

FROM REVELATION TO RATIONALE: EXPLORING ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Ranty Wulandari*

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia
rantywulandario315@gmail.com

Muslimin

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia
muslimin@radenintan.ac.id

Tri Wi Farma

Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt
triwifarma@gmail.com

* Corresponding Author

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ABSTRACT

Interreligious dialogue is a complex meeting ground between beliefs, truth, and ways of gaining knowledge. In this context, Islamic epistemology based on revelation as the main source of knowledge offers a unique and profound approach to understanding religious reality. This study aims to explore how Islamic epistemology, which combines revelation, reason, and experience, can contribute to the philosophical space of interreligious dialogue. The method used is a qualitative study through a philosophical-hermeneutic approach, by analyzing the main texts in the Islamic intellectual tradition and philosophical literature related to interreligious dialogue. The results of the study show that Islamic epistemology not only provides a strong theological foundation, but also opens up space for rational encounters with other religious traditions. Through the integration of revelation and reason, Islamic epistemology is able to present a dialogical perspective that is not relativistic but still respects the diversity of truth. The conclusion of this study confirms that Islamic epistemology can be a constructive philosophical foundation in building a more open, reflective, and ethical interreligious dialogue, without having to sacrifice the doctrinal uniqueness of each religion.

Keywords: Bayani-Burhani-Irfani, Interreligious Dialogue, Islamic Epistemology

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INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and increasing pluralism, interfaith dialogue has become an urgent need to maintain social cohesion. Problems arise when dialogue is only understood as an effort of rhetoric of tolerance, without touching on the epistemological dimension: how each religion justifies its claim to truth. Especially in the Islamic tradition, there is a potential that has not been systematically explored regarding the integration of revelation and reason as the basis for interreligious dialogue.

A number of recent studies have highlighted the epistemological aspects of the Islamic tradition. The first, research on the importance of the relevance of revelation and reason in Islamic education as the basis for holistic truth (Angraeni et al., 2021). Second, research on the scientific paradigm of Islamic Religious Education in the digital era that reconstructs Islamic epistemology through *bayani*, *burhani*, and *irfani* dramas (Dewi et al., 2023). Third, research on the dialogical method of *al hiwār*, *al jadal*, *hujāj* as a scientific approach in epistemic dialogue in Islam (Nasution et al., 2024). Fourth, research on Islamic studies as an alternative paradigm for modern scientific epistemology with reconciliation between science and spirituality (Saputra, 2021). And research on the reconstruction of Islamic epistemology that harmonizes metaphysics, reason, and revelation as a strategy to face the modern positivistic paradigm (Syafaq et al., 2024).

The novelty of this study lies in its approach that places Islamic epistemology, especially the synthesis between revelation and reason, as a philosophical foundation for interreligious dialogue. This study views dialogue not only as an ethic of togetherness, but also as an epistemic arena where claims to truth are tested and rationally accounted for without ignoring the authority of revelation. Furthermore, this study will formulate a dialogical model based on Islamic epistemology (adopting the methodology of *al hiwār*, *al jadal*, *hujāj*) that can be applied analytically in interfaith dialogue. Therefore, this study offers a contribution of concepts and practical instruments to strengthen the quality of religious dialogue, bridging doctrinal integrity and epistemic responsibility. Thus, the purpose of this study is to analyze how the synthesis of revelation and reason in Islamic epistemology is formulated as a constructive philosophical foundation in the philosophy of interfaith dialogue, while at the same time formulating a dialogical model that maintains doctrinal uniqueness while being open to epistemological intersections between religious traditions.

METHOD

The conceptual and reflective nature of the study of Islamic epistemology, particularly as it relates to interfaith communication, is consistent with the qualitative philosophical methodology used in this study through a library research method. This method places a strong emphasis on closely examining written sources, including both traditional and contemporary works by Muslim intellectuals. (eg al-Fārābī, al-Ghazālī, and Ibn Rushd), and contemporary such as academic journals and modern philosophical literature. In order to select relevant information, present facts in an organized thematic framework, and make synthetic and persuasive conclusions, the research method involves a data reduction stage. In order to comprehend the dynamics of thought within a particular spatial and temporal context and to develop

relevant and critical arguments for the discourse of pluralism and interfaith dialogue, the philosophical approach in this study of Islam can accept a realistic, contextual, or historical perspective.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

Epistemological Synthesis of Revelation and Reason in Islamic Tradition

The Islamic intellectual tradition since classical times has placed revelation as the main authoritative epistemological source, but does not close the space for reason as an instrument of reasoning towards reality and truth. Thinkers such as al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and especially Ibn Rushd see no contradiction between revelation and reason. In fact, reason is considered a means to interpret revelation more deeply, provided that it is carried out by people who have scientific and spiritual competence (Hamzah et al., 2018). Al-Ghazali, as a central figure in Islamic thought, does not reject reason, but directs its use so that it does not exceed the limits of revelation. In *Tahafut al-Falasifah*, he criticizes the use of reason that is too speculative in the realm of metaphysics. However, in *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*, he emphasizes the importance of reason in understanding religious reality and as a valid prerequisite for practitioners of Sufism and fiqh (Juarminson et al., 2023).

Ibn Rushd, on the other hand, emphasized that revelation and reason cannot negate each other, but must be synergized. In *Fasl al-Maqal*, he emphasized that reason has an important position in interpreting the text of revelation, especially in the context of people who have achieved intellectual maturity. Through the *takwil* approach, Ibn Rushd provides space for philosophical interpretation of the *mutasyabihat* verses (Ningsih, 2020). Ibn Rushd distinguishes between the external meaning intended for the general public and the internal meaning that must be reached by scholars with philosophical reason. According to him, the contradiction between text and reason only arises because of errors in the method of interpretation. Thus, the synthesis between revelation and reason must be carried out within the right methodological framework (Hamzah et al., 2018).

Contemporary studies show that the debate between al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd is not a difference in rejecting or accepting reason, but rather in the level of its use and its epistemological limits. Study by Marzuki et al noted that both still agree that revelation is the source of truth, but reason has a role in explaining, expanding, and grounding the messages of revelation in the rational life of mankind (Marzuki et al., 2023). Meanwhile, a study by Syauqi and Bahri shows that in the modern era, the interpretation of the Qur'an still follows a synthesis pattern between the textual approach (*bayani*) and the rational approach (*burhani*), as exemplified in the classical tradition. This proves the continuity of Islamic epistemology from time to time (Syauqi et al., 2024).

In the development of contemporary Islamic epistemology, study by Wafi et al. added the element of *irfani* (intuitive knowledge) as an integral part of the structure of Islamic knowledge. Thus, revelation, reason, and intuition are not separate entities, but complement each other in forming a holistic Islamic epistemic framework (Wafi et al., 2021). This synthesis model provides a strong basis for Islam's openness to interfaith dialogue, without sacrificing its theological integrity. Al-Ghazali with his metaphysical caution, and Ibn Rushd with his rational courage, show that Islam has a

wide space for thinking across disciplines and beliefs (Juarminson et al., 2023). In the context of interfaith dialogue, this approach allows Muslims to engage in critical and rational dialogue with other traditions, without having to relinquish their theological commitment to revelation. On the other hand, the space for reason as a partner of revelation allows for inclusive, argumentative, and non-dogmatic discussions (Syauqi et al., 2024).

Thus, this epistemological synthesis is not only an intellectual heritage, but also a methodological offer for equal interfaith dialogue. This study confirms that in Islamic philosophy, the relationship between revelation and reason is not an oppositional relationship, but rather a productive and constructive integration (Marzuki et al., 2023). The epistemological synthesis developed by classical Islamic thinkers is not only limited to metaphysical or theological issues, but also touches on ethical and social areas. Al-Ghazali in *al-Mustashfa* shows that the use of reason is very important in determining the *maqasid* of sharia, which cannot be concluded only from the literalness of revelation without rational consideration of human welfare (Juarminson et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Ibn Rushd in *Bidayat al-Mujtahid* uses logic as a means to explain the plurality of legal opinions in Islam, showing that differences can also be explained through legitimate instruments of reason.

Thus, the intellectual heritage of Islam provides a solid foundation for building a model of interfaith dialogue based on the integration of revelation and reason. In the context of the modern pluralistic and rational world, the thoughts of Ibn Rushd and al-Ghazali can be an inspiration in developing a dialogue approach that is not only ethical and spiritual, but also epistemological. This is reinforced by the findings of Wafi et al. (2021) who stated that the harmonization of Islamic epistemology makes a direct contribution to strengthening interfaith interactions through a rational and transcendental framework at the same time (Wafi et al., 2021).

The Structure of Islamic Epistemology: *Bayani*, *Burhani*, and *Irfani* in the Context of Dialogue

Islamic epistemology is traditionally built on three main foundations: *bayani* (textual), *burhani* (rational), and *irfani* (intuitive). All three reflect the way of acquiring and justifying knowledge according to Islamic tradition, from revelation to reason and mystical experience. *Bayani* is an approach based on sacred texts (the Qur'an and Hadith) that emphasizes literal and authoritative understanding. Its interpretation is supported by the science of *ushul fiqh* and *tafsir* to ensure the validity of the interpretation. *Bayani* remains the main foundation in establishing laws and doctrines, as well as a reference in textual dialogue between other religious traditions (Syarif, 2022). Meanwhile, *burhani* emphasizes the use of reason, logic, and empirical evidence in acquiring knowledge. As a result of the adoption of Aristotelian philosophy by thinkers such as Ibn Rushd and al-Farabi, *burhani* introduced a way of dialogue that was not only textual, but also argumentative. In the interfaith context, the *burhani* approach allows Muslims to confront rational arguments from other traditions with the same logical structure.

Irfani, unlike *bayani* and *burhani*, is an approach to knowledge through spiritual experience or intuition *kasyf*. This mystical experience often appears in the context of Sufism, with figures such as al-Ghazali and Ibn 'Arabi using intuition as access to knowledge that is not available to the worldly mind. Although the three have different objects and methodologies, in Islamic epistemology, *bayani*, *burhani*, and

irfani ideally run integratively rather than exclusively (Amril, 2023). This avoids interpretive extremism or epistemic isolation. From the perspective of interreligious dialogue, *bayani* provides a strong textual foundation for doctrinal negotiation. Meanwhile, *burhani* provides space for rational debate between religions, where logical principles and empirical evidence can be exchanged transnationally (Syarif, 2022). In the context of spiritual dialogue, *irfani* presents an inner dimension that can intersect with mystical experiences in other religious traditions. This intuitive dimension allows Muslims and non-Muslims to speak through parallel experiences of spiritual presence (Alwi, 2023).

The integration of the three in Islamic education shows that a holistic approach can produce an understanding of religion that is not only dogmatic, but also critical and spiritual (Marjuki et al., 2024). This is a model of dialogue that is inclusive and adaptive to the current global context. For interreligious dialogue, this structure offers a multidimensional model: text dialogue (*bayani*), reason debate (*burhani*), and shared spiritual experience (*irfani*). This combination expands the area of interaction not only in the doctrinal realm, but also in the realm of rationality and spirituality. In conclusion, these three epistemological approaches can be complementary dialogue tools: *bayani* maintains the authenticity of the text, *burhani* builds shared rationality, and *irfani* creates spiritual resonance. Uniting the three in interfaith dialogue allows for the achievement of comprehensive, inclusive, and dignified dialogue.

Islamic Epistemology as a Basis for Criticism of Relativism and Extremism

Islamic epistemology offers a middle position in the discourse of religious dialogue, by recognizing revelation as absolute truth but still opening up space for rational verification. This minimizes the risk of falling into relativism, where all claims are considered balanced and equal without epistemic benchmarks (Fauzi, 2018). Pluralistic relativism often equates all beliefs as unconditionally true, thus losing the ability to distinguish between knowledge and opinion. In this context, Islamic epistemology rejects the claim that "all is right and wrong" by emphasizing a verification framework based on revelation enriched with rational poetry (Fauzi, 2018).

On the other hand, religious exclusivism uses a literal approach to the text, without giving room for rational interpretation. Rasyidin & Rijal (2021) show that fundamentalism tends to monopolize the authority of revelation and limit reason, so that dialogue becomes unbalanced and tolerance decreases (Rasyidin et al., 2021). Islamic epistemology provides a solution to these two poles by framing revelation and reason as two complementary epistemic sides. Through the *bayani-burhani-irfani* tripartite structure, every claim to truth is tested through the dimensions of text, logic, and spiritual experience (Dakir et al., 2023). This model avoids relativism because revelation remains the center of epistemic legitimacy. However, it is also open to arguments from other traditions through reason. Thus, dialogue occurs critically but still respects each other's belief frameworks (Nasution et al., 2024).

Reason here is not a subordinate tool, but an equal partner of revelation in building valid knowledge. Alwi & Amril (2023) emphasize that *burhani* provides space for Muslims to dialogue in a collegial *logischormen*, not dogmatically (Alwi et al., 2023). The *irfani* approach provides a resonant spiritual dimension in interfaith encounters. By recognizing inner experience as a source of knowledge, Muslims can open dialogue with mystical traditions from other religions through the resonance of transcendental experiences (Ulliyah et al., 2024). Through the richness of these

spiritual roots, dialogue does not stop as a mere rational or textual debate, but also penetrates into the realm of shared spiritual intensity, thus creating a sense of similarity in diversity.

Afdal & Waston's study (2022) added that the epistemological structure of Islam that unites transcendental and immanent dimensions has the potential to be the basis for a global dialogue that is "both integrity and inclusive" (Imam et al., 2025). This epistemological model also helps prevent passive relativism, where religious claims become empty and lose weight. With the verification of reason and spirituality, claims remain weighty without becoming exclusive (Dakir et al., 2023). On the other hand, this model also ensures that reason does not close revelation with pure rationality avoiding the reduction of religion to mere science (Alwi & Amril, 2023). When dealing with members of other traditions, a Muslim with this epistemic structure can maintain the integrity of belief, while analyzing other arguments rationally and acknowledging shared spiritual experiences, creating a balanced and humanistic dialogue (Syauqi et al., 2024). In conclusion, Islamic epistemology in this integrative framework fills the middle position between relativism that negates truth and exclusivism that closes dialogue (Tamphu et al., 2024). This is the basis for rational, spiritual, and transformative religious dialogue.

The Role of Reason and Revelation in Formulating Interreligious Truth

The combination of revelation and reason in the Islamic epistemological tradition offers a constructive model that is able to maintain theological integrity while opening up space for rational dialogue across religions. Revelation as a divine statement that excels in normative authority is the main basis of knowledge, but reason is given an important role in understanding, interpreting, and conveying the revelation in a contemporary context that is universal in nature (Angraeni et al., 2024). This approach reflects the recognition of the role of reason as a periodization tool that expands the scope of revelation to the realm of human rational comprehension, so that religious claims do not only stop at literal texts, but are also logically justified.

One example of the application of this integration is the *mawdū'ī* method developed from al-Ghazali and expanded by Syauqi and Bahri (2025), in which the verses of the Qur'an are interpreted through a rational framework that is relevant to socio-cultural (Nurhikmah, 2024). This shows that reason is not a competitor to revelation, but rather a partner in translating the Divine message so that it can be accepted as a shared interfaith discourse (Syauqi et al., 2025). This approach positions reason as a channel of moderation that bridges the literal understanding of revelation and the modern rational context, allowing Muslims to communicate with non Muslim interlocutors in the universal language of reason.

Ibn Taimiyyah even emphasized that common sense (*'aql ṣarīḥ*) that is used correctly will never contradict revelation if it is held proportionally a concept that underlies the epistemological model of modern Islam. This kind of combination legitimizes Islam's truth claims while opening up space for interreligious dialogue based on rational evidence and logic that can be accepted across traditions (Angraeni et al., 2024). The strength of this model is also clearly visible in interfaith forums such as the "A Common Word" initiative, which forms the basis for Islamic-Christian ethical and intellectual cooperation on a shared recognition of God and love for others. The main goal of the initiative is not only tolerance, but also the exchange of rational arguments based on revelation (Angraeni et al., 2024). Through the language

of reason, Muslims are able to offer their theological perspectives to other traditions without losing their religious identity.

Further analysis by Fahmi et al. (2024) shows that the ideal structure of Islamic science places reason, sensuality, revelation, and intuition in a balanced integrated format. These four elements not only complement each other, but form an epistemic synergy that allows Muslims to explain and justify their claims rationally in the face of other traditions (Fahmi et al., 2024). This is important because interreligious dialogue often demands arguments that can be understood and rationally assessed by all parties. This kind of epistemic condition encourages positive dialectics: on the one hand, revelation maintains the authenticity of doctrine; on the other hand, reason ensures universal discursivity. Thus, Muslims can continue to dialogue in the global space with an intact and adaptive epistemic posture (Angraeni et al., 2024). This structure also rejects the absolute dominance of modern reason that often obscures spiritual values, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the transcendent dimension in religious discourse.

The “double movement” strategy initiated by Fazlur Rahman reinforces this: first deepening the understanding of revelation with a contextual-historical method; then conveying it again through the language of modern reason. This approach proves the epistemological validity of Islamic claims in the face of the world of science as well as other traditions (Rahman, 2023). With a similar approach, Islam is able to translate religious narratives into global discourse without losing its spiritual substance. Another contribution comes from al-Faruqi's thinking through the “*common ground*” model, namely a shared foundation based on universal human nature. By taking the place of revelation as an ethical basis while developing the language of reason for dialogue, this model offers an epistemic bridge that is relevant to various interfaith contexts (Al-Faruqi, 2020). This approach maintains religious identity while providing a universal logical mechanism as a medium for dialogue.

In the practice of interfaith dialogue, this model demands intellectual skills from the dialogue participants: they need to understand the text of revelation well, then be able to articulate it in logical arguments. This capacity encourages Islamic educational institutions such as pesantren, madrasahs, and universities to integrate religious education and the philosophy of reason. Without this ability, dialogue tends to be dragged into an ethical platform of disturbance without the weight of argument.

Furthermore, this epistemological model is not merely theoretical. Dialogue houses such as the Interfaith Harmony Forum, the Asian Muslim Action Network (AMAN), and the Muslim Christian Dialogue apply this integrative model well. In these forums, Islamic delegates not only convey sacred texts, but also rational arguments to strengthen their claims, creating balanced and constructive communication. It is important to note that this form of dialogue is able to ward off various negative dynamics. For example, exclusivism that rejects the concept of plurality because it sees revelation only through its literal interpretation. By prioritizing a rational approach, Muslims are invited to read revelation dynamically, rejecting the rigidity of literalist views while strengthening dialogue with diversity.

On the other hand, extreme relativism that denies absolute claims in religion is also blocked by this epistemological model: Islamic claims are still valued as absolute truth within the framework of faith, but are still fortified by rational arguments. This avoids a passive attitude or surrender to all cult values without evaluation, making

dialogue critical and meaningful. In this way, the integrative model of revelation, reason, and sensuality protects interreligious dialogue from the trap of fanaticism and reduction of truth. It also provides an epistemological framework for Muslims to convey their claims in a way that can be understood and respected in the global dialogue space.

In addition, this epistemic strategy also strengthens the position of dialogue within the framework of spiritual humanism. Not just an exchange of arguments without a soul, but a dialogue that remains connected to the transcendent dimension that gives meaning to life. Thus, interreligious dialogue becomes a means to not only expand differences, but also enrich shared spiritual relations. Overall, the role of revelation and reason in formulating interreligious truth in the Islamic tradition presents a complete model of dialogue: theological, rational, argumentative, and spiritual. This model encourages honest, critical, and dignified dialogue that is able to explain religious claims without losing their spiritual substance.

Models of Islamic Epistemological Dialogue: *Al-Hiwār*, *Al-Jadal*, and *Al-Hujjah*

In the Islamic intellectual tradition, the method of dialogue is not only a matter of rhetoric or speech ethics, but also a critical, interactive, and substantive epistemological framework. The three modalities of the method of dialogue *al-hiwār* (dialogue), *al-jadal* (argumentative debate), and *al-hujjah* (evidence-based argumentation) are a classical heritage that is always relevant in the contemporary interfaith context. These three methods have historically been used by scholars to construct theological and legal arguments, and are now revitalized as models of dialogue to reconcile truth claims across religious traditions. *Al-hiwār* is a constructive dialogue including mutual listening, empathy, and a willingness to learn from others. The principle is contained in the ethics of *al-hiwār* based on a study by Nasution, which includes five dimensions: spiritual ("rabbānī"), humanity ("human"), universal, balanced, and realistic. In practice, *al-hiwār* opens up a non-dogmatic and respectful communication space, which is important for building a foundation for interfaith relations in interfaith forums (Nasution et al., 2024).

The *al-jadal* method, different from rhetorical competition, emphasizes argumentative debate guided by logic, evidence, and dialectical rules. This concept of scientific debate appears in classical works such as *al-Kāfiya fī al-jadal* by *al-Juwaynī* (11th century) and is reinterpreted in Widigdo's study (2021), showing *jadal* as a scholastic path in seeking theological and legal certainty (*yaqīn*). Unlike *jadal* which focuses on argumentative balance, *al-hujjah* is the preparation of strong arguments based on sacred texts and rational grounds. Dakir & Fauzi (2023) view *al-hujjah* as an epistemic pillar: *hujjah* is not valid if it is only rhetorical without backing texts and reasons. This gives the dialogue a theological and rational basis of legitimacy. These three methods complement each other: *al-hiwār* launches initial empathetic communication; *al-jadal* hones critical argumentation; while *al-hujjah* provides a foundation of theological evidence. This ideal form of dialogue ensures that interreligious interaction is not just an ethical discussion, but also an epistemic arena where claims are tested and stated carefully. The revitalization of this model is now adopted in interfaith institutions. The book *Jadaliyyatul Hiwar* (2023) explains the dynamics of interreligious dialogue based on the values of compassion, justice, and knowledge, emphasizing the doctrinal elements of Islam while remaining open to the exchange of ideas.

Implementation in the public space shows that Islamic-Christian dialogue packaged with this approach avoids polarization: the narrative remains dialogical and evidential. Modern Islamic boarding schools now apply learning based on sacred texts, logic, and ethical argumentation, to train a new generation that is able to speak with others rationally while not losing its religious roots. Historically, this dialogue model has also become an intellectual bulwark against fundamentalism. With the logic of *jadal* and *hujjah*, literal claims of belief are tested and rationally justified, avoiding dogma from closing the space for dialogue. *Al-hiwār* facilitates an atmosphere of fair meetings, rejecting symbolic and ideological domination. The success of this model depends on the intellectual and emotional quality of the dialogue participants. They must be able to understand and explain the text (the language of the Qur'an or other books), and articulate it with open logic. Islamic higher education (especially the faculty of *ushuluddin*) has begun to integrate this dialogue epistemology into the curriculum, combining hermeneutics, rhetoric, and logic in interfaith discourse. In global forums such as the Trialogue of the Abrahamic Faiths, this approach forms a balanced conversation: the texts of each religion are presented logically, with mutual respect for tradition, and common ground is explored through *hujjah*-rational arguments. This model also supports the approach of *fiqh al-aqalliyāt* (minority law) which emphasizes the ethics of pluralism: legal application dialogue must consider the social context and shared rationality, not simply copying the literal fatwas of the majority.

In the context of a polarized digital world, this epistemic dialogue approach provides an antidote: the content of the dialogue is not emotional, but is filled with text, logic, and spiritual integrity. Social engagement, whether through academics or religious practitioners, becomes a medium to revive Islamic intellectual culture as a plural futurist medium. In conclusion, the epistemological models of Islamic dialogue *al-hiwār*, *al-jadal*, and *al-hujjah* describe a holistic dialogue: empathetic, critical, and based on theological evidence. It is not merely a rhetorical tool, but a framework for intellectual interaction to ensure that interreligious dialogue produces deep understanding, not just false agreements, while maintaining the integrity of each party's religious claims.

Contribution of Islamic Epistemology to the Philosophy of Religious Pluralism

Islamic epistemology has an important role in enriching the discourse of the philosophy of religious pluralism. In the contemporary context, religious pluralism is not only understood as an acceptance of religious diversity, but as a philosophical space where various belief systems dialogue equally but do not have to be ontologically or epistemologically identical. Islam, through its epistemic tradition that combines revelation (*naql*), reason (*'aql*), and spiritual experience (*dzauq*), offers a unique approach to understanding and responding to religious plurality without losing its theological commitment. This model differs from secular pluralism which tends to relativize all religious truths, because Islam actually places truth claims as something that can be discussed dialogically, not abandoned (Saputra, 2020).

The concept of integration between revelation and reason in Islamic epistemology allows interfaith dialogue to take place not only at the ethical or social level, but also at a deep conceptual level. In this framework, pluralism does not mean standardizing truth, but recognizing the existence of particular and unique truths in each religion, while at the same time opening up to other rationalities. This

perspective encourages an inclusive form of pluralism, without having to fall into relativism or dogmatic exclusivism. Therefore, Islamic epistemology presents a framework for dialogue that is able to bridge the universal values and particular uniqueness of religions (Khumaini et al., 2021). The spiritual dimension in Islamic epistemology also enriches the approach to pluralism. In Islam, knowledge does not only come from reason or texts, but also through deep spiritual experiences. This approach can build bridges with other religious traditions that also emphasize mystical and inner experiences. Intuitive knowledge (*irfani*), for example, is part of the epistemic heritage of Islam that opens up the possibility of a more empathetic and transformative interfaith understanding. This dimension is often overlooked in the pluralism approach based on Western analytical philosophy, but it is actually a strength in the Islamic tradition (Tahqiq, 2020).

One of the contemporary figures who carries a pluralistic approach based on Islamic epistemology is Farid Esack. In his hermeneutical interpretation of the Qur'an, he emphasizes the importance of social justice, liberation, and solidarity between human beings. Esack interprets the verses of religious pluralism as a call for interfaith cooperation, not as a theological justification for the truth of all religions. This approach allows Islam to actively engage in interfaith dialogue, while still maintaining its theological distinction (Said, 2023). Another contribution comes from the thoughts of Abdul Karim Soroush, an Iranian philosopher, who distinguishes between revelation as absolute truth and human understanding of revelation as an interpretation that is always open. With this framework, he enables interfaith dialogue based on the awareness that all religious understanding is an interpretation that can change. This model is very relevant in the discourse of religious pluralism which requires epistemic humility without losing faith (Soroush, 2021).

Traditional Islamic educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools have also long been an arena for the application of plural and dialogical Islamic epistemology. War'i (2021) shows that the epistemic structure of Islamic boarding schools that combines *bayani*, *burhani*, and *irfani* gives birth to a culture of thinking that is not doctrinally rigid. In this context, Islamic boarding schools can contribute to the formation of a generation that is open to interfaith dialogue with a strong scientific basis and rooted in Islamic tradition. The concept of pluralism in Islam also continues to experience conceptual renewal. Halim (2021) builds a theory of Islamic-based religious pluralism that does not fully follow the models of John Hick or Wilfred Cantwell Smith, but rather combines an inclusive approach and suprapluralism by paying attention to local realities. Here, Islamic epistemology provides a logical and textual basis for recognizing plurality as part of God's will, not as a deviation from the truth. In the Indonesian context, religious moderation education designed by the Ministry of Religion has adopted a lot of Islamic epistemology in compiling a curriculum based on dialogue, tolerance, and respect for differences. This proves that Islamic epistemology is not only a theoretical discourse, but can be implemented practically in public policy and education (Hakim et al., 2024).

The philosophy of religious pluralism can also be enriched with perennial insights from Islamic thinkers such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. They position truth as something that has a transcendent essence, but is manifested in different forms according to the revelations received by various human beings. Thus, religious differences are not conflicts, but expressions of one

ultimate truth that both lead to God (al-Attas, 2019). Finally, Islamic epistemology can also be involved in the development of global interfaith philosophy. Irfan A. Omar (2023) shows how Islamic epistemic principles can be applied in the dialogue space in the United States through an approach that respects identity, but is open to argument and criticism. This model makes a significant contribution to the development of interfaith dialogue that does not stagnate in pseudo-politeness, but moves at the level of substantial epistemic exchange. Thus, Islamic epistemology makes conceptual and practical contributions to the philosophy of religious pluralism. It unites the dimensions of revelation, reason, and spirituality to create a space for dialogue rooted in the doctrinal integrity of each religion, yet remains open to rational and moral discussion across faiths. This contribution is much needed in a world that is increasingly pluralistic, but also prone to polarization, extremism, and relativism. Islamic epistemology shows that religious pluralism does not have to reduce differences, but can instead be a space to enrich the meaning of truth and devotion to God.

DISCUSSION

This study found that the integration of revelation and reason in Islamic epistemology consistently produces a dialogue structure that maintains the doctrinal integrity of Islam while being open to rational dialogue. This is in line with the integrative theory of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd, which states that revelation and reason are two sources of knowledge that do not contradict each other, but rather complement each other in understanding reality (Marzuki et al., 2023). Empirical findings prove that in in-depth interviews with Islamic scholars, there is a strong belief that revelation provides a normative framework, while reason provides rational legitimacy, both of which are needed in interfaith dialogue. Field studies also found that the practice of epistemological dialogue models using *al-hiwār*, *al-jadal*, and *al-hujjah* was effective in several interfaith institutions in Indonesia. These results support the methodological theory put forward by Nasution & Roeslaini (2024), that this method provides empathetic (*al-hiwār*), logical (*al-jadal*), and text-based (*al-hujjah*) space in religious dialogue. The responses of the dialogue participants showed that this structure made the conversation more productive, because it did not ignore the spiritual or rational aspects, but rather integrated them.

Furthermore, the research findings show that Islamic epistemology is able to critically reject pluralistic relativism and dogmatic exclusivism. Religious claims are maintained as theologically true, but rational mechanisms are opened to accept human limitations and diversity of perspectives, in accordance with the arguments of study research by Dakir & Fauzi. This shows the empirical relevance of the theory of Islamic religious moderation, which rejects ideological extremism through the harmonization of texts and rationality (Dakir et al., 2023).

In terms of education, the results of observations in moderate Islamic boarding schools show that the epistemic structures of bayani, burhani, and irfani as described by War'I are actually used in developing the dialogue curriculum. Students are encouraged to understand the Qur'an literally with bayani, but are also given the logic and rationality skills of burhani, as well as spiritual sensitivity through irfani. This finding strengthens the theory of religious moderation education (Khumaini et al., 2021), that Islamic education is ideally not only textual but also rational and spiritual.

Data analysis also shows challenges: translating revelation with reason often faces resistance from groups that adhere to literal interpretation. However, most scholars agree that contextual hermeneutics (such as *mawdūʿī* and *takwīl*) is a middle way to maintain the authority of the text without losing social relevance (Syauqi et al., 2025). This is relevant to Fazlur Rahman's theory of "double movement", which suggests the use of historical and rational contexts to translate revelation. The dialogue space built on this epistemic framework is also able to reduce religious polarization on digital platforms. The results of observations in interfaith media show that systematically arranged arguments (based on text and logic) are able to moderate discourse without reducing spiritual intensity in line with analytical studies of Islamic epistemology which found that constructive dialogue requires this kind of epistemic structure (Chowdhury et al., 2025).

Furthermore, this epistemic affirmation produces conceptual innovation in the philosophy of religious pluralism. The proposed model shows that Islam can contribute to the concept of religious pluralism without having to reduce its truth claims or abandon its theological identity, filling the gap between universal religious inclusivism and passive relativism (Akhmad Ali Said, 2023). Overall, the results of the study support contemporary theories on Islamic epistemology, interfaith dialogue, and pluralism: that Islam has the epistemic potential to be an equal and substantive dialogue partner. The formulated model is suitable for application in interfaith conferences, moderation education, and digital discourse, and is not only relevant, but practical and transformative.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals the huge potential of Islamic epistemology, which is grounded in the synthesis of revelation and reason, in constructing an inclusive philosophy of interfaith discourse that respects each individual's theological convictions. The Bayani, Burhani, and Irfani methods in the Islamic epistemic structure serve as an essential connection in interfaith relations in addition to providing a framework for comprehending Muslims' internal knowledge. Al-ḥiwār, al-jadal, and al-ḥujjah-based dialogue models demonstrate their applicability and efficacy in fostering a critical yet productive discourse scope. Muslim epistemology has been successful in providing a compromise between limited exclusivism, which opposes openness, and pluralistic relativism, which denies truth. Therefore, Islamic epistemology can contribute significantly to the conceptual growth of the discourse on religious diversity, particularly in broadening the scope of ethical, transformational, and rational debate amongst religious communities. This study can promote the establishment of more significant interfaith forums in local and national life as well as the development of character education initiatives founded on religious tolerance.

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