

Interfaith Dialogue in Islam

Dialog Antar Agama dalam Islam

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ABSTRACT

This research reviews the importance of interreligious dialogue in Islam and highlights the factors that contribute to its effectiveness. Through the analysis of a systematic literature review, it was found that the recognition of similarities between religions, the maintenance of fundamental beliefs, the avoidance of indifference to one's own religion, and the promotion of peaceful coexistence in interreligious dialogue are positively related to the public's perception of the effectiveness of the dialogue. These findings show the importance of building an inclusive and respectful dialogue environment in achieving the goals of interfaith dialogue that benefits society at large.

Keywords: *Interreligious Dialogue, Islam, Effectiveness, Recognition of Similarities, Maintenance of Fundamental Beliefs, Avoiding Indifference, Promotion of Peaceful Living Together.*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengulas pentingnya dialog antar agama dalam Islam dan menyoroti faktor-faktor yang berkontribusi terhadap efektivitasnya. Melalui analisis tinjauan literatur sistematis, ditemukan bahwa pengakuan kesamaan antar agama, pemeliharaan keyakinan fundamental, menghindari ketidakpedulian terhadap agama sendiri, dan promosi kehidupan bersama yang damai dalam dialog antar agama berhubungan positif dengan persepsi masyarakat terhadap efektivitas dialog tersebut. Temuan ini menunjukkan pentingnya membangun lingkungan dialog yang inklusif dan menghargai dalam mencapai tujuan dialog antar agama yang bermanfaat bagi masyarakat secara luas.

Keywords: *Dialog antar agama, Islam, Efektivitas, Pengakuan Kesamaan, Pemeliharaan Keyakinan Fundamental, Menghindari Ketidakpedulian, Promosi Kehidupan Bersama Damai.*

Introduction

Interfaith dialogue in Islam refers to the dialogic endeavor of the followers of different religions, especially on a scholarly level, to recognize and stress common phenomena in various religions in a bid to proceed towards the common goal of communal harmony. Islam has not left this field unexplored, and Islamic directives in this regard are very clear. Muslims have interacted with and sought to engage other religious individuals and communities in a spirit of mutual respect and tolerance since the earliest years of Islam (Sanaullah,2014). The objective of interfaith dialogue is to make human beings better humans and improve their morality so that they may live in peace and harmony and refrain from harming one another (Prentice,2022). However, dialoguers cannot compromise on fundamentals or opt for syncretism and universal religion, nor can they engage in a dialogue that creates indifference to their religion (Raza,2022).

Interfaith dialogue in Islam is viewed as an essential means to promote peaceful coexistence and harmony among people of different religious backgrounds. Islamic directives are clear in emphasizing the importance of recognizing and stressing commonalities among various religions to work towards communal harmony. However, it is also emphasized that Muslims engaging in interfaith dialogue should not compromise on fundamental beliefs or

promote syncretism and universal religion. Islam, as a universal religion, plays a unique role in mitigating interfaith encounters and encouraging peaceful coexistence among the followers of different religions and cultures. The Prophet Muhammad is considered a model for mitigating interfaith conflicts throughout his life. Overall, Islam accepts interfaith dialogue as a necessary condition for promoting peaceful coexistence and interfaith harmony in society (Elius,2023).

The key principles of interfaith dialogue in Islam based on Sanaullah (2014), Elius (2023) : (1) Recognition of Commonalities. Interfaith dialogue aims to recognize and stress common phenomena in various religions to work towards the common goal of communal harmony. (2) Preservation of Fundamental Beliefs. Muslims engaging in interfaith dialogue should not compromise on fundamental beliefs or promote syncretism and universal religion. (3) Avoiding Indifference to One's Own Religion. Dialogue should not lead to indifference towards one's own religion. (4) Promotion of Peaceful Coexistence: Islam accepts interfaith dialogue as a necessary condition for promoting peaceful coexistence and interfaith harmony in society. These principles emphasize the importance of mutual respect, preservation of religious identity, and the promotion of peace and harmony among people of different faiths.

Some examples of successful interfaith dialogue initiatives in Islamic societies include: (1) Malaysia. Malaysia, a multi-cultural society with a blend of multi-racial and multi-religious population, has implemented interfaith dialogue initiatives to promote harmonious coexistence among different religious groups. Despite major differences in beliefs, Malaysia has managed to live harmoniously to a certain extent, emphasizing the relevance of interfaith dialogue in a pluralistic society (Ismail,2022). (2) Global Initiatives: There are global initiatives that promote interfaith dialogue, such as the work of scholars and intellectuals who have emphasized the importance of interfaith dialogue in promoting peace and understanding among different religious communities. These initiatives are based on the acceptance of interfaith dialogue as a necessary condition for promoting peaceful coexistence and interfaith harmony in every society (Elius,2023). These examples demonstrate the efforts made in Islamic societies to foster understanding, respect, and peaceful coexistence among people of different faiths through interfaith dialogue initiatives.

The benefits of interfaith dialogue in Islam include fostering understanding, promoting peace, and building harmonious coexistence among people of different faiths. This dialogue can empower the values of civilizational dialogue by addressing sensitive issues positively and prudently, ultimately contributing to the success of assimilating the concept in the inter-civilizational context. By engaging in interfaith dialogue, individuals and communities can work towards mutual respect, cooperation, and the resolution of conflicts, thereby creating a more inclusive and tolerant society (Mohamad,2021).

Implementing interfaith dialogue in Islam can face several challenges, including theological differences, cultural barriers, and political tensions. Theological differences can lead to disagreements on fundamental beliefs and practices, making it difficult to find common ground for dialogue. Cultural barriers can also pose a challenge, as different cultures may have different ways of expressing themselves and understanding concepts. Political tensions can further complicate interfaith dialogue, as political conflicts can spill over into religious differences. Additionally, there may be resistance from conservative or extremist groups who view interfaith dialogue as a threat to their beliefs and values (Mohamad,2021). Despite these challenges, it is important to continue to engage in interfaith dialogue to promote understanding and peaceful coexistence among people of different faiths.

Interfaith Dialogue, or interreligious dialogue, is an increasingly important topic in the context of today's increasingly connected global society. In Islam, interreligious dialogue is nothing new, however, the importance of this dialogue is increasingly under the spotlight amidst increasing tensions between religious communities throughout the world (Noh, 2021). This research aims to explore the concept and practice of interreligious dialogue in Islam through a systematic literature review approach. The importance of this research is to

understand more deeply the contribution of Islam to interreligious dialogue, as well as to identify research gaps that still need to be filled in the existing literature.

Sensitive issues that can hinder interfaith dialogue in Islam include theological differences, cultural misunderstandings, and political tensions. Theological differences can arise from differing interpretations of religious texts and practices, leading to disagreements on fundamental beliefs. Cultural misunderstandings can arise from differences in customs, traditions, and social norms, leading to misunderstandings and miscommunications. Political tensions can arise from conflicts between different nations or groups, leading to mistrust and hostility. Additionally, issues related to gender, sexuality, and human rights can also be sensitive topics that require careful consideration and understanding in interfaith dialogue (Mohamad, 2021)

The development of globalization and advances in information technology have brought the world closer socially and culturally, but have also given rise to conflict and tension between religious communities. In this context, interfaith dialogue becomes increasingly important as a means of building understanding, tolerance and cooperation between religious communities. However, although interreligious dialogue has become the focus of attention, comprehensive studies on the concept and practice of interreligious dialogue in Islam are still limited. There is a need for an in-depth systematic literature review to identify the contribution of Islam to interreligious dialogue and clarify its concept in the existing literature.

Research Methods

This research uses a systematic literature review method to collect and analyze relevant literature about interreligious dialogue in Islam. The first stage is identifying keywords that are appropriate to the research topic, such as "interfaith dialogue," "Islam," "dialogue". Next, a search is carried out in relevant academic databases, such as Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, JSTOR, IEEE Xplor, using predetermined keywords. The articles found are then filtered based on their relevance to the research topic, taking into account the previously established inclusion and exclusion criteria. After that, the selected articles are read thoroughly to gain an in-depth understanding of the concept and practice of interreligious dialogue in Islam. The number of articles found, the number of articles filtered, and the inclusion and exclusion criteria used were recorded to ensure transparency and accountability in the research process.

By using this approach, it is hoped that this research can provide a comprehensive picture of Islam's contribution to interreligious dialogue, as well as identify further research directions in this field.

Results and Discussion

Recognition of Similarities

Recognition of inter-religious similarities refers to efforts to identify and highlight common aspects between different religions in an inter-religious dialogue. The hypothesis states that people who are active in such dialogue will tend to have a more positive view of the effectiveness of the dialogue. The assumption is that recognition of similarities can build a strong foundation for a sense of mutual understanding and unity among dialogue participants (Rofiqi, 2022).

In this context, when dialogue participants recognize and appreciate shared values, principles or beliefs between religions, it can create strong emotional bonds and a sense of mutual respect between them. When individuals feel understood and appreciated, they are more likely to be open to the experiences and views of others. This creates an inclusive and supportive dialogue environment, where new ideas and thinking can develop (Kayaoglu, 2015) (Khan, 2020).

Furthermore, recognition of similarities can also strengthen belief in the value of dialogue itself. When participants feel that their religion is respected and recognized by others, they tend to be more involved and committed to the dialogue process. This can strengthen their belief that interreligious dialogue is an effective instrument for promoting mutual understanding, peace and harmony among religious groups (Meraj, 2017).

Thus, this hypothesis proposes that the recognition of interreligious commonalities in dialogue contributes positively to its effectiveness by strengthening relationships between participants, increasing mutual understanding, and strengthening belief in the value of dialogue itself.

Maintenance of Fundamental Beliefs

Maintaining fundamental beliefs in interreligious dialogue refers to the attitude of dialogue participants who maintain the core values of their own religion or belief. This hypothesis assumes that there is a positive relationship between maintaining fundamental beliefs in interreligious dialogue and society's perception of the effectiveness of that dialogue (Catalano, 2020) (Nawaz, 2022).

The maintenance of fundamental beliefs can play an important role in strengthening the effectiveness of interreligious dialogue. When dialogue participants feel that they can remain true to their religious beliefs and core principles, they are more likely to feel comfortable and actively participate in the dialogue. This is because maintaining fundamental beliefs gives participants a sense of confidence that they will not experience conflict in carrying out their religious beliefs (Ismail, 2020).

Furthermore, maintaining fundamental beliefs can create a strong foundation for productive dialogue. When participants feel that they can stick to the values that are important to them, they will be more open to listening and understanding other people's views without fear of losing their religious identity. This can reduce tension and increase the level of openness between participants, which in turn can increase the effectiveness of dialogue (Wagay, 2022) (Aleem, 2022).

Thus, this hypothesis suggests that maintaining fundamental beliefs in interreligious dialogue can contribute positively to society's perception of the effectiveness of such dialogue by increasing the sense of trust, active participation, and level of openness among participants.

Avoiding Indifference to One's Own Religion

Avoiding indifference to one's own religion in interreligious dialogue reflects an open attitude and respect for individual religious beliefs without creating indifference or aversion to one's own beliefs. This hypothesis assumes that people who engage in interreligious dialogue with this attitude will have a better perception of the effectiveness of the dialogue (Younas, 2023).

An open attitude towards one's own religious beliefs is an important factor in strengthening relationships between dialogue participants. When dialogue participants show appreciation and concern for their own religion, they tend to be more able to respect and appreciate the religious beliefs of others. This creates a more inclusive dialogue environment and strengthens ties between dialogue participants (Cullell, 2021) (Netanyahu, 2022).

Furthermore, avoiding indifference to one's own religion can help create space for productive and meaningful discussions. By having a solid understanding of their own religious beliefs, dialogue participants can contribute more effectively in sharing their views and thoughts with other groups. This allows for a meaningful exchange of ideas and experiences, which in turn can increase the effectiveness of dialogue (Kaloi, 2022).

Thus, this hypothesis suggests that people who engage in interreligious dialogue by avoiding indifference to their own religion will have a better perception of the effectiveness of the dialogue. An open attitude and respect for one's own religion can help build stronger

relationships between dialogue participants, as well as create space for productive and meaningful discussions.

A Peaceful Coexistence

The promotion of peace and interfaith cooperation creates a conducive dialogue environment where participants feel supported and valued. When dialogue participants feel that the purpose of the dialogue is to promote peace and interfaith cooperation, they are more likely to participate actively and contribute positively to the discussion (Khalid, 2022) (Bardon, 2022).

In addition, the promotion of peaceful coexistence can create a sense of mutual trust between dialogue participants from various religious backgrounds. This is important because mutual trust allows for a more open and honest exchange of ideas and thoughts, which can ultimately increase the effectiveness of dialogue (Abdullah, 2023).

Furthermore, the promotion of peaceful coexistence in interreligious dialogue can also produce more sustainable solutions to interreligious conflicts and differences. By focusing on peace and cooperation, dialogue participants are more likely to seek compromises and solutions that are acceptable to all parties involved (Mazhisham, 2020).

Thus, this hypothesis states that the promotion of peaceful coexistence in interreligious dialogue will be positively correlated with people's perceptions of the effectiveness of the dialogue. The promotion of peace and interreligious cooperation creates a conducive environment for dialogue, allows for the creation of mutual trust, and produces more sustainable solutions to interreligious conflicts.

Research Framework

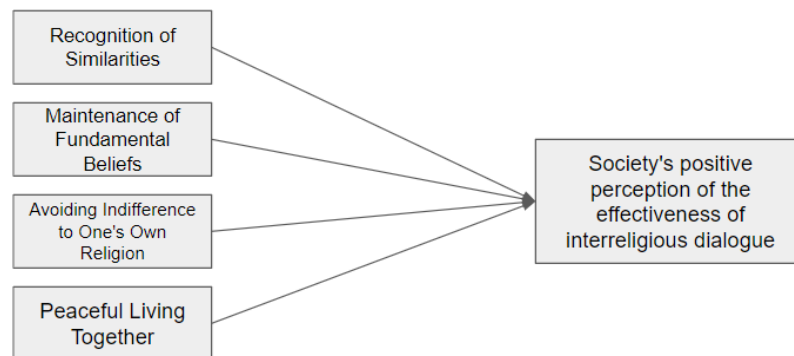


Figure 1. Research Framework

Hypothesis:

1. The more people engage in interfaith dialogue that recognizes similarities between religions, the more they tend to have a more positive perception of the effectiveness of that dialogue.
2. The more fundamental beliefs there are maintained in interreligious dialogue, the more positive the public's perception of the effectiveness of the dialogue.
3. The more people engage in interreligious dialogue that avoids indifference to their own religion, the better their perception of the effectiveness of that dialogue.
4. The more peaceful coexistence is promoted in interreligious dialogue, the more positive the public's perception of the effectiveness of the dialogue.

Conclusion

This research highlights the importance of interreligious dialogue in Islam as an effort to promote mutual understanding, peace, and harmony among diverse societies. Through a systematic literature review approach, factors such as recognition of similarities between religions, maintenance of fundamental beliefs, avoidance of indifference to one's own religion, and promotion of peaceful coexistence in interreligious dialogue have been identified as having a positive relationship with people's perception of the effectiveness of such dialogue. This shows that recognizing differences, maintaining religious identity, and creating an inclusive and respectful dialogue environment are key to achieving the goals of effective interreligious dialogue. Thus, this research makes an important contribution to understanding the concept and practice of interreligious dialogue in Islam and highlights future research directions in this field.

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