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Developing and Validating the HARMONY Model: A Prophetic Values-Based Hadith Learning Approach Integrating Digital Tools to Strengthen University Students' Religious Tolerance

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Abstract. Religious tolerance in higher education is important amid exclusivist perspectives and limited contextualization of religious learning in Indonesia's plural society. Hadith instruction in Islamic Religious Education often emphasizes normative-textual understanding while giving insufficient attention to values relevant to interreligious coexistence. This study developed and preliminarily evaluated prophetic-values-based hadith learning model. A sequential exploratory mixed-methods design was employed at four Indonesian universities. The qualitative phase involved semi-structured interviews with 16 participants, producing 651 coded statements that informed the HARMONY model (Hadith Analysis and Reflective Meaning for Openness, Nurturing, and Humanity). The model integrates Maktabah Syamilah, the Encyclopedia of the Nine Hadith Imams, and ChatGPT-supported reflective dialogue. AI-generated information was treated as provisional and verified against authoritative hadith sources under lecturer supervision. The quantitative phase involved 140 students in a one-group pretest-posttest design. Data were analyzed using paired-samples t-tests, Cohen's d, and N-Gain. Expert evaluation indicated high

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model validity ($M = 3.80/4.00$). Significant improvements were observed in hadith learning competence ($t = 18.42, p < .001, d = 1.56, N\text{-Gain} = 0.71$) and self-reported religious tolerance ($t = 17.16, p < .001, d = 1.45, N\text{-Gain} = 0.68$), categorized as high and medium, respectively. These findings provide preliminary evidence of favorable short-term changes following implementation. The study supports SDG 4 through inclusive education and SDG 16 through peaceful coexistence. Further research using comparison groups, multiple measurements, and longer observation is recommended to confirm the findings and strengthen evidence of the model's effectiveness.

Keywords: Hadith learning; Prophetic values; Religious tolerance; Higher education; Islamic Religious Education

1. Introduction

Religious education has historically played an essential role in fostering literacy and moral understanding; however, within increasingly plural societies, religious learning frequently encounters exclusive truth claims that may cultivate rigid perspectives and diminish openness toward diversity (García-Alonso, 2019; Unstad & Fjørtoft, 2021). Such conditions may trigger prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination, and interreligious tensions, particularly when religious instruction emphasizes doctrinal dimensions rather than dialogue and contextual understanding (Bayramov et al., 2015; Berger, 2014). Limited understanding of religious diversity further hinders the development of tolerant attitudes, indicating that religious literacy and tolerance are closely interconnected (Seiple & Hoover, 2021b; Ubani, 2023).

In this context, religious education requires pedagogical approaches that extend beyond cognitive and normative dimensions to provide meaningful learning experiences capable of internalizing values of humanity, empathy, and respect for diversity (Seiple & Hoover, 2021b). One of the Islamic sources with considerable potential to address this challenge is hadith, as it not only conveys normative religious prescriptions but also documents the social practices of the Prophet Muhammad in establishing inclusive, dialogical, and respectful relationships across differences (Bor & Şahin, 2018; Ramli & Ashath, 2025).

Through the Prophet's narratives, actions, and exemplary conduct, hadith offers a contextual and practical dimension of learning for nurturing socially tolerant behavior (Helmy et al., 2021; Thohari et al., 2021). Therefore, hadith learning possesses strategic potential to be developed as a pedagogical medium that not only transmits religious knowledge but also instills prophetic values relevant to multicultural life, making the development of a hadith learning model grounded in prophetic values crucial as a pedagogical strategy to support religious tolerance within higher education contexts (Hardiyanto, 2020; Prayitno et al., 2022).

Recent studies have demonstrated the important role of hadith in fostering religious tolerance through theological and pedagogical approaches. Helmy et al. (2021) examined the understanding of Islamic moderation (wasatiyyah al-Islam)

based on hadith in Islamic boarding schools in Java and found that interpretations of hadith concerning interreligious relations contributed to the development of moderate attitudes and appreciation of social diversity. Thohari et al. (2021) investigated contextual hadith understanding at the Darus Sunnah International Institute for Hadith Sciences and revealed that historical-contextual approaches in hadith studies could reduce radical tendencies and encourage more tolerant perspectives.

These findings indicate that hadith learning may reduce intolerance when students are guided to understand hadith contextually, examine social cases, and reflect on the Prophet Muhammad's ethical responses to religious and social differences. Hasannia (2021) highlighted the relationship between religious intolerance and holy ignorance, finding that insufficient understanding of the Qur'an and hadith may reinforce exclusivist attitudes. This reinforces the need for religious education that promotes critical understanding rather than merely transmitting doctrinal knowledge. Ramli and Ashath (2025) through a comparative theological study, found that Islamic teachings on tolerance derived from the Qur'an and hadith share universal values with other religious traditions in fostering peaceful coexistence.

Likewise, Puyu et al. (2025) demonstrated that hadith perspectives on Muslim-non-Muslim relations emphasize principles of protection, justice, and respect toward followers of other religions. Although these studies confirm the relevance of hadith for tolerance, most of them still position hadith primarily as a theological or conceptual source. They have not yet developed a structured instructional model that translates prophetic values into concrete learning stages for strengthening students' religious tolerance in higher education. This gap is addressed in the present study by developing prophetic values-based hadith learning model that integrates source verification, contextual interpretation, reflective dialogue, and tolerance-oriented social application.

Previous Islamic education models have contributed to tolerance and prophetic character formation. Rahmat et al., (2019) emphasized Qur'an-based understandings of religious differences and inclusive attitudes, whereas (Taja et al., (2021) focused on internalizing the prophetic characteristics of *fathonah*, *siddiq*, *amanah*, and *tabligh* through the stages of knowing, doing, and being. However, neither model integrates contextual hadith interpretation, the prophetic values of humanization, liberation, and transcendence, reflective dialogue, verified digital resources, and AI-supported learning within a unified instructional sequence.

To address this gap, the present study developed HARMONY – *Hadith Analysis and Reflective Meaning for Openness, Nurturing, and HumanitY* – as a seven-stage instructional model for hadith-based tolerance education in university Islamic Religious Education courses. Its distinctive contribution lies in integrating hadith analysis, prophetic-value internalization, reflective learning, and source-verified digital support, including AI-supported dialogue. However, AI use in hadith education requires careful attention to misinformation, data privacy, and the sensitivity of religious interpretation. Accordingly, its use should be guided by

authoritative-source verification, lecturer supervision, and protection of students' personal data and religious perspectives (M. H. M. Azhar et al., 2025; Gresko, 2025).

Based on the identified pedagogical and research gaps, this study aimed to: (1) identify the challenges and pedagogical needs associated with hadith learning for religious tolerance; (2) develop and validate the HARMONY model; and (3) examine preliminary changes in students' hadith learning competence and self-reported religious tolerance following its implementation. Accordingly, the study was guided by the following research question: How can prophetic values-based hadith learning model be developed and preliminarily evaluated to support religious tolerance among university students?

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Religious Literacy, Pluralism, and the Challenges of Religious Tolerance

Religious literacy refers to the ability to understand religious teachings, practices, symbols, and social meanings contextually, enabling individuals to perceive religious diversity in a more objective and reflective manner (Lundeto, 2021). Within plural societies, religious literacy functions not merely as religious knowledge but also as a social competence that promotes respect for differences and reduces stereotypes among religious communities. Walker et al. (2021) emphasize that religious literacy plays a significant role as part of civic education in fostering shared interests within multicultural societies.

Similarly, Grim and Lambert (2021) demonstrate that cross-religious understanding enables individuals to interact more adaptively within socially diverse environments. However, limited religious literacy frequently leads to oversimplified understandings of religion, thereby creating conditions conducive to exclusivism and intolerance (Hjelm et al., 2026; Pentaris, 2023). This condition suggests that religious literacy should be understood not merely as a form of knowledge acquisition but also as a foundational element for developing inclusive social relationships.

Building upon the significance of religious literacy, pluralism provides a social framework for understanding how religious diversity can be managed through mutual respect, equality, and intergroup dialogue (Seiple & Hoover, 2022; Stewart et al., 2020). Religious pluralism should not be interpreted merely as peaceful coexistence but rather as an active process of fostering social solidarity through reciprocal respect and constructive engagement (Seiple & Hoover, 2022). Stewart et al. (2020), through the concept of covenantal pluralism, highlight the importance of legal equality and reciprocal protection among citizens in maintaining social harmony.

Research by Hunowu et al. (2025) further indicates that pluralism in Muslim-majority societies encounters challenges related to exclusivism, identity politics, and social tensions. Therefore, religious education assumes a strategic role in strengthening religious moderation through dialogical, inclusive, and religious literacy-based approaches, enabling university students to develop tolerant

attitudes within multicultural settings (Muhajir et al., 2025; Takdir, 2025). However, religious literacy does not automatically produce tolerance when it remains limited to descriptive knowledge and is disconnected from critical reflection, intergroup dialogue, and engagement with religious diversity. Therefore, religious literacy must be pedagogically integrated with reflective, ethical, and socially situated learning.

2.2 Hadith as a Source of Social Values and Prophetic Ethics

Within Islamic epistemology, hadith is understood as a source of knowledge documenting the sayings, actions, approvals, and exemplary conduct of the Prophet Muhammad, functioning both as an explanatory and operational dimension of Qur'anic teachings in social life (T. Azhar, 2024). As an epistemic source, hadith encompasses not only normative-legal dimensions but also represents social values and prophetic ethics that shape worldviews, behaviors, and interpersonal relations (Sudrajat et al., 2026; Zulkipli et al., 2017). The content of hadith embodies principles of compassion, justice, respect for diversity, social responsibility, solidarity, and protection of vulnerable groups. These values are reflected in the Prophet's courteous and persuasive communication patterns, social practices emphasizing human dignity, and efforts to establish harmony in communal life (Al Saqr et al., 2026).

From the perspective of prophetic ethics, hadith transmits values that connect spirituality with social behavior, thereby supporting contextual moral awareness (Prayitno et al., 2022). Principles such as *khilāfah* (stewardship), social justice, and humanitarian responsibility also demonstrate its relevance to poverty, social exclusion, and environmental sustainability (Reda, 2019; Sya'roni et al., 2025). Furthermore, context-sensitive hadith interpretation enables prophetic values to be related to changing cultural settings and social conditions (Hussein et al., 2025; Mhesen, 2025). However, these ethical values do not automatically produce tolerant behavior when instruction remains limited to memorization and decontextualized normative explanation. Their internalization requires source verification, contextual interpretation, reflective dialogue, and application to plural social realities. Thus, hadith provides both an ethical foundation and pedagogical content for tolerance-oriented learning.

2.3 Prophetic Values Pedagogy in Learning Model Development

Prophetic-values pedagogy extends education beyond the transmission of religious knowledge toward the cultivation of ethical awareness, spiritual responsibility, and socially inclusive conduct (Hardiyanto, 2020; Prayitno et al., 2022). In hadith learning, this orientation requires students not only to comprehend religious texts but also to examine their ethical implications for contemporary social life. Contextual interpretation and source verification support engagement with authoritative texts, while reflection and dialogue enable students to relate prophetic teachings to lived experiences and the realities of religious diversity (Fahma et al., 2025; Ramli & Ashath, 2025). When religious values are connected with contemporary social realities, learning can contribute to tolerance, acceptance of others, empathy, and social responsibility (Anas et al., 2025; Hadiyanto et al., 2025).

Dialogical and collaborative learning provides a foundation for engaging students as active participants in the construction and negotiation of meaning (Corpuz, 2025; Loes & Pascarella, 2017). Accordingly, the pedagogical framework integrates constructivist, reflective, experiential, dialogical, and critical learning principles through activities in which students verify hadith sources, exchange perspectives, reflect on experience, and formulate contextually responsible interpretations. Reflective and experiential activities connect the meanings of hadith with authentic social situations (Fahma et al., 2025), whereas critical inquiry helps students recognize prejudicial, rigid, and exclusionary assumptions. Through collaborative inquiry, religious understanding can be linked to critical awareness and socially responsible action (Freire, 1985; Slavutzky & Gosselin, 2025). These interconnected principles are particularly relevant to contextualized, digitally supported, and tolerance-oriented religious learning (A. Azhar et al., 2025; Mansoor et al., 2025).

Humanization, liberation, and transcendence constitute an integrated ethical framework for prophetic-values-based pedagogy (A. Azhar et al., 2025; Ikhwan et al., 2025). Humanization directs learning toward empathy, human dignity, respect for diversity, inclusive communication, and peaceful coexistence (Stewart et al., 2020). Liberation encourages students to critically examine prejudice, discrimination, rigid textualism, and exclusionary religious assumptions, whereas transcendence anchors this critical engagement in spiritual awareness, prophetic ethics, and moral responsibility.

In contemporary pedagogical practice, these dimensions can be operationalized through reflective, dialogical, collaborative, and technology-supported activities (A. Azhar et al., 2025; Ikhwan et al., 2025). Accordingly, the development of the learning model was guided by three theoretical propositions: (1) contextual and source-verified hadith analysis extends religious literacy beyond literal comprehension; (2) the internalization of prophetic values requires dialogical, reflective, experiential, and collaborative learning; and (3) tolerance-oriented learning connects the ethical meanings of hadith with plural social realities and socially responsible action.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Procedure

This study employed a mixed-methods sequential exploratory design to develop and preliminarily evaluate prophetic-values-based hadith learning model for supporting religious tolerance. The qualitative phase constituted the primary strand and explored challenges in hadith learning and relevant pedagogical needs through interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. The qualitative findings subsequently informed the formulation of the learning model.

Integration occurred during model development by translating the qualitative themes into learning objectives, instructional procedures, learning activities, digital supports, and assessment indicators. The quantitative phase served as the secondary strand and employed a pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design to examine within-participant changes in hadith learning competence and

self-reported religious tolerance following model implementation. Consistent with the methodological procedure clarified in response to the previous reviewer's comment, the study proceeded through four stages: needs analysis, model development, expert validation, and preliminary quantitative assessment of pretest-posttest changes (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Because no control or comparison group was included, the observed changes could not be attributed exclusively to the model and were interpreted as preliminary evidence associated with its implementation rather than as causal effects. Nevertheless, the one-group design remained vulnerable to potential testing, maturation, history, Hawthorne, instructor, and social-desirability effects.

3.2 Research Setting

The study was conducted at four higher education institutions in West Java, Indonesia, comprising two public universities and two private universities offering Islamic Religious Education courses. The institutions were selected purposively to represent diversity in governance systems, academic culture, and student backgrounds. Such diversity provided varied and authentic contexts for examining the development and implementation of a prophetic values-based hadith learning model. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their active involvement in Islamic Religious Education courses and their relevance to the study objectives.

3.3 Participants

The qualitative phase involved 16 participants purposively selected based on their direct experience with hadith learning in Islamic Religious Education courses and their ability to provide information relevant to the research objectives. Sample adequacy was determined through thematic saturation, which was assessed concurrently with data collection by comparing the codes emerging from successive interviews. No substantively new codes or themes emerged after the fourteenth interview. Two additional interviews were conducted to confirm this pattern, after which data collection was concluded because the information obtained only reinforced the existing thematic categories.

The quantitative phase involved 140 university students from four higher education institutions offering Islamic Religious Education courses. Participants were selected purposively based on their active enrollment in the relevant courses and the suitability of their learning contexts for implementing the developed model. All participants completed the hadith learning competence and religious tolerance instruments before and after the intervention and were included in the one-group pretest-posttest analysis. Purposive sampling may have introduced selection bias and limited the representativeness and generalizability of the findings across different institutional contexts.

The quantitative phase was intended to provide a preliminary empirical evaluation of the developed model in authentic higher education settings. Because the study did not include a control or comparison group, the findings were interpreted as evidence of within-group change rather than definitive causal effectiveness. Participation in both phases was voluntary, with informed consent,

confidentiality, identity protection, and the right to withdraw without academic consequences.

3.4 Data Collection and Research Instrument

Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 16 purposively selected participants. The interviews explored existing hadith-learning practices, instructional challenges, students' learning needs, understandings of prophetic values, and the integration of religious tolerance into hadith instruction. With participants' consent, the interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and anonymized before analysis. Data collection and preliminary coding were conducted concurrently to assess thematic saturation. No substantive new codes or themes emerged after the fourteenth interview, and two additional interviews were conducted to confirm that the data only reinforced the existing thematic categories.

Quantitative data were collected using the hadith learning competence and religious tolerance instruments administered to the same 140 participants. The pretest was conducted before the first instructional session to establish baseline scores, while the post test was administered after the final session under comparable conditions. Anonymous participant codes were used to match the paired responses while maintaining confidentiality and protecting participants' identities.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

Instrument validity and reliability were assessed to ensure measurement accuracy and consistency. Content validity was evaluated by three experts in Islamic Religious Education, Hadith Studies, and instructional design. Their ratings ranged from 3.76 to 3.84 on a four-point scale, with an overall mean of 3.80, indicating that the instrument was categorized as very valid. Empirical testing involved 30 students who were not included in the main study. Corrected item-total correlations ranged from .42 to .81, exceeding the critical value of $r = .361$ at the .05 significance level; therefore, all items were retained.

The five-item hadith learning competence subscale yielded Cronbach's $\alpha = .78$, while the six-item positive tolerance subscale yielded $\alpha = .76$. The four negatively worded intolerance items were reverse coded before analysis and yielded $\alpha = .70$. When the positive tolerance and reverse-coded intolerance items were combined, the ten-item religious tolerance scale yielded $\alpha = .74$. The overall 15-item instrument produced Cronbach's $\alpha = .72$, indicating acceptable internal consistency for this preliminary study.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis followed the sequential exploratory mixed-methods design by integrating qualitative and quantitative procedures. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically through coding, categorization, theme development, and interpretation to identify pedagogical needs, prophetic values, and the conceptual basis of the developed hadith learning model. NVivo was used to organize interview transcripts, manage coded segments, group related codes, and visualize emerging thematic patterns. The coding process was collaboratively reviewed

through iterative research-team discussions to strengthen analytical credibility and achieve thematic agreement. A saturation log was also maintained to document the emergence, repetition, and stabilization of codes and themes across successive interviews. Qualitative rigor was supported through concurrent data collection and analysis, maintenance of an audit trail, saturation monitoring, and collaborative review of codes and themes. Differences in coding or interpretation were discussed iteratively by the research team until thematic agreement was reached.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in IBM SPSS Statistics. Because the pretest and posttest scores were obtained from the same 140 participants, a homogeneity-of-variance test for independent groups was not required. The normality assumption was instead examined using the Shapiro-Wilk test on the difference scores between each participant's pretest and posttest results. Changes in hadith learning competence and self-reported religious tolerance were analyzed using paired-samples *t*-tests, Cohen's d_z for paired observations, and N-Gain. N-Gain scores were interpreted according to Hake's (1998) criteria: low (< 0.30), medium ($0.30-0.69$), and high (≥ 0.70).

Additionally, a sensitivity power analysis for a two-tailed paired-samples *t*-test was conducted using $\alpha = .05$, statistical power of .80, and 140 paired observations. The analysis indicated that the sample was sufficiently sensitive to detect a minimum standardized mean difference of approximately 0.24. However, this analysis only indicated the detectable magnitude of within-participant change and did not establish sample representativeness or causal inference. Institutional affiliation was treated as contextual variation rather than as a controlled or comparative factor.

Consequently, possible institution-level influences could not be separated from the observed within-participant changes and were considered when interpreting the findings. Integration occurred at two points. First, the qualitative themes were translated into learning objectives, instructional procedures, learning activities, digital supports, and assessment indicators during model development. Second, at the interpretation stage, the quantitative patterns of change were compared with the qualitative themes to assess whether the observed outcomes were consistent with the pedagogical needs and model components identified during the exploratory phase.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

All participants received information about the study objectives, procedures, voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality, and their right to withdraw without academic consequences. Written informed consent was obtained before data collection. Identifying information was removed from interview transcripts and quantitative datasets, and anonymous codes were used to match pretest and posttest responses. Students were not required to enter personally identifiable or sensitive religious information during AI-supported activities. AI-generated content was treated as provisional and verified against authoritative hadith sources under lecturer supervision.

4. Results

4.1 Needs Analysis in the Qualitative Phase

The qualitative needs analysis examined 651 coded statements from in-depth interviews with 16 participants. The participants consisted of four Islamic Religious Education lecturers and twelve university students from four higher education institutions. Thematic analysis identified four major themes: the dominance of normative-textual hadith learning, limited internalization of religious tolerance values, the need for dialogical and reflective learning experiences, and the urgency of developing prophetic values-based hadith learning model. Each theme is presented with the main findings, representative participant statements, and implications for learning model development.

4.1.1 Theme 1: Dominance of Normative-Textual Hadith Learning

Analysis of 176 statements indicated that hadith learning in higher education remains predominantly normative and textual. Most participants explained that learning activities focused mainly on literal interpretation, memorization, and legal-religious aspects of hadith. Connections between hadith meanings and the social realities of religious diversity were still limited. One student remarked, "Hadith learning focuses more on the content and legal rulings of hadith, but there is still limited discussion about how it applies to living with people of different religions" (M7). Another student added, "We learn the meaning of hadith, but there is little emphasis on how hadith shapes social attitudes" (M2). Similarly, a lecturer stated, "The approach to hadith instruction remains predominantly conceptual and has not yet fully embraced contextual dimensions" (D2).

These findings show that hadith learning has not yet fully connected textual understanding with students' everyday social experiences. This limitation may reduce students' opportunities to understand hadith as practical ethical guidance for living in religiously diverse contexts. Therefore, the researcher identified the need for a pedagogical model that links hadith texts with contextual social realities and supports the development of religious tolerance.

4.1.2 Theme 2: Limited Internalization of Religious Tolerance Values

The second theme was supported by 158 statements indicating limitations in the internalization of tolerance values within hadith learning. Participants acknowledged that although Islam teaches respect for others, learning activities had not systematically guided students toward reflective experiences related to religious tolerance. One student explained, "We know that Islam teaches mutual respect, but there has not been much learning that connects these teachings with everyday life" (M3). Another participant noted, "Tolerance is usually mentioned only briefly and is not treated as a major focus of learning" (M9). A lecturer further explained, "The values of tolerance exist within hadith, but they have not yet been transformed into learning activities that shape students' behavior" (D4).

These findings suggest that tolerance values are present in hadith learning but have not been systematically translated into instructional practice. The implication is that students may understand tolerance cognitively but lack

structured opportunities to internalize it as social behavior. From the researcher's perspective, this result indicates the need for a learning model that explicitly integrates tolerance-oriented activities, structured reflection, and socially situated learning experiences.

4.1.3 Theme 3: Need for Dialogic and Reflective Learning Experiences

A total of 149 statements reflected participants' expectations for hadith learning that is more dialogical, reflective, and contextualized. Students expressed the need for learning experiences that move beyond one-way instruction and provide opportunities to discuss social issues related to religious diversity. One student stated, "We understand hadith more easily when it is connected to real-life examples in society" (M11). Another added, "Discussions about social cases help us better understand how Islam teaches respect for differences" (M6). A lecturer emphasized, "Lecture-based instruction alone is insufficient; students need spaces for dialogue and reflection on the meanings of hadith" (D1).

These responses show that students and lecturers expect hadith learning to be more interactive and connected to real-life social contexts. The raw data indicate that dialogue, reflection, and contextual discussion are important for helping students construct deeper meanings from hadith. Therefore, the researcher interpreted this theme as evidence of the need for a learning model that facilitates collaborative discussion, reflective meaning-making, and contextual application of hadith values.

4.1.4 Theme 4: Urgency of a Prophetic Values-Based Hadith Learning Model

The fourth theme, supported by 168 statements, highlighted the urgency of developing prophetic values-based hadith learning model to strengthen students' religious tolerance. Participants emphasized that hadith instruction should place greater emphasis on the Prophet Muhammad's exemplary conduct in responding to differences and fostering harmonious social relationships. A lecturer stated, "The Prophet's example in respecting others should become an essential component of hadith learning" (D3). A student similarly expressed, "When hadith is explained through examples of the Prophet's attitudes toward differences, we understand the meaning of tolerance more easily" (M5). Another participant affirmed, "Learning becomes more meaningful when we do not only understand the text but also the Prophet's lived values in practice" (M10).

These responses indicate that participants viewed prophetic values as an important pedagogical foundation for connecting hadith learning with the development of religious tolerance. The findings suggest that students understand tolerance more meaningfully when hadith is linked to the Prophet Muhammad's lived example in responding to diversity and social differences. From the researcher's perspective, this result demonstrates the need for a systematic learning model that integrates the dimensions of humanization, liberation, and transcendence into students' learning experiences, thereby enabling hadith learning to function not only as textual understanding but also as value internalization and social practice.

Overall, the four themes indicate that hadith learning in higher education still faces challenges in linking textual understanding with the contextual internalization of religious tolerance values. The findings reinforce the need for a learning model that extends beyond normative instruction by integrating dialogue, reflection, and prophetic exemplarity into the learning process. Accordingly, the results of the needs analysis served as the conceptual foundation for developing prophetic values-based hadith learning model aimed at strengthening students' religious tolerance in a more systematic and applicable manner.

4.2 Development of Model

4.2.1 Model Design

Based on the findings of the needs analysis, this study developed prophetic values-based hadith learning model named HARMONY (Hadith Analysis and Reflective Meaning for Openness, Nurturing, and Humanity). The model was designed to strengthen students' religious tolerance through hadith learning that is more contextualized, reflective, and applicable to contemporary social realities. Its implementation was supported by integrated digital learning resources, including Maktabah Syamilah for classical hadith literature and the Encyclopedia of the Nine Hadith Imams for hadith retrieval and verification.

ChatGPT was used to facilitate the exploration of hadith meanings and reflective dialogue; however, it was not positioned as an authoritative source of religious knowledge. To manage potential inaccuracies or hallucinated responses, students were instructed to verify AI-generated outputs using authoritative hadith references and lecturer guidance. AI-generated reflections were treated as preliminary prompts for discussion rather than final religious interpretations. Ethically, students were guided to use AI responsibly by maintaining source verification, critical evaluation, and respect for established Islamic scholarship.

The instructional syntax of the model consisted of seven interrelated stages summarized through the acronym HARMONY, namely Hadith Identification, Authentic Source Analysis, Reflective Understanding, Meaning Construction, Openness Dialogue, Nurturing Values, and Yielding Social Harmony. Each stage incorporated specific instructional actions, learning targets, and intended outcomes designed to bridge textual comprehension of hadith with the internalization of religious tolerance values. The pedagogical structure of the HARMONY model is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The Syntax of the HARMONY Model in Prophetic Values-Based Hadith Learning for Strengthening Religious Tolerance

Stage	HARMONY Syntax	Learning Activities	Learning Target	Expected Outcome
1	H - Hadith Identification	Identifying diversity-related issues and hadith themes	Social awareness	Tolerance sensitivity
2	A - Authentic Source Analysis	Exploring hadith through <i>Maktabah Syamilah</i> and the <i>Encyclopedia of the Nine Hadith Imams</i>	Hadith literacy	Authentic understanding
3	R - Reflective Understanding	Reflecting on prophetic values embedded in hadith	Moral awareness	Understanding of tolerance
4	M - Meaning Construction	Relating hadith to contemporary social contexts	Contextual interpretation	Social relevance
5	O - Openness Dialogue	Collaborative dialogue facilitated by ChatGPT	Openness of thought	Inclusive communication
6	N - Nurturing Values	Reflection and simulation of tolerant behavior	Value internalization	Social empathy
7	Y - Yielding Social Harmony	Implementing tolerance-oriented actions	Social practice	Social harmony

As illustrated in Table 1, the HARMONY model positioned hadith learning as a pedagogical process that gradually integrates textual literacy, reflection on prophetic values, and social experience. Through this sequential process, students were encouraged not only to comprehend hadith at the textual level but also to internalize its ethical and social implications within multicultural settings. Accordingly, the model was expected to strengthen religious tolerance in a more systematic, contextualized, and practically applicable manner.

4.2.2 Instructional Implementation of the HARMONY Model

The HARMONY model was implemented over eight consecutive weeks, with one 150-minute session per week, totaling 1,200 minutes. The stages of *Hadith Identification*, *Authentic Source Analysis*, *Reflective Understanding*, *Meaning Construction*, *Nurturing Values*, and *Yielding Social Harmony* were each allocated one session, whereas *Openness Dialogue* was conducted over two sessions to provide sufficient time for exploring different perspectives and verifying arguments.

During the first two weeks, students identified issues related to religious diversity and retrieved relevant hadiths from authoritative sources under the instructor's guidance. The learning materials included hadiths concerning respect for a Jewish funeral procession (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, no. 1312), speaking positively or remaining silent (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, no. 6018), gentleness in human conduct (*Sahih Muslim*, no. 2594), and the principle that human beings are evaluated according to their hearts and deeds rather than their appearance or wealth (*Sahih Muslim*, no. 2564).

Students verified the texts and examined their relevance to human dignity, interreligious respect, non-discrimination, and peaceful coexistence.

During the third and fourth weeks, students reflected on the selected hadiths and connected their ethical meanings with contemporary social and digital contexts. During *Reflective Understanding*, students answered questions such as: “What prophetic value is conveyed by this hadith?”, “How does it relate to contemporary religious diversity?”, “What attitudes contradict its message?”, and “What responsible action should students take?” Responses were written individually, discussed in small groups, and revised following lecturer feedback. Reflective understanding was assessed using a four-point rubric covering textual comprehension, identification of prophetic values, contextual relevance, recognition of different perspectives, and socially responsible action. Students subsequently constructed contextual interpretations by relating the hadiths to actual cases of religious diversity.

During weeks five and six, students participated in structured dialogues addressing religious differences, prejudice, discriminatory communication, and peaceful disagreement. The instructor established discussion rules, encouraged balanced participation, guided the verification of arguments, and corrected unsupported interpretations. In the seventh week, students engaged in role-playing and case simulations to practise empathy, respectful communication, and tolerance-oriented conduct. In the final week, they designed social actions applicable to campus or digital environments. Assessment throughout the implementation included source-verification tasks, reflective journals, contextual analyses, dialogue performance, role-playing, and social-action projects.

4.2.3 Expert Validation of the HARMONY Model

Following the model development phase, expert validation was conducted to assess the feasibility and conceptual appropriateness of the HARMONY model prior to implementation in limited-scale trials. Validation involved three experts representing the fields of Islamic Religious Education, hadith studies, and instructional design. The evaluation focused on conceptual alignment, clarity of instructional syntax, integration of prophetic values, and implementation feasibility. The results of the expert validation are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Expert Validation Results of the HARMONY Model

Validator	Expertise	Score	Category
Validator 1	Islamic Religious Education	3.84	Very Valid
Validator 2	Hadith Studies	3.76	Very Valid
Validator 3	Instructional Design	3.81	Very Valid
Average		3.80	Very Valid

As shown in Table 2, the HARMONY model achieved an average score of 3.80 out of 4.00, categorized as very valid, indicating strong conceptual appropriateness and implementation feasibility. These findings suggested that the model demonstrates sufficient pedagogical coherence, integration of prophetic values, and instructional clarity to proceed to the limited-scale implementation stage.

Consequently, the HARMONY model was deemed suitable for further empirical testing to evaluate its effectiveness in strengthening students' religious tolerance.

4.3 Quantitative Phase: Empirical Testing of the HARMONY Model

The quantitative phase involved 140 university students from four higher education institutions offering Islamic Religious Education courses to examine pre-post changes of the HARMONY model through a pretest-posttest design. Measurement was conducted based on indicators of religious tolerance encompassing passive tolerance, active tolerance, passive intolerance, and active intolerance. In addition, students' hadith learning competence was assessed through indicators related to hadith literacy, contextual understanding, prophetic reflection, and dialogical explanation skills. Descriptive analysis demonstrated improvements in tolerance scores alongside a reduction in intolerance tendencies following the implementation of the HARMONY model, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Hadith Learning Competence and Religious Tolerance Before and After the HARMONY Model Implementation (N = 140)

Dimension	Indicator	Test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hadith Learning Competence	Hadith Search Skills	Pretest	140	2.88	0.61
		Posttest	140	4.12	0.46
	Hadith Verification Skills	Pretest	140	2.75	0.58
		Posttest	140	4.03	0.49
	Contextual Understanding of Hadith	Pretest	140	3.01	0.56
		Posttest	140	4.21	0.43
	Prophetic Values Reflection	Pretest	140	3.08	0.52
		Posttest	140	4.26	0.40
	Dialogic Explanation Skills	Pretest	140	2.94	0.59
		Posttest	140	4.18	0.45
Passive Tolerance	Acceptance of Differences	Pretest	140	3.18	0.54
		Posttest	140	4.21	0.43
	Respect for Different Beliefs	Pretest	140	3.24	0.49
		Posttest	140	4.28	0.39
	Recognition of Religious Rights	Pretest	140	3.11	0.56
		Posttest	140	4.19	0.44
Active Tolerance	Support for Religious Practices	Pretest	140	2.97	0.61
		Posttest	140	4.08	0.48
	Inclusive Social Interaction	Pretest	140	3.05	0.57
		Posttest	140	4.14	0.42
	Openness to Dialogue	Pretest	140	3.09	0.53
		Posttest	140	4.23	0.40
Passive Intolerance	Prejudice	Pretest	140	3.02	0.58
		Posttest	140	2.14	0.51
	Exclusivism	Pretest	140	2.96	0.55
		Posttest	140	2.07	0.46
Active Intolerance	Discrimination	Pretest	140	2.76	0.63
		Posttest	140	1.95	0.47
	Rejection of Differences	Pretest	140	2.81	0.59
		Posttest	140	1.88	0.45

As shown in Table 3, the descriptive findings indicated improvements across all indicators of hadith learning competence and religious tolerance following the implementation of the HARMONY model. The most substantial gains were observed in hadith search and verification skills, contextual understanding of hadith, and reflection on prophetic values. In relation to tolerance, notable increases emerged in both passive and active tolerance indicators, particularly respect for different beliefs and openness to dialogue. Simultaneously, passive and active intolerance indicators—including prejudice, exclusivism, and discriminatory tendencies—demonstrated a consistent decline. These findings suggest that the HARMONY model holds substantial potential for strengthening students' hadith learning competence while simultaneously enhancing religious tolerance.

4.3.1 Assumption Testing: Normality and Homogeneity

Before conducting the paired-samples *t*-tests, the normality assumption was examined using the Shapiro-Wilk test. Because the pretest and posttest scores were obtained from the same 140 participants, the test was applied to the difference scores calculated by subtracting each participant's pretest score from the corresponding posttest score. A homogeneity-of-variance test was not required because the analysis involved paired observations rather than independent groups. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test for Pretest-Posttest Difference Scores (N = 140)

Variable	Difference Score	Statistics (W)	<i>p</i>
Hadith Learning Competence	Posttest – Pretest	0.986	0.162
Religious Tolerance	Posttest – Pretest	0.983	0.078

As shown in Table 4, the Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that the difference scores for hadith learning competence ($W = 0.986$, $p = .162$) and religious tolerance ($W = 0.983$, $p = .078$) did not significantly deviate from normality. Because both *p*-values were greater than .05, the normality assumption for the paired-samples *t*-tests was satisfied. Therefore, paired-samples *t*-tests were considered appropriate for examining the pretest-posttest changes.

4.3.2 Statistical Analysis of Pretest-Posttest Changes

The pretest-posttest changes associated with the implementation of the HARMONY model were examined using paired-samples *t*-tests, Cohen's *d*, and N-Gain analysis. Paired-samples *t*-tests were used to determine whether the mean differences between the pretest and posttest scores were statistically significant. Cohen's *d* was calculated to estimate the magnitude of the standardized mean differences, while N-Gain analysis was used to assess the degree of improvement. N-Gain scores were interpreted according to Hake's (1998) criteria: low (< 0.30), medium (0.30–0.69), and high (≥ 0.70). The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Paired-Samples t-Test, Effect Size, and N-Gain Results

Variable	Mean Difference	t	p	Cohen's d	N-Gain	Category
Hadith Learning Competence	1.19	18.42	<.001	1.56	0.71	High
Religious Tolerance	1.08	17.16	<.001	1.45	0.68	Medium

As shown in Table 5, statistically significant pretest–posttest differences were observed in hadith learning competence, $t(139) = 18.42, p < .001$, and self-reported religious tolerance, $t(139) = 17.16, p < .001$. The N-Gain score was 0.71 for hadith learning competence, categorized as high, and 0.68 for religious tolerance, categorized as medium according to Hake's (1998) classification. Cohen's d values were 1.56 and 1.45, respectively.

Based on Cohen's (1988) conventional benchmarks of approximately 0.20, 0.50, and 0.80 for small, medium, and large standardized mean differences, both values were categorized as large. Descriptive findings also indicated reductions in passive and active intolerance indicators, including prejudice, exclusivism, discrimination, and rejection of differences. Overall, the findings demonstrate substantial within-participant changes following the implementation of the HARMONY model. However, because the study did not include a control or comparison group, these changes cannot be attributed exclusively to the model and may also reflect testing, maturation, Hawthorne, social-desirability, or other contextual effects.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that prophetic values-based hadith learning model can be developed through contextual, reflective, and dialogical pedagogy. Its implementation was associated with meaningful changes in students' hadith learning competence and self-reported religious tolerance. The needs analysis showed that previous hadith learning practices were largely normative-textual and insufficiently connected to the social realities of religious diversity. This means that students may understand hadith conceptually but still need structured learning experiences to translate its ethical messages into tolerant attitudes and social interactions.

These findings support previous studies showing that contextual hadith understanding contributes to moderation and respect for social pluralism (Helmy et al., 2021; Thohari et al., 2021). They also align with studies indicating that limited religious literacy may contribute to exclusivism and weak interreligious understanding (Hasannia, 2021; Seiple & Hoover, 2021a; Ubani, 2023). Therefore, pedagogical transformation in hadith learning refers to shifting from the mere transmission of normative knowledge toward learning activities that help students reflect on, discuss, and apply prophetic ethical values in diverse social contexts.

The development of the HARMONY model indicates that prophetic values-based hadith learning may bridge textual comprehension and the cultivation of religious tolerance through a structured learning sequence. This process occurs because the model guides students to identify relevant hadith themes, verify sources, reflect on prophetic values, discuss social issues, and relate hadith meanings to contemporary religious diversity. Through these stages, students are not only asked to understand hadith textually but also to interpret its ethical implications for social life.

Reflective and dialogical activities enable students to examine different perspectives, connect religious teachings with lived realities, and develop more inclusive understandings of Islamic values. These findings support the view that value-based learning can foster moral awareness and social responsibility (Hardiyanto, 2020; Prayitno et al., 2022). They also align with constructivist and experiential learning theories, which emphasize active meaning-making through reflection, collaboration, and experience (Bada & Olusegun, 2015; Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Loes & Pascarella, 2017). Accordingly, hadith functions not only as a normative source of religious instruction but also as a pedagogical medium for cultivating inclusive social character.

The quantitative findings indicate substantial within-participant pretest-posttest changes in students' hadith learning competence following the implementation of the HARMONY model. Changes in hadith retrieval, verification, and contextual interpretation suggest that the use of digital resources supported students in accessing and examining hadith texts more systematically. Maktabah Syamilah and the Encyclopedia of the Nine Hadith Imams provided students with access to classical hadith sources and verification procedures, while ChatGPT functioned as a guided reflective tool for generating discussion prompts and helping students explore the social meanings of hadith.

However, AI-generated responses were not treated as authoritative religious interpretations. Instead, they were verified against authoritative hadith sources and lecturer guidance. In this sense, the role of AI in this study was limited to supporting reflective dialogue and critical questioning rather than replacing scholarly interpretation. This finding suggests that AI-assisted learning may contribute to religious education when it is combined with source verification, ethical guidance, and teacher supervision. Such an approach aligns with studies emphasizing the potential of digital tools to support religious literacy, reflective thinking, and contextual learning (Mansoor et al., 2025; Walker et al., 2021).

The observed changes in self-reported active tolerance and intolerance indicators suggest that prophetic values-based hadith learning may be associated with the development of more tolerant attitudes. The reported changes were not limited to students' acceptance of differences but also extended to indicators of social support, inclusive interaction, and openness to dialogue. At the same time, the lower posttest scores on prejudice, exclusivism, discrimination, and rejection of differences indicate lower self-reported intolerant tendencies. This pattern suggests that tolerance development involves both the strengthening of positive

social attitudes and the weakening of exclusionary dispositions. These findings are consistent with the view that tolerance should be understood as an active form of respect for differences, not merely passive recognition (Höffe, 2015; Stewart et al., 2020). They also align with the notion of covenantal pluralism, which emphasizes reciprocal respect, protection of rights, and peaceful coexistence in plural societies (Stewart et al., 2020; Takdir, 2025). Thus, the findings suggest that the model may provide a promising pedagogical framework for supporting cognitive development and socio-ethical readiness for living harmoniously in multicultural environments. Nevertheless, because tolerance was measured using a self-report questionnaire, these changes should not be interpreted as direct evidence of behavioral change.

The originality of this study lies in the development of the HARMONY model as a structured pedagogical design for prophetic values-based hadith learning. The model integrates classical hadith literacy, source verification, reflective dialogue, and tolerance-oriented learning activities into a coherent instructional syntax. Unlike conventional Tarbiyah-based approaches that often emphasize teacher-centered moral transmission, the HARMONY model positions students as active participants in verifying hadith, reflecting on prophetic values, and discussing their relevance to religious diversity. In this way, the study extends previous research that mainly positioned hadith as a conceptual source for moderation and tolerance (Helmy et al., 2021; Ramli & Ashath, 2025). It operationalizes hadith learning as an applied, reflective, and measurable pedagogical experience.

Theoretically, this study demonstrates how prophetic values can be operationalized through a structured pedagogical model integrating hadith literacy, source verification, reflective dialogue, and tolerance-oriented learning. Practically, the HARMONY model may be adapted for Islamic Religious Education courses in settings with curricular, institutional, and participant characteristics comparable to those of the participating institutions in West Java. However, its applicability to religiously diverse student populations, institutions outside West Java, and other educational contexts requires further investigation.

Overall, the findings provide preliminary evidence of meaningful pretest–posttest changes associated with the implementation of the developed model. However, because this study employed a one-group pretest–posttest design without a control or comparison group, the observed changes cannot be attributed exclusively to the model. Testing effects, maturation, the Hawthorne effect, social-desirability bias, and contextual conditions during implementation may also have influenced the results. Future studies should employ randomized or quasi-experimental designs, include comparison groups and delayed follow-up measurements, and combine self-report instruments with behavioral observations to examine the model’s effects and the sustainability of the observed changes more rigorously.

6. Conclusion

This study concluded that the HARMONY model can be developed as a prophetic values-based approach to hadith learning that integrates contextual exploration, reflective dialogue, and digital support. The needs analysis revealed that existing hadith instruction remained predominantly normative-textual and provided limited opportunities for students to internalize tolerance values. Expert validation indicated that the model was highly valid, while its implementation was associated with meaningful pretest-posttest changes in students' hadith learning competence and self-reported religious tolerance, including reduced intolerance tendencies. However, because the study employed a one-group pretest-posttest design without a control group, these findings should be interpreted as preliminary evidence of changes associated with the model's implementation rather than definitive evidence of causal effectiveness. Theoretically, the study contributes to transformative and character-oriented hadith pedagogy. Practically, it provides a promising instructional framework for promoting more inclusive and socially responsive Islamic Religious Education in higher education.

Future studies are recommended to examine the applicability of the HARMONY model across different universities, academic programs, and Islamic Religious Education settings. Research using control or comparison groups could provide more robust evidence regarding its relative effectiveness, while longitudinal designs may help assess whether changes in students' religious tolerance are sustained over time. Further studies may also refine the pedagogical components of prophetic values-based hadith learning. Where AI or other digital tools are used, their role should remain supplementary, critically guided, and verified against authoritative academic and hadith sources.

This study was limited to four higher education institutions and used a one-group pretest-posttest design without a comparison group. Therefore, the findings represent preliminary within-participant improvements rather than causal evidence of effectiveness. Testing, maturation, instructor influence, contextual factors, and social-desirability bias may have affected the results. Moreover, brief self-report instruments may not fully capture hadith learning competence, tolerant attitudes, or actual behavior. Future studies should use control groups, performance-based measures, more diverse samples, and longitudinal follow-up.

7. Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest related to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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9. Declaration of AI Use

The authors declare that AI-based tools, namely Claude and Grammarly, were used solely to review grammar, clarity, readability, and language consistency in selected parts of the manuscript, particularly the abstract, introduction, theoretical framework, discussion, and conclusion. These tools were not used for data analysis, interpretation of findings, development of arguments, or generation of scientific content. All intellectual responsibility for the study design, analysis, interpretation, and final manuscript remains entirely with the authors.

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