

## Women and Religious Moderation: Interpretation of Legal Behavior and Identity Politics

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### **Abstract**

*This paper aims to identify the interpretation and legal behavior of women in actualizing their understanding of religious moderation and its implications for women's identity politics. The research method used is a qualitative research approach. The research locations are Pekalongan City, Salatiga City, and Palembang City with a total of 130 informants selected by random sampling. The results and analysis show: first, women's understanding of the four indicators national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodative to local culture is very subjective and can be said to be good; second, women's legal behavior in religious moderation is quite diverse, namely: for national commitment it tends to be normal and legal, neutral, and pathological or illegal; for tolerance it tends to be normal and legal, neutral, even potentially pathological and illegal; for anti-violence it tends to be normal and legal and there is potential for pathological and illegal; and for accommodative to local culture their legal behavior tends to be neutral and ambiguous; and third, women's identity politics shows that the majority of them are moderate or in the middle. They accept the concept of religious moderation and most of them have implemented the concept of religious moderation in their lives within the community. However, there are also some informants who are still "trapped" in pseudo-identity politics based on the reasons for group and belief similarities.*

**Keywords:** Interpretation, Women, Religious Moderation, Legal Behavior, Identity Politics.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The challenge in the Era of Globalization is the rise of radicalism, intolerance, extremism, and exclusivism movements (Manshur & Husni, 2020) so religious tolerance must always be promoted (Zuoan, 2013) including in Indonesia, considering Indonesia is identified with the plurality of its society. If this condition is not managed well, it has great potential to create conflicts and divisions based on SARA (ethnic, religious, racial, and intergroup) which threatens the existence of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). Unfortunately, the radicalism and terrorism movements often involve women as perpetrators, such as the bombing incidents at the Makassar and Surabaya Cathedral gates (Qori'fah, 2019)..

There has been a drastic change regarding the phenomenon of women's involvement in radicalism and terrorism. In the past, the role and involvement of men in every act of terrorism were always dominant, but this is different now. The fact shows that the perpetrators of radicalism and terrorism acts are women. Although women are often labeled as powerless, fearful, and gentle-hearted, this situation is very surprising. Women's involvement in these acts is a new phenomenon both as followers, loyal companions, propagandists, recruitment agents, and bombers (Gideon, 2021).

Musdah Mulia stated that women's involvement as perpetrators is a new mode in acts of terrorism. If previously acts of terror had a masculine face and a patriarchal approach, the acts of terror have now expanded with a feminine approach (Mulia, 2019). Meanwhile, Saraswati stated that the rise of women's involvement in radicalism and terrorism proves that women are more vulnerable to getting involved in these issues (Musyafak, 2020). The impact of women's involvement in terrorism activities eventually solidifies their identity politics as adherents of radical Islam, adherents of hard-line Islam, and is identified

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with certain clothing symbols such as large hijabs and niqabs. This physical appearance, which generally differs from other Muslim women's clothing, often leads to suspicion and discrimination from the public (Wahidah, 2020).

Many factors are suspected to trigger women's vulnerability in these acts, including ignorance of proper religious understanding, limited access to information, limited ability to express views and attitudes, economic and social factors, and so on. On the other hand, women also have strategic potential and roles as agents of change to encourage social change to prevent terrorism (Ahmad et al., 2021) and spread values of tolerance and peace with a cultural feminist approach (Rajagukguk & Pattipeilohy, 2018; Erzurum et al., 2014), including the mainstreaming and strengthening of religious moderation in Indonesia.

Considering the potential rise of radicalism and terrorism in the name of religion involving women, which poses a threat to the existence of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), President Jokowi's government has declared the strengthening and moderation of religion as one of its work programs. The policy on strengthening religious moderation is stipulated in Presidential Regulation Number 18 of 2020 concerning the 2020-2024 RPJMN with a target of achieving a religious harmony index of 75.8 (Bappenas, 2020). This policy was followed up by the Ministry of Religious Affairs by establishing a white paper on religious moderation (Junaedi, 2019). In the perspective of legal studies, the existence of this policy is functioned as a legal instrument to encourage social change (law as a tool of social engineering) to realize the mainstreaming and strengthening of understanding to respect differences, be willing to live together in a diverse community, and prioritize tolerant and inclusive open values (Fahri, 2019). The urgency of mainstreaming and strengthening religious moderation for all elements of the nation, including women, is based on the consideration that religious moderation is not only a fundamental social capital for national development but also encourages respect for human values and its existence strengthens the ideology of Pancasila and its derivative laws as a national identity and a bond of national unity amid Indonesian pluralism.

Although there have been many previous studies on women's involvement in terrorism (Bloom, 2017), women's role in preventing radicalism and terrorism (Erzurum et al., 2014; Isabella et al., 2021), and religious moderation (Suharto, 2021), no research has yet revealed the interpretation of women's legal behavior and identity politics in connection with the mainstreaming and strengthening of their religious moderation. Therefore, this research is very important considering women are one of the key figures in instilling values of tolerance and peace in a plural life (Kolt, 2007). Moreover, the program of religious moderation is currently being promoted for all elements of society, including women.

## **Research Methods**

This research is a socio-legal study combined with a qualitative research approach, including data analysis (Sugiyono, 2013). The research process includes two phases: (1) collecting qualitative data, (2) interpreting the results by investigating how qualitative data and analysis explain and support the results of data analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The data sources used in this study are primary data obtained directly from the field through in-depth interviews, observations, and questionnaires. Secondary data sources were obtained through documentation studies.

The data collection technique used in this research is random sampling with an even distribution of informants across the three research areas. This study was conducted in three regions: Pekalongan City, Salatiga Regency, and Palembang City, with 130 female informants. The selection of these three regions was based on the consideration that Pekalongan is known for its Muslim-majority icon, Salatiga is known for its icon as the most tolerant city in Indonesia with a balanced composition of Muslims and non-Muslims, and Palembang is known for its multi-ethnic icon.

Qualitative data based on observations and interviews conducted directly by researchers were used to analyze women's identity politics related to their religious moderation. Qualitative data was used to support empirical results in the qualitative approach. More in-depth and comprehensive explanations can be obtained based on observations and interviews. The data analysis in this mixed-method research uses the

model developed by Miles and Huberman, namely data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Sugiyono, 2013).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected from the questionnaires distributed to the informants in this study consist of 130 female informants with distributions of 55 in Pekalongan City, 29 in Salatiga City, and 44 in Palembang City, who meet the criteria. There are four indicators of religious moderation explored, namely: national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodative to local culture. Each variable is broken down into 20 points of questions strengthened by interviews from informants. The data collected and processed resulted in the following presentation of results:

### Pekalongan 57 Informants

Characteristics	Category	Amount	%
last education	High School/Equivalent	10	17.54%
	D3	4	7.02%
	S1	26	45.61%
	S2	15	26.32%
	S3	2	3.51%
	Total		57
Work	Housewife	2	3.51%
	Artist	1	1.75%
	Lecturer	8	14.04%
	Student	8	14.04%
	Private sector employee	7	12.28%
	Teacher	11	19.30%
	Businessman	2	3.51%
	Retired	3	5.26%
	ASN	10	17.54%
	University staff	5	8.77%
Total		57	100%
Religion	Islam	53	92.98%
	Catholic	1	1.75%
	Christian	1	1.75%
	Hindu	1	1.75%
	Buddha	1	1.75%
	Total		57
Sources of information about religious moderation	Religious leaders	14	24.56%
	Social media	32	56.14%
	Superior	5	8.77%
	Colleague	5	8.77%
	Newspaper	1	1.75%
	Total		57

### Palembang 44 Informants

Characteristics	Category	Amount	%
last education	High School/Equivalent	8	18.18%
	D3	5	11.36%
	S1	22	50%
	S2	5	11.36%
	S3	3	6.82%
	Profession	1	2.27%
	Total		44
Work	Housewife	7	15.91%
	Nun	1	2.27%
	Doctor	1	2.27%

	Lecturer	6	13.64%
	Student	6	13.64%
	Private sector employee	3	6.82%
	Teacher	11	25%
	Unemployment	1	2.27%
	Retired	1	2.27%
	ASN	2	4.55%
	Agency staff	4	9.09%
	Other	1	2.27%
	Total	44	100%
Religion	Islam	21	47.73%
	Catholic	15	34.09%
	Christian	8	18.18%
	Total	44	100%
Sources of information about religious moderation	Religious leaders	9	20.45%
	Social media	27	61.36%
	Superior	3	6.82%
	Colleague	5	11.36%
	Total	44	100%

### Salatiga 29 Informants

Characteristics	Category	Amount	%
last education	High School/Equivalent	9	31.03%
	S1	17	58.62%
	S2	2	6.90%
	S3	1	3.45%
	Total	29	100%
Work	Housewife	1	3.45%
	Lecturer	1	3.45%
	Student	11	37.93%
	Private sector employee	4	13.79%
	Self-employed	1	3.45%
	Teacher	6	20.69%
	ASN	4	13.79%
	Not yet working	1	3.45%
	Total	29	100%
Religion	Islam	27	93.1%
	Catholic	1	3.45%
	Hindu	1	3.45%
	Total	29	100%
Sources of information about religious moderation	Religious leaders	5	17.24%
	Social media	19	65.52%
	Superior	1	3.45%
	Colleague	4	13.79%
	Total	29	100%

From the data above, it can be analyzed that from the three research areas, the last education level of the informants is dominated by bachelor's degree graduates (S1). For the religious distribution, the informants are still dominated by those who are Muslims. In terms of occupation, the jobs are dominated by teachers, lecturers, and students. The informants obtained sources of information about religious moderation from social media.

## Women's Understanding of Religious Moderation Turns Out to be Good

In the context of religious moderation in Indonesia, there are several policies that provide guidelines on religious moderation, including those contained in the Presidential Regulation (PERPRES) on the National Medium-Term Development Plan for 2020-2024 (RPJMN 2020-2024); Minister of Religious Affairs Decree No. 93 of 2022 on Guidelines for the Implementation of Religious Moderation Strengthening for Civil Servants; Minister of Religious Affairs Decree No. 92 of 2022 on the Working Group for Strengthening the Religious Moderation Program at the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and a white paper on religious moderation published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The indicators of religious moderation contained in various regulations are used as guidelines to explore women's understanding of religious moderation in Pekalongan, Palembang, and Salatiga. The findings are presented in the table below.

**Table 2. Women's Understanding of Religious Moderation**

Areas	Dementia	Results
Pekalongan	National Commitment	From 57 informants The study answered strongly agree with a score of 586 points, 350 points answered agree, 55 points were unsure and 149 points answered disagree. Thus, the majority of informants tend to strongly agree with the national statement items.
	Tolerance	Of the 44 research informants who answered strongly agree with a score of 314 points, 403 points answered agree, 89 points answered they were unsure, 334 points answered they disagreed and 25 points answered they strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of informants tend to agree with the tolerance statement items.
	Anti violence	Of the 29 research informants who answered strongly agree with a score of 415 points, 319 points answered agree, 73 points answered they were unsure, 333 points answered they disagreed and 0 points answered they strongly disagreed . Thus, the majority of informants tend to strongly agree with the items stating their understanding of non-violence
	Accommodating to Local Culture	Research informants answered strongly agree with a score of 177 points, 500 points answered agree, 199 points answered they were unsure, 264 points answered disagreed and 0 points answered strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of informants tend to agree with the items stating their understanding of acceptance of traditions.
Palembang	National Commitment	Of the 44 research informants who answered strongly agree with a score of 470 points, 250 points answered agree, 44 points answered they were unsure, 66 points answered they disagreed and 50 points answered they strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of informants tend to strongly agree with the national statement items.
	Tolerance	Research informants answered strongly agree with a score of 327 points, 231 points answered agree, 54 points answered undecided, 159 points answered disagreed and 109 points answered strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of informants tend to strongly agree with the tolerance statement items.
	Anti violence	Research informants answered strongly agree with a score of 351 points, 224 points answered agree, 54 points answered doubtful, 135 points answered disagreed and

		116 points answered strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of informants tend to strongly agree with the items stating their understanding of non-violence
	Accommodating to Local Culture	Research informants answered strongly agree with a score of 257 points, 356 points answered agree, 146 points answered they were unsure, 136 points answered disagreed and 29 points answered strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of informants tend to agree with the items stating their understanding of acceptance of traditions.
Salatiga	National Commitment	Research informants answered strongly agree with a score of 233 points, 246 points answered agree, 33 points answered undecided, 41 points answered disagreed and 25 points answered strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of informants tend to agree with the national statement items.
	Tolerance	Research informants answered strongly agree with a score of 118 points, 246 points answered agree, 74 points answered undecided, 92 points answered disagreed and 50 points answered strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of informants tend to agree with the tolerance statement items.
	Anti violence	Research informants answered strongly agree with a score of 150 points, 223 points answered agree, 49 points answered undecided, 97 points answered disagreed and 61 points answered strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority of informants tend to agree with the items stating their understanding of non-violence.
	Accommodating to Local Culture	Research informants answered strongly agree with a score of 76 points, 256 points answered agree, 132 points answered undecided, 101 points answered disagree and 15 points answered strongly disagree. Thus, the majority of informants tend to agree with the items stating their understanding of acceptance of traditions. From the data description above, it can be seen that women in Pekalongan, Palembang and Salatiga have a good understanding of religious moderation.

Regarding women's interpretation of religious moderation, if linked to the theory of interpretation (Pradopo, 1999), women who become informants are positioned as recipients of messages about religious moderation. The majority of informants stated that they heard, read, and knew about the term religious moderation from various media. The media that becomes a source of information for women to obtain information about religious moderation is quite diverse, namely social media, colleagues, community leaders, superiors, and others. Social media is the most accessed media by informants to get information related to religious moderation. This is not surprising considering the background of the informants who are mostly educated, have good jobs or professions, and are IT literate (social media). These results strengthen Wibowo's study that digital media, including social media, is frequently accessed by the public to get information about religious moderation (Wibowo & Nurjanah, 2021).

From the symbolic interactionist theory, women's understanding cannot be separated from their position as recipients of text messages about religious moderation, which is the result of the subject's interpretation after social interaction in their social life. From Blummer's perspective, a person's interpretation of something always rests on three premises: 1) Humans act toward things based on the meanings those things have for them; 2) These meanings are derived from social interaction with others; and 3) These meanings are modified through an interpretive process used by individuals in dealing with the things they encounter (Burke & Stets, 1966; Turner, 2011). Symbolic interactionists believe that individuals not only use symbols to help them communicate

and interact with others, but by using them, they help build those symbols (Subiakto, 2020). Likewise, the research subjects' interpretation of the concept of religious moderation represents a dialectical process as described by Blummer.

From the description above, it can be understood that women's interpretation of religious moderation, which reflects the dimensions of national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation to local culture, can be considered good. Furthermore, women's interpretation of religious moderation is subjective. It is subjective because it heavily depends on individual perspectives, so the four dimensions in religious moderation are interpreted with concepts that are not exactly the same as the text messages of religious moderation outlined in the guidelines. Still, the core values reflected in the messages of religious moderation have been well captured and narrated. Therefore, women's interpretation of religious moderation can be said to be subjective because it heavily depends on two aspects: internal and external.

The internal aspect refers to things related to the value system and beliefs held by the research subjects, such as values of nationalism, humanism, non-discrimination, tolerance, and their religion. The external aspect refers to things related to the context surrounding the research subjects, such as the living environment and social interactions in the community. Both aspects, internal and external, greatly influence the interpretation, ultimately making women's interpretation in the three research areas very unique and varied depending on their perspectives. In Blummer's terms, it is said that "interpretation is subjective, and how individuals understand their world from their unique perspective" (Subiakto, 2020).

### **Legal Behavior: From Legal to Pathological**

As is known, the main function of law is as a social control tool intended to create order and regulate social interactions in community, nation, and state life. On the one hand, social change in society is very dynamic, so inevitably, the law is demanded to adapt to meet the needs of the society it serves (Maharidiawan Putra, 2018). In the Postmodern era, characterized by deconstruction, relativism, multiculturalism, back-to-nature lifestyle, hedonism, consumption patterns, strengthening identity politics, and the emergence of radical and fundamentalist movements, radicalism and fundamentalism issues in the name of religion leading to violent and terrorist acts threatening peace in communal life must be regulated and prevented.

One effort to prevent violent and terrorist acts in the name of religion is to strengthen religious moderation regulated in state policies. This is important considering that law, as a social control tool and a social engineering tool, has a strategic function for strengthening religious moderation. The response to implementing a law or policy on religious moderation will undoubtedly impact public demands to behave according to the established legal guidelines. From the perspective of the requirements and possibilities for implementing public and private interests, this behavior is estimated to be positive (positive social significance), harmful (negative social significance), or neutral (not significant, indifferent, formally not a violation, or illegal action) (Gottfredson & Hindelang, 1979; Tikhomirov, 2020). According to Bustomi, legal behavior is categorized as normal, intermediate, and pathological (Bustomi, 2022). According to De Villiers, legal behavior is categorized as legal and illegal (Parker, 2017).

The response to demands for the implementation of a law or policy regarding religious moderation will of course have an impact on demands for the public to behave in accordance with established legal rules. From the point of view of the requirements and possibility of implementing public and private interests, such behavior is assessed as positive (its positive social significance), dangerous (negative social significance, detrimental) or neutral (insignificant, indifferent, formally not a violation or illegal act) (Gottfredson & Hindelang, 1979; Tikhomirov, 2020). According to Bustomi, legal behavior is categorized as normal, intermediate and pathological behavior. (Bustomi, 2022). Meanwhile, according to De Vellier, legal behavior is categorized as legal and illegal (Parker, 2017).

Awareness, rational and emotional evaluation, habits, legal awareness levels, and other factors influence the psychological aspect of human behavior. Achieving a certain level of awareness about legal needs forms interest, motivation, behavior orientation, goals, intentions, decisions, and consequently, legal action as a result of deliberate and consistent satisfaction (Sunstein, 2001: 233). The correlation between behavior and legal

awareness and legal culture is that legally significant behavior is causally related to them (Zavalnjuk, 2013) because its content is determined by the level of individual legal awareness. The measure of legal awareness is, therefore, a source of rational awareness about the goal of actions (legal or illegal) and a prerequisite for forming judgments about legally permissible means to achieve them, directing choices, and allowing evaluation of the potential effectiveness of chosen legal means and methods.

To explain the legal behavior of informants regarding religious moderation, this study uses the approach of law in action—how the guidelines on religious moderation are obeyed and ignored by informants. The questionnaire questions asked to informants, with scoring based on the Likert scale from strongly agree (weight 5), agree (weight 4), neutral (weight 3), disagree (weight 2), and strongly disagree (weight 1), were used by the research team to predict the informants' legal behavior in religious moderation. From the previous data presentation, the conclusions can be summarized as follows:

The legal behavior regarding national commitment can be said that the majority of informants' legal behavior is in the normal and legal category: meaning the informants accept the concepts of national commitment, so they are predicted to comply with the guidelines set by the government. For example, the acceptance of Pancasila as the state's foundation and the philosophy of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), accepting the principle of equality before the law, and equality of rights and obligations. This finding supports Saputro's thesis that Pancasila has been accepted as an ideology by Christians (Saputra, 2019). Although the majority of informants show "normal and legal" behavior, some informants also show potential "neutral" behavior related to their preference that they will comply with the law as long as it does not conflict with their religious norms. In addition, there are also informants' legal behaviors that have the potential to be "pathological and illegal" because the informants stated they agree and accept the caliphate system to be applied in Indonesia, even though Pancasila has been established as the sole ideology in Indonesia. The "pathological and illegal" findings in the three regions show that although the scale is small, it should be monitored to prevent it from developing into a latent danger that will replace Pancasila and the NKRI as done by HTI (Arif, 2016; Aritonang, 2020; Paulus, 2019).

The legal behavior regarding tolerance can be said that the majority of informants' legal behavior is in the "normal and legal" category because most informants do not mind accepting the differences around them. They also do not mind showing tolerance in social interactions, cooperating, helping, and respecting the beliefs of others different from their own, and do not consider their belief as the absolute truth. This finding supports that tolerance has become a lifestyle for the community, as shown in studies by Hermawati (Hermawati et al., 2017) and Susanto (Susanto & Kumala, 2019). However, some legal behaviors are "neutral" with a relatively high response related to their willingness to visit other religions' places of worship. Likewise, there are informants whose legal behavior is predicted to be "pathological and illegal," such as a preference for choosing leaders who share the same belief. This "pathological and illegal" legal behavior can potentially create horizontal conflicts in community life, as shown in Kharisma's study on the issue of religious politicization (Kharisma, 2017) and the criminalization of religion in the Jakarta gubernatorial election case (Nurfadila, 2017; Rahmadi, 2017).

The legal behavior regarding anti-violence can be said that the majority of informants' legal behavior is in the "normal and legal" category, meaning they believe that violence is a violation of human rights, violence in the name of religion must be addressed by state authorities, violence causes harm, and they reject coercive approaches with violence. The majority of informants also agree that violence is not a way to solve problems. Such legal behavior will undoubtedly impact a conducive situation in community life. Women have a strategic role in creating peace (Dimou, 2021; Rivas & Safi, 2022) and as a bulwark to prevent radicalism and violent extremism (Mulia, 2019). However, some informants show tendencies towards "pathological and illegal" legal behavior because they prefer to use coercive approaches, stopping religious activities if they do not align with their teachings, and are willing to seal places used for religious activities by others if they do not align with their teachings. Such legal behavior, if true, can be categorized as vigilantism that potentially violates the law (Wahyuni, 2013).

The legal behavior regarding accommodation to local culture can be said that the majority of informants' legal



behavior is in the "neutral" category because their responses tend to be ambiguous (neutral). They are willing to accept, respect, and support local cultural traditions as long as the existing traditions and religious rituals around them do not conflict with their teachings and beliefs. However, they will still respect the practice of traditions carried out by others. Such legal behavior can undoubtedly impact the integration of local culture and religion because of the cautious attitude in maintaining strong faith. This finding differs from Kartika's study, which shows that women in Bali have strategic functions and roles in developing local culture sourced from Hindu religious values (Kartika, 2021). Religion becomes a source of spirit and inspiration in developing local culture.

From the previous data presentation related to the four indicators of religious moderation, namely national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation to local culture, the majority of women's legal behavior in Pekalongan, Palembang, and Salatiga can still be categorized as normal and legal.

### **Women's Identity Politics: We Are Moderates**

Identity politics is another formulation of difference politics. Cressida Heyes defines identity politics as the marking of political activities (Heyes, 2007: 45). Agnes Heller, on the other hand, defines identity politics as a political movement focused on difference as a primary political category. Identity politics arises from individual awareness to elaborate particular identities in the form of primordial ethnic and religious identity relations (Heller, 1991: 322). Generally, the general theory of identity politics and various research results show two main factors that make ethnicity and religion attractive and prominent to be used and influential in political processes. First, when ethnicity and religion become factors at stake. There is a need to defend or protect a group's identity. Second, when the political process is competitive. It means that the political process causes identity groups to face each other, and it is not clear who will be the winner from the beginning.

Based on the findings, starting from the distribution of informants' understanding of moderation broken down into points of questions about national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation to local culture, it is evident that the identity politics attached to the informants is moderate. It is called moderate because the majority accept and agree with the concept of religious moderation that has been established. They realize that even though they come from different ethnicities, tribes, and religions, they do not excessively highlight aspects related to SARA (ethnic, religious, racial, and intergroup) in their communal, national, and state life.

In their daily lives, they can adapt and interact socially with others reasonably, without acting discriminatively, and still prioritizing mutual respect. The differences attached to them do not hinder them from socializing and cooperating with others. The informants can wisely place themselves in a broader context in their lives. They are proud to be part of Indonesia, which appreciates diversity and plurality in its communal life. Although sometimes, in some of their responses, they are "trapped" in romanticism based on group or religious similarities, especially in their preference for leaders who share the same belief.

From the above description, it can be concluded that women's identity politics in Pekalongan City, Palembang City, and Salatiga City shows that the majority are moderate or in the middle. They accept the concept of religious moderation, and most of them have implemented the concept of religious moderation in their lives within the community. However, some informants are still "trapped" in pseudo-identity politics based on group and belief similarities.

### **CONCLUSION**

Women's understanding in Pekalongan City, Palembang City, and Salatiga City about the four indicators of religious moderation, consisting of national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation to local culture, is very subjective and can be said to be good. Women's legal behavior in religious moderation is quite diverse, namely: for national commitment, it tends to be "normal and legal," but some are "neutral" and "pathological or illegal"; for tolerance, it also tends to be "normal and legal," although some are "neutral," and there is potential to be "pathological and illegal"; for anti-violence, it tends to be "normal and legal," and there is potential to be "pathological and illegal"; and for accommodative to local culture, the legal behavior shows

to be "neutral and ambiguous." Women's identity politics in Pekalongan City, Palembang City, and Salatiga City shows that the majority are moderate or in the middle. They accept the concept of religious moderation, and most of them have implemented the concept of religious moderation in their lives within the community. However, some informants are still "trapped" in pseudo-identity politics based on group and belief similarities.

This research significantly enriches the theoretical framework of religious moderation, legal behavior, and identity politics by providing a comprehensive analysis of women's perspectives and behaviors in Indonesia. Focusing on the diverse socio-cultural contexts of Pekalongan, Salatiga, and Palembang, it reveals the subjective nature of women's understanding and the varied legal behaviors associated with religious moderation. The study highlights the crucial role of education and awareness, particularly through digital platforms, in shaping women's interpretations of religious moderation. By offering contextual insights and emphasizing the importance of social media as a key source of information, the research informs policymakers and educators about the current state of women's understanding and behavior towards religious moderation, enabling them to design more effective and targeted programs.

The implications of this research are far-reaching, particularly in the areas of policy implementation, community engagement, and combating radicalism. The findings suggest that while most women possess a good understanding of religious moderation, their interpretations and practices vary, necessitating inclusive and region-specific policies. The study underscores the importance of engaging community leaders and religious figures in promoting values of tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodation to local culture. It also highlights the need for continuous monitoring and intervention strategies to prevent radicalism and maintain social harmony. By fostering national unity through the promotion of Pancasila and digital literacy, the research aims to enhance critical thinking skills and resist extremist ideologies, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and harmonious society.

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