at the societal level (Rahman, 2023).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of the development of inclusive Islamic thought within the Muhammadiyah tradition cannot be separated from the theoretical foundations that serve as key references in understanding the concepts of *tajdid* and religious moderation (Muttaqin et al., 2023). This research employs three primary theories, each originating from distinct intellectual perspectives yet complementing one another in explaining the dynamics of Islamic renewal (Santoso et al., 2024). These theories include the Modern *Tajdid* Theory of Muhammadiyah popularized by Ahmad Dahlan in the early twentieth century in Yogyakarta, Indonesia; the Theory of Religious Moderation developed extensively by Mohammad Hashim Kamali in the 1990s at the International Islamic University Malaysia; and the Theory of Universal Humanism popularized by Seyyed Hossein Nasr since the 1960s at Harvard University, United States (Umar et al., 2023). Together, these theories provide a strong conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between Islamic renewal, religious moderation, and universal human values, which constitute the core focus of this study (Kim, 2025).

The first theory, namely the Modern *Tajdid* Theory of Muhammadiyah formulated by Kiai Haji Ahmad Dahlan, is defined as an effort to renew Islamic thought through the purification of creed and the rational, contextual reinterpretation of religious teachings (Rifai & ., 2024). Dahlan (1912, Hooge School tot Opleiding van Inlandsche Onderwijzers, Indonesia) emphasized that Islamic reform must be grounded in a deep commitment to the Qur'an and Sunnah, while remaining open to scientific advancement and social transformation (Zunaidi et al., 2025). Within this conceptual framework, *tajdid* not only serves to reaffirm the authenticity of religious teachings but also functions as a creative mechanism to respond to the challenges of its era (Rofi'ah & Asrini, 2023). This concept gradually evolved into the hallmark of Muhammadiyah thought, known as Progressive Islam, which is oriented toward public welfare, justice, and human dignity (Elsyam et al., 2025).

The second theory is the Theory of Religious Moderation popularized by Mohammad Hashim Kamali in the 1990s at the International Islamic University Malaysia. Kamali posits that moderation is a principle of balance rooted in the Islamic concept of *wasathiyah* (Hasnawati & Sudirman, 2025). For Kamali, moderation is not merely a middle position but a worldview that promotes social justice, tolerance, and respect for diversity (Maspeke, 2023). His conceptual framework situates moderation as an ethical principle that must manifest in legal regulations, educational systems, and social conduct. Thus, religious moderation is not merely a theological idea but serves as practical guidance for fostering harmonious social interaction within plural societies (Muvid, 2024).

The third theory is the Theory of Universal Humanism developed by Seyyed Hossein Nasr since the 1960s at Harvard University, United States. Nasr explains that human values form the essence of spiritual traditions embedded within various world religions (Purwani, 2024). Universal Humanism emphasizes that every human being possesses intrinsic dignity that must not be diminished by differences in religion, ethnicity, or culture. In his theoretical framework, Nasr connects Islam's transcendent values with humanity's moral responsibilities toward one another and the natural environment (Sihombing et al., 2023). This theory becomes relevant in examining the development of inclusive Islamic thought as it opens the space for dialogue between Islam and global human values (Choir & Aziz, 2024).

These three theories have developed in line with the contexts of their respective eras. Muhammadiyah's *Tajdid* Theory initially emerged as a response to stagnation in Islamic thought in Indonesia and then evolved into a paradigm of Islamic modernization that integrates tradition and

rationality. In contemporary times, *tajdid* has expanded into an intellectual, social, and institutional movement that emphasizes inclusive Islam (Azizah et al., 2023). Kamali's Theory of Religious Moderation has also developed from a normative concept into a model of public policy, especially following the rise of global extremism (Asiah et al., 2025). Meanwhile, Nasr's Universal Humanism has gained renewed relevance in interreligious dialogue, offering a philosophical foundation for global humanistic ethics within multicultural societies (Khodijah et al., 2025).

The theoretical relationship among these three perspectives lies in their shared emphasis on forms of religiosity aligned with human development without abandoning the fundamental principles of Islam (Setiawan & Maryam, 2024). Dahlan situates *tajdid* as the foundation for renewal leading toward a progressive understanding of Islam. Kamali strengthens this by providing a normative framework of moderation as a guiding ethical principle in social life (I. H. Aziz et al., 2023). Nasr, in turn, expands the ethical dimension by grounding inclusivity in universal human values. Together, these theories enrich the analytical framework of this study, particularly in explaining how universal human values can reinforce models of Islamic moderation within the Muhammadiyah tradition (Patahilah & Lubis, 2025).

These theories are also directly related to the central problem of this research, which concerns the gap between the theoretical doctrine of moderation and the actual religious practices of society (Saumantri & Ismail, 2025). *Tajdid* helps explain that the gap emerges from intellectual stagnation and the lack of contextual understanding of religious texts. Kamali's Moderation Theory shows that the failure to internalize moderation stems from insufficient understanding of balance, tolerance, and justice (Hopid et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Nasr's Universal Humanism reveals that the gap is also caused by the absence of integrated humanistic values within everyday religious practices (Nuha & Hayid, 2024).

In the context of the research gap, the three theories clarify that existing studies have not sufficiently integrated *tajdid*, moderation, and universal humanism into a unified analytical framework, particularly within the Muhammadiyah context (Nasiri & Afifah, 2024). Previous research often examined these elements separately. Therefore, this study fills the void by adopting an integrative approach that highlights Muhammadiyah's contributions to developing a form of inclusive Islam aligned with contemporary needs (Fasyiransyah et al., 2025).

The research questions concerning the development of *tajdid*, the application of religious moderation, and the formulation of a universal human-value-based moderation model can be explained through these theories (Jamaluddin, 2024). *Tajdid* offers conceptual tools to understand Islamic renewal; moderation provides ethical balance; and universal humanism expands inclusivity by embedding Islamic teachings within global humanistic values (Solihin, 2025).

The objectives and benefits of this research, whether theoretical, academic, or practical, can also be approached through the integration of the three theories. Theoretically, this study reinforces the conceptual understanding of inclusive Islamic thought (Rokhzi, 2025). Academically, it enriches the literature on *tajdid* and religious moderation from the Muhammadiyah perspective. Practically, it provides a framework for designing *da'wah* and educational programs grounded in universal human values (Hasanah & Abbas, 2023).

The literature review concludes that these three theories Modern *Tajdid*, Religious Moderation, and Universal Humanism serve as a solid foundation for analyzing the development of inclusive Islamic thought within the Muhammadiyah tradition (Arofi et al., 2024). The insights of Ahmad Dahlan, Mohammad Hashim Kamali, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr demonstrate that Islamic renewal must operate within a moderative framework grounded in respect for universal human values (Basri & Zaki, 2023). These theories provide new perspectives relevant to the main research problem, addressing research gaps and strengthening the novelty of a universal-value-based moderation model (ASRORI et al., 2025). Accordingly, this study possesses a strong theoretical foundation for explaining Muhammadiyah's contribution to shaping a compassionate, open, and humanistic Islamic paradigm (Syam & Ishak, 2025).

RESEARCH METHODS

The study on the development of inclusive Islamic thought within the Muhammadiyah tradition, particularly through an analysis of the concepts of *tajdid* and religious moderation, employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical research design. This approach was selected because it enables the researcher to examine phenomena in depth, especially those related to the construction of thought, religious interpretation, and complex social dynamics. The descriptive-analytical design is used to systematically describe the development of *tajdid* and moderation within Muhammadiyah while analyzing their relevance and implications for religious practices in society. This design not only focuses on presenting phenomena but also involves interpretive processes based on theoretical perspectives, historical contexts, and the experiences of the informants interviewed.

The choice of a qualitative approach is grounded in the characteristics of the research object, which cannot be measured quantitatively, such as values, meanings, interpretations of religious texts, and personal experiences. The qualitative approach supports an in-depth understanding of Muhammadiyah's thought, particularly regarding the construction of inclusive Islam rooted in the concepts of *tajdid* and moderation. This approach also enables the researcher to explore the perceptions of Muhammadiyah figures concerning the gap between the ideal concept of moderation and its practical application in society. The descriptive-analytical design was chosen because it provides the capacity to elaborate concepts in detail and connect them with social dynamics and historical contexts. Thus, this study not only presents data but also offers critical analysis of Muhammadiyah's role in fostering an open and humanistic form of Islam.

The research was conducted in Yogyakarta, selected as the site due to its significance as a center of Muhammadiyah's intellectual development. The choice of location is based on both methodological and historical considerations. Yogyakarta is the birthplace of Muhammadiyah and remains the core of the organization's academic, *da'wah*, and modern Islamic thought development activities. Numerous educational institutions, study centers, and organizational bodies operate in the region, providing extensive access to primary literature, influential figures, and the intellectual dynamics of Muhammadiyah. Moreover, Yogyakarta offers a conducive intellectual environment for the development of moderate and inclusive Islamic studies, making it an appropriate setting for exploring contemporary interpretations of *tajdid*. Choosing a location aligned with the characteristics of the research object also strengthens data validity, as the majority of historical documents, intellectual archives, and relevant Muhammadiyah figures are concentrated in this region.

The number of informants in this study is set at four individuals, representing a range of perspectives and experiences. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, whereby individuals were chosen based on their knowledge and direct involvement in the development of Muhammadiyah's thought. Pseudonyms were used to maintain research ethics and confidentiality. The first informant, referred to as Mr. Haris, is a member of the Majelis Tarjih and *Tajdid* who possesses a deep understanding of renewal within Muhammadiyah. The second informant, Ms. Rahma, is a lecturer at a Muhammadiyah higher education institution who specializes in religious moderation studies. The third informant, referred to as Fikri, is a young Muhammadiyah activist involved in disseminating Progressive Islam discourse through social media. The fourth informant, Mr. Yusuf, is a branch leader of Muhammadiyah with firsthand experience managing community-based *da'wah* programs.

The selection of these informants is based on three major considerations: scholarly competence, organizational experience, and involvement in thought development movements. Scholarly competence ensures that the informants have a strong conceptual understanding of *tajdid* and moderation. Organizational experience provides insight into how these concepts are implemented in practice. Meanwhile, involvement in intellectual movements allows the study to highlight fresh perspectives on the challenges and opportunities of promoting inclusive Islam in Muhammadiyah, particularly amid digitalization and ongoing social transformation.

Data collection techniques in this study include literature review, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The literature review process involved examining primary and secondary sources such as Muhammadiyah thought texts, official organizational documents, previous research, books, scientific journals, and relevant historical archives. This review was conducted to build the theoretical framework, understand the concept of *tajdid*, and analyze the development of moderation discourse within

Muhammadiyah. The literature review also aided in identifying research gaps and determining analytical approaches.

In-depth interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format to explore informants' perspectives, experiences, and interpretations of *tajdid*, moderation, and inclusive Islamic development. A semi-structured format was chosen to allow flexibility while maintaining focus through a list of guiding questions. Interviews were conducted both in person and online depending on informant availability. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to identify key themes relevant to the research.

The documentation method was used to obtain information from Muhammadiyah's official documents, such as decisions of the Majelis Tarjih, congress results, *da'wah* guidelines, activity reports, and relevant articles published by Muhammadiyah institutions. These documents complement interview and literature data and aid in mapping the development of Muhammadiyah thought across different periods.

Data analysis employed an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved sorting relevant information from interviews, literature, and documentation, then categorizing them according to research themes such as *tajdid*, religious moderation, and universal human values. This stage assists in organizing data systematically for more effective analysis.

Data presentation was carried out through narrative descriptions, thematic tables, and conceptual explanations to illustrate patterns, tendencies, and relationships among research variables. The presentation process also involved interpreting data using the theories employed in the study, resulting in a comprehensive understanding of the development of inclusive Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah. This stage functions as a bridge between empirical data and theoretical construction.

The final stage of analysis was conclusion drawing, conducted inductively by assessing the consistency of research findings. The researcher examined the relationships between the collected data, research questions, objectives, and theoretical frameworks. Conclusions were drawn carefully while considering context, data coherence, and verification through triangulation. Triangulation involved comparing findings from interviews, documentation, and literature to ensure data validity. Member checking was also conducted with informants to confirm that the researcher's interpretations aligned with their intended meanings.

The conclusion-drawing technique not only answers research questions but also provides theoretical and practical implications. The conclusions reflect Muhammadiyah's contribution to developing inclusive Islamic thought, explaining gaps between ideal moderation and actual practice, and highlighting the importance of integrating universal human values in constructing a moderation model. As such, the analytical and interpretive processes conducted in this study contribute meaningfully to the development of Islamic studies and research on religious moderation within Muhammadiyah.

Overall, the qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical design employed in this study offers a comprehensive framework for exploring *tajdid* and religious moderation. The strategic choice of research location, the representativeness of informants, and systematic data collection and analysis reinforce the validity and credibility of the findings. This methodological approach enables a holistic understanding of inclusive Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah while providing a strong basis for academically rigorous analysis aligned with national and international publication standards.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study show that the development of inclusive Islamic thought within the Muhammadiyah tradition is rooted in the dynamics of the concept of *tajdid*, which from the beginning was formulated by its founder as a renewal movement that is not only oriented toward the purification of doctrine but also toward the creation of a religious framework aligned with values of public welfare and humanity. In this research context, both interviews with informants and literature analysis indicate that inclusive Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah continues to develop significantly, especially

when linked to the demands of religious moderation amid social changes in Indonesian society. This intellectual development closely relates to the central problem of the study, namely the gap between the normatively formulated doctrine of moderation and its implementation in religious practice, which often does not run in balance. The findings reveal that this tension arises from limited contextual understanding and the weak internalization of universal human values that should serve as the foundation for the practice of religious moderation.

Table 1. Development of Inclusive Islamic Thought in Muhammadiyah: Theoretical Foundations, Empirical Findings, and Implications

Theoretical Framework	Core Concepts	Key Research Findings	Forms of Implementation in Muhammadiyah	Challenges Identified	Implications for Inclusive Islam
Tajdid (Renewal) – Ahmad Dahlan	Renewal as continuous reinterpretation; integration of doctrinal purity and social context	Tajdid functions as a philosophical and methodological foundation for inclusive Islamic thought; renewal is not rupture from tradition but contextual adaptation	Reformulation of social jurisprudence, modern education, healthcare institutions, collective ijtihad through Majelis Tarjih	Resistance from conservative groups; limited contextual religious understanding	Tajdid enables Muhammadiyah to maintain doctrinal integrity while fostering openness, inclusivity, and adaptability in plural society
Religious Moderation (Wasathiyah) – Mohammad Hashim Kamali	Balance, justice, proportionality, contextual religiosity	Moderation is institutionalized in Muhammadiyah policies but unevenly internalized at grassroots level	Integration of moderation values in education, dakwah bil-hal, humanitarian services, community empowerment	Literal-textual interpretations; influence of social media; weak value-based education	Moderation strengthens inclusive Islam by aligning religious firmness with tolerance, justice, and social harmony
Universal Humanism – Seyyed Hossein Nasr	Human dignity, moral responsibility, spirituality-humanity unity	Universal human values shape Muhammadiyah's inclusive orientation, especially among youth and humanitarian programs	Disaster relief, healthcare, women empowerment, interfaith cooperation, environmental advocacy	Humanitarian values not fully integrated into everyday religious practice	Universal humanism provides moral grounding that transforms moderation into lived ethical and social action
Integrated Model (Tajdid–Moderation–Humanism)	Methodological, ethical, and moral synergy	Inclusive Islamic thought emerges from the interaction of renewal,	Progressive Islam framework guiding education, dakwah, and social services	Inconsistent implementation across regions and communities	Forms a holistic model of inclusive Islam relevant to Indonesia's

Theoretical Framework	Core Concepts	Key Research Findings	Forms of Implementation in Muhammadiyah	Challenges Identified	Implications for Inclusive Islam
		moderation, and universal values			plural and global context

Table 1 presents a comprehensive synthesis of the study's findings and discussion regarding the development of inclusive Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah. The table integrates three major theoretical frameworks—tajdid, religious moderation (wasathiyah), and universal humanism—to explain both the conceptual foundations and empirical realities of Muhammadiyah's inclusive Islamic orientation.

The findings indicate that tajdid, as formulated by Ahmad Dahlan, serves as the methodological backbone of Muhammadiyah's reform movement. Tajdid enables continuous reinterpretation of Islamic teachings by connecting foundational religious values with evolving social realities. This renewal process has allowed Muhammadiyah to develop modern educational systems, social jurisprudence, and humanitarian institutions while preserving doctrinal integrity.

The theory of religious moderation, as articulated by Mohammad Hashim Kamali, explains the ethical dimension of inclusivity. Moderation within Muhammadiyah is reflected in balanced approaches to education, da'wah, and social action. However, the study reveals a persistent gap between normative formulations of moderation and its practical internalization at the grassroots level, largely due to literalist interpretations and limited religious literacy.

Meanwhile, Nasr's concept of universal humanism provides the moral and humanitarian foundation for inclusive Islam. The findings show that Muhammadiyah increasingly understands religiosity as commitment to human dignity, justice, and solidarity. This is especially evident in youth engagement and humanitarian programs, which demonstrate that spirituality and social responsibility are inseparable.

The findings show that the concept of tajdid as derived from the thought of Ahmad Dahlan has provided the initial foundation for the emergence of inclusive Islam within the Muhammadiyah tradition. The tajdid concept introduced by the founder of Muhammadiyah is not merely a technical principle of reform but a philosophical framework guiding the movement to continuously develop non-stagnant religious understandings. Tajdid in Dahlan's perspective is not understood as severing ties with tradition but as an effort to connect Islam's foundational values with unavoidable social change. Historically, Dahlan's thought contains a strong encouragement for Muslims to translate the normative messages of the Qur'an into modern life, including through the acceptance of scientific knowledge, the strengthening of social ethics, and the renewal of the educational system. The awareness that religion cannot be detached from the dynamics of time has become a key element for Muhammadiyah in building a more open, productive, and inclusive religious framework.

Within the first theoretical framework, tajdid is understood as a creative effort to integrate doctrinal purity with the development of knowledge and the needs of the era. This creative effort includes the ability to reread religious teachings by considering social and cultural contexts as well as the constantly shifting national challenges. Reform is not interpreted as replacing religious teachings but as renewing the way religious teachings are understood and applied so that they remain relevant. Thus, tajdid is a method of revitalizing the original spirit of Islamic teachings that emphasize public benefit, justice, and wisdom. This is evident in Muhammadiyah's formulation of social jurisprudence, modern education, and da'wah activities oriented toward social transformation. The spirit of tajdid also encouraged institutional innovations, including the establishment of schools, hospitals, and social

welfare centers, all of which serve as concrete manifestations of the integration between Islamic values and contemporary needs.

The first informant, Mr. Haris, explained that within the Majelis Tarjih and Tajdid, renewal is always directed at addressing contemporary challenges through rational and open approaches. He emphasized that renewal is not carried out solely within the realm of rituals or legalistic worship matters but primarily in understanding social realities as integral components of religious life. The Majelis Tarjih does not merely reinterpret texts but also considers the needs of modern society facing emerging issues such as digitalization, environmental concerns, religious diversity, and global dynamics. Renewal is conducted through a process of collective *ijtihad* involving experts from diverse disciplines, resulting in religious decisions that are not only theologically valid but also socially relevant. This rational-open approach demonstrates Muhammadiyah's commitment not to be trapped by the formalities of doctrine but to develop a contextual form of religious life.

This theory helps explain why Muhammadiyah has been able to intensively cultivate inclusive Islamic discourse, especially when facing issues of pluralism and tolerance. The foundation of *tajdid* enables Muhammadiyah to view diversity as a social reality that must be approached with wise religious understanding. Inclusive Islam within Muhammadiyah does not blur religious identity but positions human values as inherent components of Islamic teachings. This approach motivates Muhammadiyah to be proactive in various interfaith dialogues, humanitarian programs, and social collaborations involving diverse groups. Muhammadiyah's readiness to develop inclusive ideas arises from its intellectual tradition, which from the beginning has been oriented toward openness and reform. The ability to view religion not merely as ritual but as a moral force guiding life in plural society is one reason inclusive Islamic discourse has developed rapidly within Muhammadiyah.

In an increasingly diverse social context, the concept of *tajdid* provides a theoretical framework guiding Muhammadiyah to avoid rigid and exclusive religious attitudes. Exclusive tendencies often emerge from undeveloped, overly textual religious interpretations. *Tajdid* rejects such approaches and introduces a method that integrates textual understanding with contextual analysis. This allows Muhammadiyah to maintain doctrinal purity without ignoring rapidly changing social realities. In the context of religious pluralism, *tajdid* guides Muslims to see humans as dignified beings whose rights must be respected regardless of religious background. Thus, *tajdid* functions as an epistemological filter preventing intolerance, fanaticism, and the misuse of religion for narrow interests.

The implementation of *tajdid* also facilitates the emergence of new interpretations that are more relevant to community life. These interpretations appear not only in theological domains but also in social, educational, and community practices. For example, in education, Muhammadiyah has formulated learning systems that integrate Islamic sciences and modern science, producing Muslim generations with broad knowledge and inclusive perspectives. In the social sector, Muhammadiyah develops healthcare and community empowerment models grounded in humanitarian approaches. This aligns with informants' statements that *tajdid* enables Muhammadiyah institutions to adapt to evolving times without losing their religious identity. Such reforms not only address internal Islamic issues but also offer solutions to broader societal challenges.

Additionally, Muhammadiyah's understanding of *tajdid* demonstrates that religious renewal must be continuous rather than a one-time event. This aligns with the principle that society constantly changes and, therefore, religious understanding must also be renewed to remain relevant. In practice, *tajdid* requires a dialogue between texts and contexts. This process is conducted not only by religious scholars but also by educators, academics, and social practitioners involved in Muhammadiyah activities. As a result, Islamic thought renewal has developed into a collective movement—a hallmark of Muhammadiyah. Strengthening this principle illustrates that *tajdid* is not only theoretical but a movement method requiring active participation from all Muhammadiyah members.

The study also finds that implementing *tajdid* is not always smooth, particularly when encountering resistance from communities that misunderstand renewal. Some informants noted that certain groups still view reform as deviation from tradition or as excessive modernization. However, such resistance is an important part of *tajdid* dynamics, motivating Muhammadiyah to develop stronger

educational, dialogical, and advocative approaches. These challenges show that renewal is a social process requiring time, strategy, and effective communication. Tajdid in Muhammadiyah continues to evolve from normative discourse into a more mature intellectual and social movement.

The concept of inclusive Islam grounded in tajdid also demonstrates how Muhammadiyah understands Islam as a religion with broad scope that transcends narrow group identities. Inclusive Islam emphasizes that universal values such as justice, brotherhood, and humanity are not exclusive to any particular religion but are part of humanity's collective moral heritage. This perspective enables Muhammadiyah to collaborate with various stakeholders to achieve humanitarian goals such as disaster relief, education, and healthcare. This further clarifies that tajdid serves as a bridge between normative Islamic teachings and the needs of modern global society.

Thus, the findings reveal that tajdid is a crucial pillar supporting the development of inclusive Islam within Muhammadiyah. Tajdid not only provides a reform framework but also methodological, ethical, and social direction for Muslims to live harmoniously in plural society. Tajdid forms the foundation for more open and dialogical religious practices while preserving Islamic integrity. This study underscores that Muhammadiyah's success in promoting inclusive Islam is inseparable from its consistent and progressive application of tajdid. Through tajdid, Muhammadiyah has become an adaptive, relevant movement presenting Islam as a unifying force amid Indonesia's diversity.

In relation to the second theory, namely the theory of religious moderation developed by Mohammad Hashim Kamali, the study finds that the development of inclusive Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah cannot be separated from the internalization process of wasathiyah values across various organizational aspects. Moderation in Kamali's view shows that ideal religiosity is not built solely through normative textual mastery but also through contextual understanding that considers social dynamics and realities of diversity. This concept becomes highly relevant within Muhammadiyah, which since its inception has adopted progressive Islam as its foundational orientation. The second informant, Mrs. Rahma, emphasized that moderation in Muhammadiyah is defined as a balance between firm adherence to Islamic teachings and openness to social diversity. She asserted that religious moderation is not only a theoretical idea but an ethical guide that must be reflected in organizational behavior and policies. This is reinforced by the study's findings indicating that moderation has become one of the fundamental principles guiding Muhammadiyah's policies in education, da'wah, and community empowerment.

The findings show that the implementation of moderation in Muhammadiyah is reflected in educational programs emphasizing proportional, rational, and humanistic understandings of Islam. Muhammadiyah educational institutions, from elementary schools to universities, have integrated wasathiyah values into their curricula. Strengthening religious literacy is achieved through interdisciplinary approaches that combine Islamic understanding with modern scientific knowledge, enabling students to perceive Islam as a value system closely linked to social life. Training for teachers and lecturers is also directed toward instilling moderative perspectives in pedagogical methods. Through these efforts, moderation becomes practical knowledge internalized through long-term learning processes. The study reveals that education remains one of the most effective avenues for transforming moderation into conscious experience among Muhammadiyah members.

Implementation of moderation in da'wah is another important finding. Historically, Muhammadiyah is known for its dakwah bil-hal approach, emphasizing practical actions that address societal needs. Moderation in da'wah is evident in the efforts of Muhammadiyah preachers to convey Islamic teachings with friendly, dialogic approaches while avoiding exclusive narratives that may trigger social tension. Preachers are encouraged to prioritize social harmony, respect for others, and the delivery of Islamic messages that are understandable and acceptable within plural society. This approach reflects Kamali's assertion that moderation must have normative-ethical dimensions manifested in real religious practices. The study demonstrates that moderation in Muhammadiyah's da'wah is not merely discursive but has become part of its organizational culture, although implementation remains uneven.

In addition to education and da'wah, social action further strengthens the role of moderation in shaping inclusive Islam within Muhammadiyah. Philanthropy, healthcare, disaster response, and social advocacy programs conducted by Muhammadiyah consistently demonstrate that the organization places humanitarian values at the core of its social services. Moderation in social action is reflected through Muhammadiyah's commitment to assisting communities regardless of religious, ethnic, or social background. This shows that religious moderation is not merely an effort to maintain theological balance but a commitment to universal humanitarian practice. The findings reinforce Kamali's theory that moderation must be expressed through real actions upholding justice and solidarity across groups.

However, the study reveals a gap between the doctrine of moderation and its implementation at the grassroots level. A segment of the community still interprets religion literally without recognizing broader ethical and humanistic dimensions. This reveals limitations in the internalization process of moderation values across wider society. The causes include lack of value-based education, the influence of social media spreading narrow interpretations, and limited spaces for intergroup dialogue. The findings indicate that implementing moderation requires more intensive, systematic, and continuous strategies in shaping mindsets and behaviors. Thus, internalizing moderation cannot rely solely on organizational policies but requires habituation through social experiences and empowerment programs oriented toward universal human values.

The study further shows that obstacles to the internalization of moderation relate to religious understanding patterns that prioritize textual obedience without considering context. Some community members wrongly perceive moderation as compromising Islamic teachings rather than as a balance strengthening justice principles in Islam. Such misconceptions require improved religious literacy emphasizing wasathiyah as a doctrine rooted deeply in Islamic tradition. Moderation does not conflict with religious firmness but ensures religious practice remains aligned with public welfare values taught by Islam. Kamali's theory provides essential clarification that moderation balances moral demands of religion with diverse social realities.

The study also finds that successful internalization of moderation depends on the organization's ability to provide open dialogue spaces. Where community members have opportunities to exchange perspectives and understand religious differences, acceptance of moderation tends to increase. However, such spaces are not evenly available, leading to inconsistencies in moderation understanding and practice. Therefore, the study encourages the creation of local learning communities that integrate moderation values into daily religious practices.

Overall, the findings show that religious moderation within Muhammadiyah has formed a strong inclusive framework, although its implementation faces challenges requiring sustained attention. Internalizing moderation values requires intellectual, social, and emotional approaches so that communities can perceive moderation as integral to Islam rather than as foreign or contradictory to their religious identity. Thus, religious moderation within Muhammadiyah can continue developing as a foundational pillar of inclusive Islam in Indonesia, consistent with Kamali's theory positioning moderation as an ethical principle guiding Muslims in plural, dynamic societies.

The third theory used in the study, Seyyed Hossein Nasr's concept of Universal Humanism, provides a comprehensive conceptual framework for understanding humanitarian dimensions underpinning Islamic inclusivity in Muhammadiyah. In Nasr's thought, spiritual values cannot be separated from humanitarian values as both constitute a cosmic unity that positions humans as rational and moral beings with responsibilities toward one another and the environment. This thought is significant for interpreting the direction of inclusive Islamic development within Muhammadiyah, as it views religion not merely as a set of dogmatic teachings but as an ethical force encouraging humanity to live justly, respectfully, and harmoniously. In this context, universal humanism becomes an essential foundation for developing Islamic thought that avoids exclusivist tendencies or absolute truth claims and instead moves toward dialogue, collaboration, and mutual understanding. Nasr emphasizes that humanity must be placed at the center of spiritual experience so that religion remains relevant to global challenges such as humanitarian crises, economic injustice, social conflict, and moral decline.

According to the third informant, Fikri, the involvement of Muhammadiyah's youth in global humanitarian discourse indicates that universal values such as human dignity, solidarity, and social justice have begun to form integral components of their religious orientation. He explained that Muhammadiyah youth build their religious identity not only through ritual activities but also through involvement in humanitarian issues, such as refugee advocacy, environmental campaigns, gender equality, and disaster relief. This reflects the spirit of universal humanism, where religiosity is understood through genuine contributions to improving social conditions rather than through increased ritual intensity devoid of humanitarian awareness. This phenomenon demonstrates that intellectual regeneration within Muhammadiyah has developed naturally through the adoption of global humanistic values harmonized with progressive Islamic teachings. Their engagement with global humanitarian discourse broadens their religious orientation beyond narrow group identity, enabling them to respond to universal human issues.

Literature analysis supports the interview findings, indicating that universal humanism provides an understanding that religiosity should be measured not only by ritual compliance but also by commitment to defending humanitarian values. Studies on Nasr's thought affirm that religion is not confined to ritualistic domains but represents a value system directing humans toward goodness, balance, and moral responsibility. Literature on Muhammadiyah also demonstrates that Dahlan's spirit of *tajdid* opened pathways to a more socially oriented interpretation of religion. Previous studies on Islam and humanitarianism confirm that integrating humanistic values helps Muslims understand religion as a source of peace rather than conflict or exclusivism. Thus, academic literature strongly supports the relevance of universal humanism to shaping a more responsive religious ethos within Muhammadiyah.

The findings show that universal humanism helps broaden the understanding of religious moderation by ensuring that it is not confined to normative discourse but is expressed through real, impactful actions. Moderation in this study is understood not merely as balanced attitudes or rejection of extremism but as a moral and social orientation that places humanity at the center of religious ethics. This perspective affirms that moderation cannot be detached from universal values such as justice, empathy, tolerance, and the protection of vulnerable groups. Without these values, moderation becomes merely a slogan difficult to implement within complex societies. The findings show that Muhammadiyah has developed various concrete programs such as disaster response, women's empowerment, expanded educational access, and interfaith cooperation reflecting this humanistic dimension of moderation.

Universal humanism helps explain why such actions are essential in shaping inclusive Islam. Nasr views spirituality as inseparable from real-life engagement, ensuring religion is not detached from humanitarian issues. This aligns with Muhammadiyah's renewal efforts aiming to harmonize Islamic teachings, scientific progress, and modern social challenges. Understanding universal human values enables Muhammadiyah to formulate moderation strategies rooted not only in normative theology but also in the social, psychological, and cultural needs of society. This fosters a new pattern of religiosity among Muhammadiyah members that is more open, cooperative, and sensitive to social realities.

Additionally, the integration of universal humanism strengthens Muhammadiyah's position as a leading moderate Islamic movement in Indonesia. Universal human values complement *tajdid* and moderation, producing a holistic religious approach. In this framework, *tajdid* provides methodological foundations, moderation offers ethical direction, and universal humanism provides moral grounding linking religious teachings with global social responsibilities. This integrated paradigm enables Muhammadiyah not only to address internal Islamic challenges but also to respond to global issues such as inequality, climate change, poverty, and humanitarian conflict.

The study also demonstrates that Muhammadiyah's youth play a vital role in strengthening the application of universal humanism. They use social media, community networks, and educational platforms to disseminate humanitarian values. This shows that their religiosity is not merely ritualistic but advocative and transformative. The organic growth of universal humanism within Muhammadiyah accelerates its acceptance, especially among younger generations living in a globalized digital environment.

Overall, the integration of universal humanism illustrates that Muhammadiyah's religious thought is moving toward a more inclusive, dialogical, and humanitarian orientation. This aligns with contemporary demands for religion to contribute concretely to solving social problems rather than merely producing theological discourse. Universal humanism offers moral strength for Muhammadiyah to develop religious strategies balancing spirituality, rationality, and humanity. With this foundation, inclusive Islam within Muhammadiyah has great potential to become a model of moderate Islam capable of addressing the dynamics of multicultural societies in Indonesia and globally.

The three theories help explain the implementation of inclusive Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah, especially in addressing the study's central problem. The gap between doctrinal moderation and actual religious practice is shown to be multidimensional. From the *tajdid* perspective, the gap emerges from limited renewal of contextual religious understanding. From Kamali's moderation framework, the gap arises from weak internalization of balance, tolerance, and justice. From Nasr's humanism, the gap stems from insufficient integration of humanitarian values in everyday religious practice. According to the fourth informant, Mr. Yusuf, communities often prioritize group identity over universal human principles, producing imbalances between doctrinal moderation and practical reality.

The study also shows that the research questions concerning the development of *tajdid*, the application of moderation, and the formulation of a universal-value-based moderation model were answered comprehensively through the integration of empirical data and theoretical frameworks. Findings on *tajdid* show ongoing reinterpretation of Islamic teachings based on core textual sources. Findings on moderation show that it has evolved into an ethical pattern across Muhammadiyah sectors. Findings on universal humanism affirm that humanitarian values are essential components animating inclusive Islamic development.

As stated in the research aims—to analyze the development of inclusive Islamic thought through *tajdid* and moderation—the findings show that these objectives were successfully achieved. First, the study illustrates how *tajdid* forms the foundation of renewal shaping inclusive Islamic character. Second, it explains how moderation is conceptualized, developed, and implemented in Muhammadiyah's organizational and social life. Third, it formulates a universal-value-based moderation model relevant to contemporary needs.

Theoretical benefits of the study are reflected in its contribution to strengthening literature linking *tajdid*, moderation, and humanitarian values. Academically, the study provides new references supporting curriculum development in Islamic education, Muhammadiyah thought, and religious moderation studies. Practically, it offers insights for leaders and activists in implementing moderate and humanitarian values in *da'wah*, education, and social empowerment. The findings confirm that moderation must be realized through concrete social action rather than confined to discourse.

The findings also reveal that inclusivity within Muhammadiyah is supported by strengthening religious literacy, developing diversity-sensitive educational curricula, and community empowerment programs emphasizing equality and justice. Interviews show that several Muhammadiyah branches have integrated universal human values into internal activities such as interfaith dialogue, conflict-resolution training, and social advocacy. *Tajdid* is visible in Muhammadiyah's rational, socially oriented responses to contemporary issues such as radicalism, intolerance, and misinformation.

The study further demonstrates that the universal-value-based moderation model constitutes a novelty. It offers not only normative guidelines but ethical orientations for religious practices. This confirms the relevance of Nasr's universal humanism to Indonesian social contexts and shows that inclusive Islam can grow through the integration of universal values with progressive Islamic thought.

The conclusion drawn from these findings is that the development of inclusive Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah results from the synergy between *tajdid* as a renewal movement, moderation as an ethical principle, and universal human values as moral orientation. These theories explain the dynamics of Muhammadiyah's intellectual development while addressing the central problem, research gap, research questions, aims, and benefits. Thus, the findings not only provide empirical descriptions

of inclusive Islamic implementation but also contribute significantly to theoretical development on Islamic religious moderation.

The discussion section aims to comprehensively explain the interrelationship between the central problem, research gap, research questions, research aims, and research benefits in connection with empirical findings. The study shows that *tajdid* and religious moderation have evolved significantly yet face challenges in implementation. The discussion elaborates how the findings reinforce and refine the theoretical concepts, providing deeper understanding of Muhammadiyah's contributions to inclusive and humanistic Islam.

The central problem derives from the inconsistency between Muhammadiyah's normative concept of religious moderation and community-level religious practices that often fail to reflect inclusivity and balance. The findings show that this problem is complex and tied to varying levels of understanding of *tajdid* and moderation. Though Muhammadiyah has strengthened progressive Islam doctrinally, value internalization remains uneven across society. Informants noted that segments of the community continue interpreting religion literally, resisting moderation and universal human values. This clarifies that the gap is not only conceptual but also practical and pedagogical.

The research gap becomes clearer when the findings are examined through *tajdid*, moderation, and humanism frameworks. Earlier studies focused heavily on *tajdid* as doctrinal purification, while this study shows *tajdid*'s progressive dimension enabling adaptation to social challenges. Research on moderation tended to emphasize institutional policy, whereas this study highlights cultural, educational, and experiential challenges. Meanwhile, the role of universal humanism in Muhammadiyah's renewal has been understudied, and this study fills that gap by showing its importance.

The three research questions were answered systematically through empirical and theoretical integration. *Tajdid* develops through continuous reinterpretation; moderation is implemented but uneven; universal humanism strengthens ethical foundations for inclusive Islam.

The research aims are fulfilled, showing that *tajdid*, moderation, and humanism interact to shape an inclusive Islamic paradigm. The study's theoretical, academic, and practical benefits are also clarified through the findings.

Overall, the discussion demonstrates that inclusive Islamic thought in Muhammadiyah arises from dynamic interactions among *tajdid*, moderation, and universal human values. The study contributes to Islamic thought development by explaining not only conceptual evolution but also practical interactions shaping Muhammadiyah's current inclusive identity.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the development of inclusive Islamic thought within the Muhammadiyah tradition is deeply rooted in the organization's dynamic interpretation of *tajdid* and its consistent commitment to religious moderation. Drawing on the findings and discussion, it is evident that Muhammadiyah has not positioned *tajdid* merely as doctrinal purification, but as a transformative intellectual and social project aimed at responding to contemporary challenges while preserving normative Islamic principles. The research demonstrates that *tajdid* operates in two interrelated dimensions: purification (*purifikasi*) of creed and worship, and dynamization (*dinamisasi*) of social thought. These two orientations are not contradictory; rather, they constitute a coherent framework that enables Muhammadiyah to maintain theological authenticity while promoting inclusivity in pluralistic contexts.

The results indicate that Muhammadiyah's interpretation of *tajdid* has evolved from a primarily reformist critique of syncretic practices toward a broader epistemological framework that embraces contextual reasoning, social welfare, and universal human values. Through its educational, health, and social service institutions, Muhammadiyah has translated theological reform into practical engagement with society. The discussion shows that this institutional manifestation of *tajdid* reflects an inclusive orientation, as it serves diverse communities regardless of religious or cultural background. Consequently, inclusive Islamic thought within Muhammadiyah is not articulated solely at the level of discourse, but embodied in concrete programs that reinforce social cohesion and civic responsibility.

Furthermore, the study finds that the concept of religious moderation (*wasatiyyah*) within Muhammadiyah is integrally connected to its understanding of *tajdid*. Moderation is not framed as theological compromise; rather, it is conceptualized as a balanced approach that avoids both rigid literalism and excessive liberalism. The findings reveal that Muhammadiyah's religious moderation is grounded in scriptural interpretation guided by *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, rational inquiry, and public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*). This orientation allows Muhammadiyah to uphold Islamic orthodoxy while engaging constructively with democratic values, human rights discourse, and interreligious dialogue. The discussion underscores that such moderation has strengthened Muhammadiyah's role as a civil society actor contributing to national integration and peaceful coexistence in Indonesia.

The research also concludes that inclusive Islamic thought in Muhammadiyah is shaped by its organizational culture and collective *ijtihād* mechanisms. The Majelis Tarjih and Tajdid, as the authoritative body for religious deliberation, plays a significant role in formulating adaptive legal opinions that address contemporary issues such as gender equity, environmental ethics, and socio-economic justice. The findings suggest that this institutionalized process of reasoning ensures doctrinal continuity while allowing interpretative flexibility. As discussed, this structured approach to reform differentiates Muhammadiyah from both conservative movements that resist reinterpretation and progressive currents that detach reform from textual foundations.

Another important conclusion emerging from the analysis is that Muhammadiyah's inclusive thought contributes to the broader discourse on Islamic reform in the global context. The study shows that Muhammadiyah offers a model of reform that harmonizes scriptural fidelity, rational engagement, and social activism. In contrast to polarized narratives that associate reform either with secularization or radicalism, Muhammadiyah demonstrates that renewal can function as a means of strengthening religious identity while promoting tolerance and pluralism. The discussion highlights that this synthesis has enabled Muhammadiyah to maintain credibility among its grassroots members while gaining recognition in international academic and policy circles as a representative of moderate Islam.

In relation to the title of this study, it can be affirmed that the development of inclusive Islamic thought in the Muhammadiyah tradition is inseparable from the dialectical interaction between *tajdid* and religious moderation. The findings confirm that *tajdid* provides the theological and methodological foundation for renewal, whereas moderation ensures that such renewal remains balanced, dialogical, and socially responsible. Together, these concepts form a comprehensive paradigm that shapes Muhammadiyah's intellectual trajectory and public engagement.

In conclusion, the research establishes that Muhammadiyah's inclusive Islamic thought is neither incidental nor reactive, but structurally embedded within its reformist heritage. By integrating purification and dynamization, scriptural commitment and contextual reasoning, as well as doctrinal clarity and social inclusivity, Muhammadiyah has constructed a distinctive model of Islamic reform. This model affirms that religious authenticity and pluralistic engagement are not mutually exclusive, but mutually reinforcing. The study thus contributes to scholarly debates on contemporary Islamic thought by demonstrating that the Muhammadiyah experience offers a viable and sustainable framework for cultivating inclusive, moderate, and reform-oriented Islam in the modern world.

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