



# EXPLORING THE PERCEPTION OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AMONG PUBLIC UNIVERSITY'S STUDENTS

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What is religious pluralism?

# Introduction

- Religious pluralism is a philosophy that claims all religions are aiming for the same Truth, but it advocates for different paths to the same Truth based on one's different religio-cultural-political context.
- Religious pluralism is contradicting to Islam.
- In addition, this philosophy has been declared as deviated from Islam by JAKIM and the Government of Selangor gazette on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014.

# Objective

- They are expected to be aware of contemporary discourses that are contradicting to Islam.
- The students are expected to become the source of reference for the public not only in their area of specialization but also on issues related to Islam and in this case, religious pluralism is without exception.
- Thus, this study explores the perception of an Islamic public university's students to the philosophy of religious pluralism and its debates.

# Method

- Focus group discussion (FGD)
- 6 FGDs consisted of 45 students
- Convenient sampling techniques
- The questions asked:
  1. Do you know the meaning of religious pluralism?
    - If yes, can you please define the meaning?
    - If no, why do you think you have no clue on its meaning?
  2. Are you aware of the debate on religious pluralism in Malaysia; and the individuals/scholars who are in support of/reject religious pluralism?



# Method

- The data was transcribed and analyzed thematically:
  - (1) familiarizing the data
  - (2) coding
  - (3) searching the themes
  - (4) reviewing the themes
  - (5) defining and naming the themes
  - (6) writing up the report

# Results

Table 1: The understanding of religious pluralism

NO	ITEM	RELIGIOUS SYNCRETISM	RELIGIOUS COEXISTENCE	RELIGIOUS EQUALITY	UNSURE	DEPT.
1	Understanding of Religious Pluralism	6	0	2	1	A
		7	1	0	0	B
		1	0	5	2	C
		1	6	1	0	D
		3	3	2	0	E
		1	0	1	2	F
		19	10	11	5	TOTAL
		<b>42%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>11%</b>	

# Results

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## Three definitions of Religious Pluralism:

1. Religious **syncretism**: any mixture of two or more religions.
2. Religious **equality**: a concept that propagates equality of religions, all religions are equal.
3. Religious **coexistence**: many or plural religions in a society or community who are living harmoniously and peacefully.



# Results

Table 2: Awareness of the debate of Religious Pluralism in Malaysia

NO	ITEM	YES	NO	DEPT.
2	Awareness of the debate of Religious Pluralism in Malaysia	3	6	A
		4	4	B
		2	6	C
		1	7	D
		0	8	E
		3	1	F
		13	32	TOTAL
		<b>29%</b>	<b>71%</b>	

# Results

NO	ITEM	YES	NO	DEPT.
2	Awareness of the debate of Religious Pluralism in Malaysia	13 <b>29%</b>	32 <b>71%</b>	TOTAL

- Name of scholars:
  1. Br. Firdaus Wong
  2. Dr. Zakir Naik
  3. Dr. Danial Zainal Abidin
- Some issues:
  1. The dispute between Muslims and the Catholic Christians over the use of *kalimah* Allah in the Bible.
  2. Many mix celebrations
    - Deepa-Raya and Kongsu Raya

# Conclusion

- The findings cannot be generalized to the other public universities.
- Given that the findings have shown that even the Muslims students are lack of understanding regarding the topic, it becomes more important to extend the study.



THANK YOU VERY MUCH