



Transcending Institutional Origins: The Homogeneity of Multidimensional Moderate Character Among Prospective Elementary Teachers

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the phenomenon of "Institutional Transcendence" by examining whether institutional origins (public vs. private schools) influence the multidimensional moderate character of prospective elementary teachers. Employing a comparative quantitative approach combined with structural modeling, data were elicited from 76 second-semester students of the Elementary School Teacher Education program. The results of a One-Way ANOVA demonstrate no statistically significant disparity in moderate character levels based on institutional origins ($F=0.071$, $p=0.791 > 0.05$). Furthermore, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) confirms the structural integrity of the multidimensional model ($R^2 = 0.196$), identifying Cultural Adaptability and Conflict Resolution as the most significant drivers of moderation. These findings suggest that the higher education environment acts as a potent "Equalizer," effectively homogenizing values through a shared academic ecosystem. The study concludes that while the "Equalizer" effect successfully aligns cognitive and affective dispositions, a "Knowing to Action Gap" persists, necessitating a pedagogical shift toward experiential "Moral Action" to transform theoretical moderation into decisive civic courage.

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Introduction

Elementary education serves as a foundational crucible for shaping the character of the nation's youth, positioning elementary school teachers in a strategic role as both educators and moral exemplars. Central to this pedagogical responsibility is the development of a multidimensional moderate character, a construct defined by inclusive orientations, tolerant attitudes, and a profound appreciation for diversity manifested across cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains. According to Hanafi et al., (2022), religious moderation represents a holistic worldview characterized by a "middle path" approach, prioritizing justice and the rejection of extremism. Grounded in the principles of multicultural education (Gholtash & Yarmohammadian, 2011) and character development (Lickona, 1991; Rijal, 2023; Suroso & Husin, 2024), this character integrates "moral knowing", "moral feeling", and "moral action" to ensure that prospective teachers can effectively balance theoretical understanding with decisive social action (Khairil Azhar et al., 2025). Existing literature often dichotomizes public and private education as distinct ecological systems that produce divergent character outcomes (Jennings et al., 2015). However, this perspective overlooks the dynamic nature of identity formation during the transition to higher education. Drawing upon



Vygotsky's Social Constructivism theory, character values are not static artifacts of prior schooling but are fluidly reconstructed through intense social interactions within the current university environment.

The discourse on the homogeneity of moderate character among students has been a subject of increasing scholarly interest. Several studies have emphasized that national curricula and character-building programs tend to produce uniform outcomes in students' conceptual understanding of moderation. Verkuyten & Kollar, (2021) highlight that systematic civic education fosters a shared awareness of responsibilities, leading to a standardized level of moderate disposition. Furthermore, Nursya'bani & Listyaningsih, (2021) observed that in universities with a strong multicultural ethos, students often exhibit overlapping patterns in their social inclusivity and conflict resolution, suggesting that the academic environment facilitates a collective internalization of moderate values regardless of individual differences.

Existing literature frequently dichotomizes public and private education as distinct ecological systems that produce divergent character outcomes. Traditionally, school origins whether public, private, or vocational are viewed as the primary anchors of a student's ideological trajectory (Jennings et al., 2015). Maolana, (2024), Yasmin, Muhammad, and Siddiqui (2021) noted that private schools with specific religious affiliations often have more structured character programs, while Picauly (2024) argued that public schools offer a broader heterogeneous environment that fosters social adaptability. However, these studies primarily focused on the "institutional seal" of secondary education as a permanent predictor of future moderate behavior.

Despite the wealth of studies on moderation and institutional types, there remains a critical scholarly gap regarding the persistence of these institutional influences once students transition into higher education. Most current research either examines religious moderation in general social activities or focuses on character outcomes within the same educational tier. There is sparse empirical evidence investigating whether the ideological baggage from public or private high schools is maintained or "transcended" when students are immersed in the pluralistic ecosystem of a teacher education program at the university level.

The novelty of this study lies in its challenge to the deterministic view of institutional backgrounds by introducing the concept of "Institutional Transcendence." Drawing upon Vygotsky's Social Constructivism and James Marcia's Identity Development theory, this research posits that character values are not static artifacts but are fluidly reconstructed during the "Identity Moratorium" phase of university life. This study is unique in its focus on how the higher education environment acts as a potent "Equalizer," homogenizing multidimensional moderate values among prospective teachers and bridging prior disparities created by their secondary school indoctrination.

This research is urgent due to the increasing manifestations of exclusivism and intolerance found in classroom discourses and social media among prospective educators. Students are often susceptible to biased information, making it imperative to understand how their character is formed and homogenized. As Verkuyten & Kollar (2021) suggest, if teacher education programs fail to unify these values, the "knowing to action gap" will persist, leading to a generation of teachers who are conceptually moderate but behaviorally hesitant in fostering inclusive classrooms.

Consequently, this study aims to analyze the extent to which institutional backgrounds (Public vs. Private) influence the multidimensional moderate character of Prospective Elementary Teachers (PETs). The primary objective is to test the homogeneity of these values and determine whether university-level interventions effectively transcend prior



institutional affiliations. By doing so, this research seeks to shift the societal paradigm: demonstrating that institutional status is not a definitive guarantor of character, but rather the ongoing internalization of values within higher education that prepares students to become moderate agents of change.

Research Method

This study employs a comparative quantitative approach to examine the moderate character of prospective elementary school teachers. Data collection was conducted between May 10 and July 2, 2024, involving 76 second-semester students from the Elementary School Teacher Education (PGSD) program at Universitas PGRI Kanjuruhan Malang. Participants were selected via purposive sampling based on two criteria: (1) being active PGSD students enrolled in Islamic religious education courses, and (2) possessing diverse secondary educational backgrounds to allow for cross-institutional comparison. The sample comprised alumni from public schools (n=40) and private schools (n=36), encompassing various streams including general (SMA), vocational (SMK), and Islamic senior high schools (MA).

Multidimensional Moderate Character is operationally defined as a multidimensional construct integrated into the academic landscape to foster inclusive and safe learning environments. Grounded in Lickona's (1991) theory of moral character (Moral Knowing, Feeling, and Action) and Haddock's & Maio, (2018) attitude measurement, this construct comprises four critical domains: Civic Responsibility (National Commitment); Social Inclusivity (Tolerance); Conflict Resolution (Anti-Radicalism/Violence); and Cultural Adaptability (Local Cultural Accommodation).

The research instrument consisted of a multi-indicator questionnaire utilizing a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree). The scale development was theoretically underpinned by Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), focusing specifically on *Attitude Toward Behavior*. To ensure validity, the instrument incorporated both explicit measures (direct survey responses) and implicit considerations of religious moderation as mandated by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs (2021).

The quantitative data underwent a rigorous two-stage transformation process. Initially, ordinal data derived from the Likert-scale instrument were converted into interval data to meet the assumptions of parametric testing. Descriptive analysis was then performed using the Weighted Means Scored (WMS) technique to establish a general profile of students' moderate character. To test the core hypothesis regarding institutional homogeneity, a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used. This test was specifically selected to evaluate whether the mean differences between public-school alumni (n=40) and private-school alumni (n=36) were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, the internal consistency of the multidimensional construct was validated using Cronbach's Alpha, ensuring that the four domains of moderation, Civic, Social, Conflict, and Culture were measured with high reliability. While Variance-Based Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via Smart PLS 4 was utilized for its robustness in analyzing hierarchical component models with small sample sizes (N=76), the ANOVA remained the primary tool for testing significant differences between public and private school cohorts.

Mean Interval	Category	Interpretation of Character Manifestation
4.26 – 5.00	Very High	Consistent internalized values; proactive moderate behavior.
3.51 – 4.25	High	Strong conceptual understanding; frequent moderate behavior.
2.76 – 3.50	Medium	Developing awareness; inconsistent behavioral application.
2.01 – 2.75	Low	Limited awareness; potential for intolerant tendencies.



0.00 – 2.00 Very Low Critical absence of moderate values; high risk of radicalism.

Table 1. Category and Interpretation of Character Manifestation

Results and Discussion

The moderate character scores of 76 prospective teacher students in East Java high schools ranged from 69.9 in public schools and 68.8 in private schools. This study describes data from normality test results that have been conducted, showing that the data are normally distributed. The empirical evidence derived from the One-Way ANOVA demonstrates a striking uniformity in the moderate character scores between alumni of public and private institutions. This statistical homogeneity suggests that the 'institutional seal' of secondary schools does not create a permanent ideological divide. Notably, the high scores in Anti-violence (4.8) signify a robust conceptual rejection of radicalism. Nevertheless, the moderate performance in the Tolerance dimension (3.7) reveals a 'theological hesitation', a condition where students support diversity in principle but remain cautious in practical intercultural social gestures. This 'knowing-to-action gap' is a critical finding, indicating that while students are conceptually moderate, their active civic engagement requires further pedagogical reinforcement.

Contextually, this reflects the 'Institutional Isomorphism' where private religious schools and public schools in Malang increasingly adopt similar pedagogical standards regarding tolerance and nationalism. Furthermore, the findings align with Jennings et al., (2015), who argued that school quality effects are often overstated compared to family environment and individual agency. In the context of this study, the shared 'academic ecosystem' of the university appears to exert a more potent homogenizing effect (The Equalizing Effect) than the students' high school lineage. The 'Good' category observed in both groups indicates that the professional identity construction of a teacher emphasized during the first year of college overrides previous sectarian identities. The results of the one-way ANOVA test on differences in moderate character of students from public and private schools are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Differences in Moderate Character

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	9.373 ^a	1	9.373	.071	.791
Intercept	363068.376	1	363068.376	2737.273	.000
School	9.373	1	9.373	.071	.791
Error	9815.267	74	132.639		
Total	374096.284	76			
Corrected Total	9824.639	75			

The inferential analysis conducted through a One-Way ANOVA yielded an F-value of 0.071 with a corresponding significance value (p-value) of .791. Since the p-value significantly exceeds the alpha threshold of .05 ($p > .05$), the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. This statistical outcome indicates that there is no significant difference in the level of moderate character between students originating from public and private secondary schools. The multidimensional construct of moderate character, encompassing tolerance, national commitment, anti-radicalism/violence, and cultural adaptation appears to be consistent across both cohorts. Consequently, it can be concluded that the institutional background of the school of origin does not exert a significant influence on the students' current moderate character. This finding is congruent with extant literature, which posits that the formation of moderate character is a holistic process, predominantly shaped by social experiences, the family environment, and the transformative learning climate of higher

education, rather than the disparate educational systems found in secondary schools. Both descriptive and inferential SPSS analyses converge on the same conclusion: the "institutional seal" of public versus private high schools is transcended by the unified pedagogical outcomes observed at the university level.

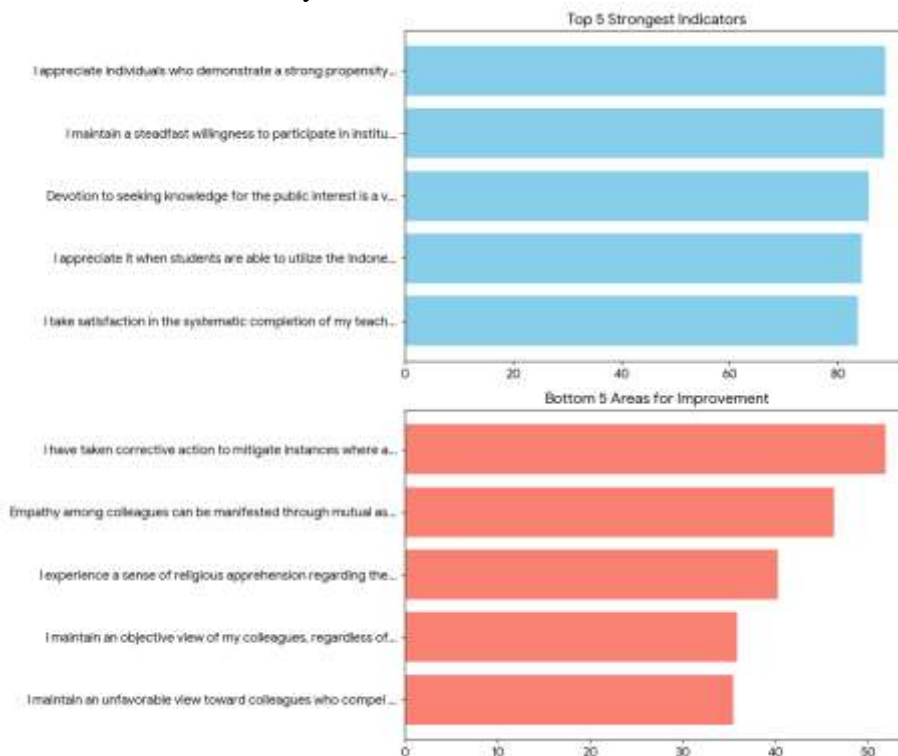


Figure 1. The moderate character profiles of prospective elementary teachers across public and private institutions

The empirical analysis reveals a striking similarity in the moderate character profiles of prospective elementary teachers across public and private institutions. As illustrated in Figure 1, the four primary dimensions Social Inclusivity, Civic Responsibility, Conflict Resolution, and Cultural Adaptability exhibit overlapping patterns. The total mean score for public institutions ($M = 70.23$) and private institutions ($M = 70.74$) shows no statistically significant disparity ($p > .05$). This finding supports the core argument of this study: that the internalisation of moderate values transcends institutional origins, suggesting a unified pedagogical outcome in teacher education programs regarding religious moderation.

A deeper examination of the moral structure reveals a consistent "declining trend" from conceptual understanding to practical implementation. The data, visualized in Figure 1, demonstrates that while prospective teachers possess high Moral Knowing (scores ranging from 72.4 to 73.4), their Moral Action scores are lower (averaging 68.1 to 70.0). This "Knowing to Action Gap" indicates that while the subjects are cognitively aware of moderation principles, they encounter complexities when translating these values into decisive social actions, such as intervening in instances of religious intolerance or peer coercion.

The granular analysis of specific indicators highlights critical areas of strength and systemic vulnerabilities. The strongest indicators, as shown in Figure 1, are rooted in Social Integration and Institutional Cooperation (scores >85), reflecting a robust readiness for multicultural collaboration. Conversely, the lowest scores are found in indicators related to Peer Intervention and Theological Apprehension (scores <45).



Prospective teachers exhibit a "passive moderation" stance; they value harmony but feel hesitant or "theologically anxious" when engaging in cross-religious social gestures, such as extending holiday greetings or correcting intolerant behaviors among colleagues. These results suggest that future teacher training must shift from theoretical discourse (*Knowing*) to experiential, case-based simulations (*Action*) to effectively bridge the gap and solidify the moderate character of future educators.

The empirical distribution of moderate character indicators among prospective teachers reveals a compelling "structural harmony" punctuated by subtle "behavioral hesitations." At the conceptual apex, the dimension of Anti-Radicalism and Violence achieves a near-ceiling score of 4.8, driven by a robust consensus (88.9% positive response) regarding the role of educators as agents of peace and the rejection of violent extremism. This suggests that the theoretical framework of religious moderation has been successfully internalized as a core professional identity. However, a more granular examination of the Social Tolerance dimension (3.7) reveals a significant "theological apprehension". While 81.5% of respondents theoretically value religious diversity, only 55.5% feel comfortable engaging in inter-religious social gestures, such as extending holiday greetings, with a notable 37% remaining neutral on this specific issue. Furthermore, a critical "knowing-to-action gap" is identified in peer-intervention scenarios; respondents show high agreement on institutional cooperation (85.2%) but exhibit lower scores (<45%) when required to actively discourage peer coercion in religious practices. These findings suggest that while prospective teachers are "theoretically moderate," they maintain a "passive stance" when confronted with real-world social friction. Consequently, the data argue for a pedagogical shift in teacher education programs—moving beyond the transmission of nationalistic values (National Commitment 3.8) toward developing the "civic courage" necessary to translate inclusive thoughts into decisive, moderate actions in diverse classroom environments.

This study shows that the moderate character of students, both from public and private schools, is in the good category. Students from private schools have an average moderate character score equal to students from public schools. This is evidenced by the finding that the average value of the moderate character scale for students between schools scores 70-80, which is included in the good category. This indicates that, despite variations in the secondary education backgrounds, both schools exhibit relatively balanced levels of moderate character. These results are consistent with the research findings of Jennings et al., (2015), which state that schools only play a small role in explaining socioeconomic and racial disparities in educational outcomes. This is evidenced by longitudinal data on test scores and lecture attendance over four years among students in Texas and Massachusetts, showing that there is no clear difference between high schools. In addition, other factors are influenced by the quality of facilities and infrastructure, the learning process, and other factors from the family environment, besides internal student factors, including learning interest, health, intelligence, talent, and so on (Metekohy et al., 2022). This indicates that the type of school factor does not directly determine the high or low level of students' moderate character.

Meanwhile, according to the social constructivism theory proposed by Vygotsky (1980) in Joyce (2004), the formation of character and values is not solely shaped by institutional structures such as schools but also by intense social interactions in the individual's environment. In this context, students from both types of schools have equal possibilities to experience the process of internalizing moderate values through social environments such as family, digital media, communities, and higher education. In addition, Ziegler et al. (2021) educational equity theory states that access to basic values such as tolerance, diversity, and anti-violence has become part of the national education system, both public and private.

Indratmoko, et al. (2025) state that the Independent Curriculum and previously the 2013 Curriculum emphasize national values and character in subjects such as Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn), thus enabling equitable instillation of moderate values. Birhan et al. (2021) and Taufiq (2014) state that character formation is not only determined by formal institutions but also by the harmony between character education at home, school, and society. If the family and social environment support values such as tolerance, responsibility, and love of peace, then students from both private and public schools can have similar moderate character potential. Furthermore, the role of higher education is also important as an equalizer. James Marcia's identity development theory shows that the college period becomes a place for active value exploration (identity moratorium) that contributes to equalizing understanding and attitudes toward moderate values. Therefore, shared experiences in higher education can bridge initial character differences due to school type.

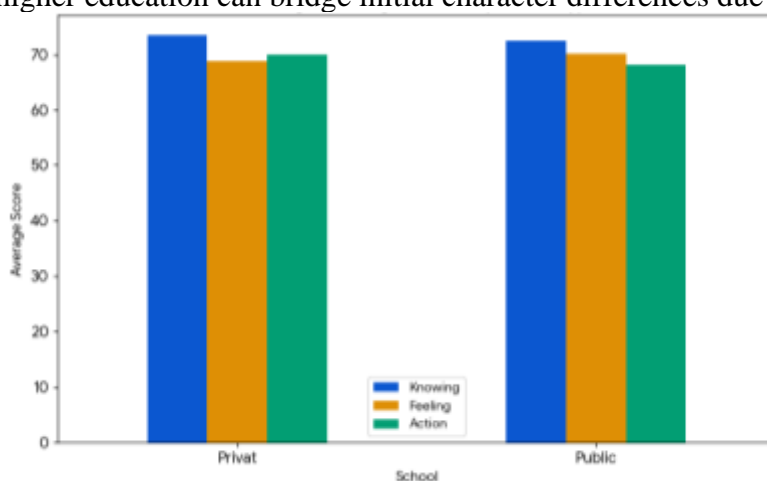


Figure 2. Knowing vs Feeling vs Action by School Type

The core thesis of this study is the observed homogeneity of moderate character among prospective teachers, regardless of their academic affiliation. As evidenced in Figure 2, the performance across four key pillars Social Inclusivity, Civic Responsibility, Conflict Resolution, and Cultural Adaptability shows a high degree of convergence. While minor variances exist, such as private school students scoring slightly higher in Cultural Adaptability (77.46) and public-school students leading in Conflict Resolution (69.38) the overall mean scores (70.23 vs 70.74) indicate that institutional origin is not a primary determinant of moderate disposition. This "institutional transcendence" suggests that the national curriculum on religious moderation has been implemented with consistent efficacy across diverse educational sectors.

The progression from conceptual awareness to behavioral manifestation follows a distinct, slightly downward trajectory across both cohorts. Figure 2 illustrates that prospective teacher operates at peak efficiency during the Moral Knowing phase ($M > 72.5$). However, there is a visible attrition in scores as they transition toward Moral Action ($M \approx 68.1-70.0$). This finding suggests that while teacher education programs excel at cognitive transmission, there remains a pedagogical challenge in fostering the "courage to act." The data implies that the participants are "theoretically moderate" but may face hesitation when confronted with real-world dilemmas that require active intervention against intolerance.

A granular analysis of indicator-level data reveals a paradox between "Universal Harmony" and "Passive Intervention." As shown in Figure 2, indicators related to Institutional Cooperation and Social Integration consistently rank as the highest strengths

(scores > 85). Paradoxically, the lowest-ranking indicators (scores < 40) revolve around Peer Intervention and Theological Apprehension.

Specifically, the low scores in disapproving peer coercion during prayer and the lingering anxiety over interfaith greetings highlight a "Passive Moderation" phenomenon. Prospective teachers are highly capable of working within a diverse system but remain cautious about challenging the status quo of their peers' religious practices. This nuanced vulnerability underscores the need for a shift in teacher training from static knowledge to dynamic, case-based advocacy and critical thinking.

The findings from this data show that there is a character value that needs to be addressed by teachers and parents in a school institution, improving previous research findings, and able to make better contributions. The results of a study conducted by Buterin Mičić, Vrkić Dimić, and Rogić (2019) stated that differences in school origin significantly affect student tolerance levels. Other research by Rahayu and Dong (2023) also found that character values are more formed by activities and habituation during college, not just by high school experiences. Extracurricular activities have a positive relationship with character education development (Rahayu and Dong 2023; Utami, Rohmatillah, and Kholid 2021), students with several determinant factors, namely internal school factors such as friends, teachers, and school climate, while external school factors are parents. The absence of significant differences between students from public and private schools in terms of moderate character can be understood as a result of a holistic value formation process, involving the interaction of various educational and social environments. This also shows that moderate character education has been quite evenly implemented in both types of schools, or that students' experiences in higher education are more dominant in shaping their current moderate attitudes (Ajzen and Fishbein 2021).

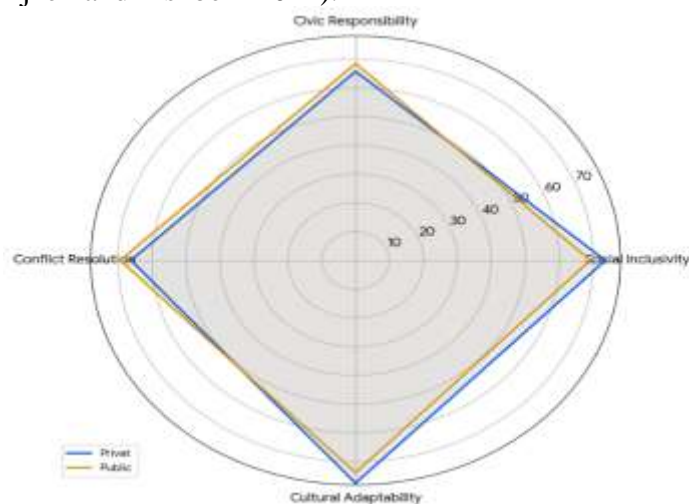


Figure 3. Multidimensional Moderating Dimensions by School Type

Figure 3 is the empirical visualization presented in the radar chart illuminate a nuanced and sophisticated interplay between institutional types and their respective performance across four critical multidimensional of moderation dimensions: Civic Responsibility, Social Inclusivity, Cultural Adaptability, and Conflict Resolution. At a macro level, the data reveals a high degree of convergence, with both private and public sectors maintaining a robust presence within the 50 to 70-point deciles, suggesting a standardized baseline of moderate values across the educational landscape. However, a granular divergence is most discernible in the domain of Cultural Adaptability, where private

institutions (blue line) exhibit a statistically superior trajectory, nearly touching the 70-point threshold. This disparity may be attributed to the specialized curricula and internationalized environments often prevalent in private sectors, which prioritize global citizenship and cross-cultural competencies as core institutional value propositions. Conversely, the public sector (orange line) maintains a slight but consistent competitive edge in Social Inclusivity and Civic Responsibility. This finding reinforces the "Common School" sociological theory, positing those public institutions, by virtue of their mandate to serve a heterogeneous demographic without restrictive entry barriers, act as natural laboratories for social cohesion and the cultivation of national civic duty. Interestingly, the dimension of Conflict Resolution serves as a point of institutional equilibrium; the near-perfect overlap of both data paths suggests that conflict mediation strategies have been harmonized across both sectors, likely due to synchronized national educational standards or shared pedagogical frameworks in emotional intelligence. Ultimately, the near-symmetrical diamond configuration of the plot signifies that while private schools excel in "adaptive" global-facing skills, public schools remain the primary anchors for "inclusive" social-facing values. This synergy suggests that a holistic model of moderation in the 21st-century educational context requires a cross-pollination of these institutional strengths, integrating the adaptive agility of the private sector with the foundational inclusivity of the public domain to produce graduates who are both globally competent and socially grounded.



Figure 4. The Structural Model Analysis (Path Coefficient)



Figure 4 provides empirical weight to the argument that higher education serves as a transformative space for "Institutional Transcendence." The moderate character construct, with an R^2 of 0.196, demonstrates that nearly one-fifth of the variance in students' moderate disposition is unified by the university ecosystem, regardless of their diverse secondary school backgrounds. This finding suggests that the shared academic environment in the Elementary School Teacher Education (PGSD) program effectively fosters a collective ideological identity, aligning with the "Equalizing Effect" hypothesized in this study.

The dominance of Cultural Adaptability (path coefficient: 0.314) and Conflict Resolution (0.215) within the model indicates that these dimensions are the primary drivers of moderation among prospective teachers. From the perspective of Vygotsky's Social Constructivism, these results imply that the university acts as a "Zone of Proximal Development," where initial sectarian or exclusive values from public or private origins are reconstructed into a more inclusive professional framework. The high factor loading in the "S-Feeling" indicator (0.418) further suggests that the university environment has successfully cultivated an affective commitment to tolerance, which is essential for future educators in a pluralistic society.

However, the structural configuration also reveals a critical "Knowing-to-Action Gap." While the model shows robust integration of moderate values, the relatively lower weights for behavioral (action) indicators across the four domains point to what can be termed as "Passive Moderation." This structural nuance implies that while the "Equalizer" effect is successful in harmonizing cognitive and affective dispositions, there is an urgent pedagogical need to move beyond theoretical discourse. To fully realize the potential of "Institutional Transcendence," teacher education programs must pivot toward experiential learning and case-based simulations to bridge the gap between moderate conviction and decisive social action.

The non-significant disparity observed in this study aligns with the findings of Dost and Priestley, Mazzoli-smith, (2023), who argue that while students from heterogeneous public school backgrounds often develop adaptive and independent characters, they may encounter challenges in cultivating a sense of institutional belonging if the subsequent campus environment lacks inclusivity. Conversely, the high scores observed among private school alumni resonate with Yasmin et al., (2021), who suggest that structured character development programs in private institutions foster sustainable values of non-violence and open-mindedness. This institutional effectiveness is often driven by principals who cultivate "communities of virtue" through specialized curricula. In contrast, Picauly (2024) identifies that although public schools integrate character education into their national curricula, optimal implementation is frequently hindered by logistical constraints, such as limited supervision and inadequate teacher training.

Analysis of specific indicators, particularly Tolerance and National Commitment, revealed higher-than-average scores across both cohorts. This suggests that the Indonesian secondary education system, regardless of institutional status, has been relatively successful in instilling fundamental nationalistic values and an appreciation for diversity. This success is reinforced by Cahyono et al., (2022), who emphasize that a diverse school climate inherently boosts student empathy and multicultural awareness. However, a nuanced divergence was noted in the Anti-violence and Radicalism indicators, where students from private schools displayed more stable and consistent scores. This stability likely stems from the habituation of dialogue and deliberation, as well as the exemplary role of teachers in conflict resolution—factors identified by Sutton et al., (2015), and Werdiningsih et al., (2024) as vital for strengthening peaceful dispositions.



From a theoretical perspective, the moderate character scores (ranging between 70–80) indicate that students are currently in a "Developing" phase. According to the triadic framework of Moral Knowing, Moral Feeling, and Moral Action, the results imply that while students possess the cognitive and affective foundations of moderation, their consistent translation into behavioral action is still evolving. The statistical homogeneity found in this study underscores that contemporary character formation is less a product of rigid institutional labeling and more a result of a complex interplay between national curriculum standards, social consistency factors, and the transformative experience of higher education.

The findings of this study reinforce the principle that planned and consistent character education is the primary catalyst for fostering moderate dispositions. As asserted by Siegel et al., (2017), character formation is a product of intentional learning, a supportive social environment, and the presence of exemplary educators. Consequently, this study confirms that previous institutional backgrounds whether public or private do not hold a deterministic influence over a student's moderate character. Higher education, therefore, must serve as a continuation of this developmental trajectory, employing contextual and relevant pedagogical approaches to transform students into agents of social change who are grounded in national values and tolerance.

These results resonate with Sulaiman et al., (2022) and Zaduqisti et al., (2020), who posit that effective multicultural education must integrate inclusive attitudes through both formal curricula and institutional culture. Similarly, Manik et al., (2025) argue that while institutional enrollment does not inherently guarantee character development, specific pedagogical strategies can significantly cultivate personal virtues alongside academic competence.

This research offers a distinct perspective compared to existing literature. While Jennings et al., (2015) examined the intersection of moderate character with socioeconomic status and race, noting, for instance, that school environments account for less than 10-15% of the variance in social outcomes compared to family background, this study focuses specifically on the "Institutional Origin" variable. Furthermore, while Metekohy et al., (2022) linked moderation to infrastructure and physical health, and Bruce Joyce & Marsha Weil, (1980) emphasized intense social interactions, this research isolates the secondary education trajectory (SMA, SMK, and MA).

The uniqueness of this finding lies in its potential to shift the paradigm for educators and parents. It suggests that the "status" of a school is secondary to the "agency" of the student and the quality of their social ecosystem. This aligns with Fitria Sari et al., (2025), who emphasizes the harmony between home, school, and society in character building. In conclusion, the data demonstrates that "Institutional Transcendence" is a reality for prospective teachers. Whether a student graduates from a public high school or a private Islamic boarding school, their level of moderation upon entering university is shaped more profoundly by parenting patterns, social interactions, and individual faith than by the administrative status of their former school. Character instillation is a holistic, ongoing process. Therefore, school status is not a significant determinant of moderate character among undergraduate PGSD students; rather, the academic climate of higher education and the surrounding social environment serve as the ultimate equalizers in forming inclusive and moderate professional educators.



Conclusion

This research demonstrates that the moderate character of prospective elementary teachers exhibits high homogeneity, transcending their diverse secondary educational origins. Empirical evidence from a One-Way ANOVA ($p = 0.791 > 0.05$) confirms that there is no significant difference in moderation levels between alumni of public and private institutions, supporting the thesis of "Institutional Transcendence" where prior sectarian identities are superseded by a unified professional identity. The university environment functions as a potent "Equalizer," facilitating an ideological convergence through an inclusive academic ecosystem and the "Identity Moratorium" phase, where students actively reconstruct values independent of secondary school indoctrination. While students achieve near-ceiling scores in conceptual anti-radicalism (4.8), a discernible "Knowing to Action Gap" in the tolerance dimension (3.7) reveals a state of "passive moderation" characterized by theological apprehension in practical intercultural social gestures. Ultimately, these findings underscore that character formation is a fluid process shaped more profoundly by holistic social, ecology including parenting, social interactions, and individual faith, than by administrative school status, necessitating a pedagogical shift toward experiential simulations to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and decisive moderate action.

Recommendation

Based on the identified limitations and the "Knowing to Action Gap" found in this study, future research should transition toward a longitudinal approach by engaging first-semester students to establish a more accurate baseline of character prior to university-level homogenization. Methodologically, future studies are recommended to broaden the scope of subjects by comparing alumni from diverse specialized backgrounds, such as traditional boarding schools versus general non-boarding institutions, while incorporating additional moderating variables like digital literacy and family socio-economic status. From a pedagogical perspective, teacher education programs must shift from purely cognitive "Moral Knowing" toward experiential "Moral Action" through case-based simulations and collaborative projects to bridge the gap between theoretical moderation and decisive social conduct. Ultimately, these efforts should aim to refine the "Equalizer" effect of higher education, ensuring that prospective teachers are equipped with the "civic courage" necessary to foster inclusive and safe learning environments.

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