



Intervention Program to Reduce Religious Prejudice in Education Settings: A Scoping Review

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Abstract: In a plural society, education has an important role in preparing students to be able to live together with differences, including religious differences. Based on the contact hypothesis theory, various intervention programs have been carried out to overcome religious prejudice. This study aims to explore the concept, form, and impact of the interfaith intervention program in reducing religious prejudice in the context of education. The method used was a scoping review following the PRISMA-ScR protocol. Articles were searched online from the SAGE, Science Direct, Scopus, and Web of Science databases. There were six journal articles in the period 2012–2021 that were included based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria set. The results of this scoping review synthesized concepts, forms, and impacts, as well as research methods related to interfaith intervention programs to reduce religious prejudice in the education settings. We discussed the implications and directions for further research in research for the design, implementation, and evaluation of intergroup contact-based learning in education settings, especially higher education.

Keywords: intergroup contact theory; interfaith relations; intervention program; prejudice reduction; religious pluralism; scoping review



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1. Introduction

Religion-based social conflicts have recently become a serious global community challenge for the creation of harmony in relations between diverse groups. Since the events of 9/11, the problems of religion-based social relations have been worsened by the development of religious fundamentalism and extremism, as the roots of religion-based violence and terrorism (Vergani et al. 2020; Wibisono et al. 2019). Some researchers use the term religious fundamentalism to describe a strict interpretation of religious beliefs (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992; Liht et al. 2011; Williamson 2010). Religious-based radicalism or extremism is connected to a certain political agenda (Kruglanski et al. 2018; Simon et al. 2013; Webber et al. 2018) as an alternative to the existing system (Wibisono et al. 2019).

Ten years after 9/11, several major countries implemented several policies related to education to reduce prejudice. This started from the US in 2011 with the strategic policy of “Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States” (The White House 2011). The UK, in the same year, released the INSTED (In-Service Training and Educational Development) project for teachers on Sensitive and Controversial Issues (Jerome and Elwick 2020). Canada in 2013 issued a policy of “Building Resilience against Terrorism” which focuses on four aspects that are prevent, detect, deny and respond (Public Safety Canada 2013). In fact, UNESCO in 2016 and 2017 issued two policies for the prevention of radicalism in education in 2016 and 2017. The two policies were “A Teacher’s Guide on the Prevention of Violent Extremism” (UNESCO 2016) and “Preventing Violent Extremism through Education: A Guide for Policy Makers” (UNESCO 2017).

Religion-based conflict is inseparable from the concept of prejudice since social scientists assert that prejudice is the root of intergroup conflict (Allport 1954; Duckitt 2003). Reducing prejudice has an important role in creating harmony in religious diversity. Prejudice and education are inextricably linked because they both deal with the most basic component of human behavior: learning to coexist (Hughes 2017). Education is viewed as critical in decreasing prejudice, developing mutual understanding, and strengthening social cohesiveness (Banks and Banks 2016; Gill 2016; Mayhew and Rockenbach 2021; Raihani 2018; Rockenbach et al. 2015; Ubani et al. 2020; Malović and Vujica 2021).

Education is viewed as a strategic effort in a plural society to educate individuals with the knowledge, attitudes, and abilities necessary to live harmoniously in social diversity (Gill 2016; Mayhew et al. 2016; Mayhew and Rockenbach 2021; Raihani 2018; Rockenbach et al. 2015). The contact hypothesis theory states that contact between different groups can reduce prejudice when optimal conditions exist, such as equal status, group collaboration, common aims, as well as social and institutional support (Allport 1954; Pettigrew and Tropp 2008). As a result, intergroup contact is regarded as one of the most effective means of reducing prejudice (Boin et al. 2021). Contact between groups to minimize religious prejudice has been widely employed in a variety of social contexts, including education and teaching in schools and universities with the use of terminology, including ‘interfaith learning’ (Goldberg 2020; Mayhew and Rockenbach 2021), ‘inter-religious education’ or ‘interfaith education’ (e.g., Engebretson et al. 2010; Wielzen and Avest 2017), and ‘inter-faith dialogue’ or ‘inter-religious dialogue’ (Ariarajah 2019; Rydz and Wieradzka-Pilarczyk 2017). The concept behind interfaith learning is that strong interfaith interactions underlie the acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors for positive relationships among people of different religions or worldviews (Mayhew and Rockenbach 2021; Rockenbach et al. 2020; Wielzen and Avest 2017).

In conclusion, formal education has an essential role in providing the students with the information, attitudes, and abilities required to live harmoniously in pluralistic society, eliminating religious prejudice. Based on previous studies, various intervention programs have been carried out in educational settings to reduce religious prejudice. Therefore, to obtain a comprehensive understanding of intervention programs in reducing religious prejudice in educational settings, a literature review was necessary to identify and synthesize the terminology used to understand the form and implementation of intervention programs, the impact of intervention programs, and the research methods used.

2. Methods

This study used a systematic scoping review (ScR) based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses check sheet (PRISMA-ScR; Tricco et al. 2018) and to comply with JBI (The Joanna Briggs Institute) Manual for Evidence Synthesis (Peters et al. 2020). Scoping reviews, unlike other forms of reviews, such as systematic literature reviews, provide a comprehensive overview of the area and can be used to (1) reveal essential concepts underpinning a field of study, (2) clarify working definitions, and/or (3) explain the conceptual limits of a topic (Peters et al. 2020).

Scoping reviews are a helpful technique for determining the scope or coverage of a body of literature on a certain issue, as well as providing a clear indicator of the number of material and research available and an overview of the topic’s focus (Munn et al. 2018). Therefore, the researcher uses a scoping review to gain a comprehensive and thorough understanding of the issues related to intervention programs in reducing prejudice in educational settings. Researchers prefer to use a scoping review over a narrative review, which tends to cherry pick studies from the literature that are in accordance with the researcher’s assumptions (Mayo-Wilson et al. 2017; Winchester and Salji 2016). This scoping review applied five sequential stages, namely, (1) identifying the research question; (2) identifying relevant studies; (3) study selection; (4) charting the data; (5) collating, summarizing, and reporting the results (Peters et al. 2020).

Stage 1: identifying the research question

The focus of this scoping review was to explore the program interventions used to reduce religious prejudice in educational settings. The following questions were used to guide the literature search to ensure that relevant literature was found:

1. What terminology was used that was related to religious relations in the context of education?
2. What forms of program intervention were used?
3. How were the intervention programs implemented?
4. What were the impact of the intervention programs?
5. What research methods were used to determine the impact of the intervention programs?

Stage 2: identifying relevant studies

To aid in the identification of relevant research, a detailed search method was established based on the precise inclusion and exclusion criteria described in Table 1.

Table 1. Criteria for inclusion and exclusion.

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Time period	2012–2021	Studies outside of these dates
Language	English	Non-English
Type of article	Peer-review empirical research articles	Articles that are not empirical research including literature review, meta-analysis
Study focus	Articles where the focus related to intervention program based on interfaith contact with a clear form of activity, purpose, and impact	The article is not an interfaith contact-based intervention program that is implemented or just an intervention idea
Setting	Educational setting (school or university) with student participants.	Outside the educational setting and/or not involving student participants

The search for articles in this scoping review was carried out on articles published since 2012 because several policies in major countries related to education to prevent prejudice and intolerance began in 2011. Several important policies related to counter radicalism, especially the importance of reducing prejudice through education, emerged during the post-9/11 decades in major countries.

The data were obtained through various databases, namely, SAGE, Science Direct, Scopus, and Web of Science. The keywords used were a combination of “interfaith learning” OR “interfaith education” OR “inter-religious learning” OR “inter-religious education” OR “interfaith dialogue” OR “inter-religious dialogue” AND student*. The search strategy that involves a combination of keywords in the database along with the number of articles found is shown in Table 2.

Stage 3: Study selection based on inclusion and exclusion criteria

After removing duplicates, the literature search revealed a total of 363 articles. The title and abstract of these articles were examined and only the articles that met the inclusion criteria were processed. The full-text version of the article was retrieved and analyzed if the criteria could not be clearly defined through the title or abstract. Six papers matched the inclusion criteria and were included in this evaluation after a total of 25 full-text articles were reviewed. In the PRISMA-ScR flowchart, Figure 1 depicts the steps of the search operation (Tricco et al. 2018).

Table 2. Search terms and strategies for each database.

Database	Filter	Search Terms	Result	Total
SAGE	Article type: research article	interfaith learning OR interfaith education OR interfaith dialogue AND student *	92	105
		inter-religious learning OR inter-religious education OR inter-religious dialogue AND student *	13	
Science Direct	Article type: research article	interfaith learning OR interfaith education OR interfaith dialogue AND student *	58	89
		inter-religious learning OR inter-religious education OR inter-religious dialogue AND student *	31	
Scopus	Document type: research article	interfaith learning OR interfaith education OR interfaith dialogue AND student *	230	334
		inter-religious learning OR inter-religious education OR inter-religious dialogue AND student *	104	
Web of Science	Document type: articles	interfaith learning OR interfaith education OR interfaith dialogue AND student *	36	74
		inter-religious learning OR inter-religious education OR inter-religious dialogue AND student *	38	
Total			602	

Note: The truncation symbol (*) is used in electronic database searches to find words formed from the root word affixed with the truncation symbol. In this case: student * will be found “student, students”.

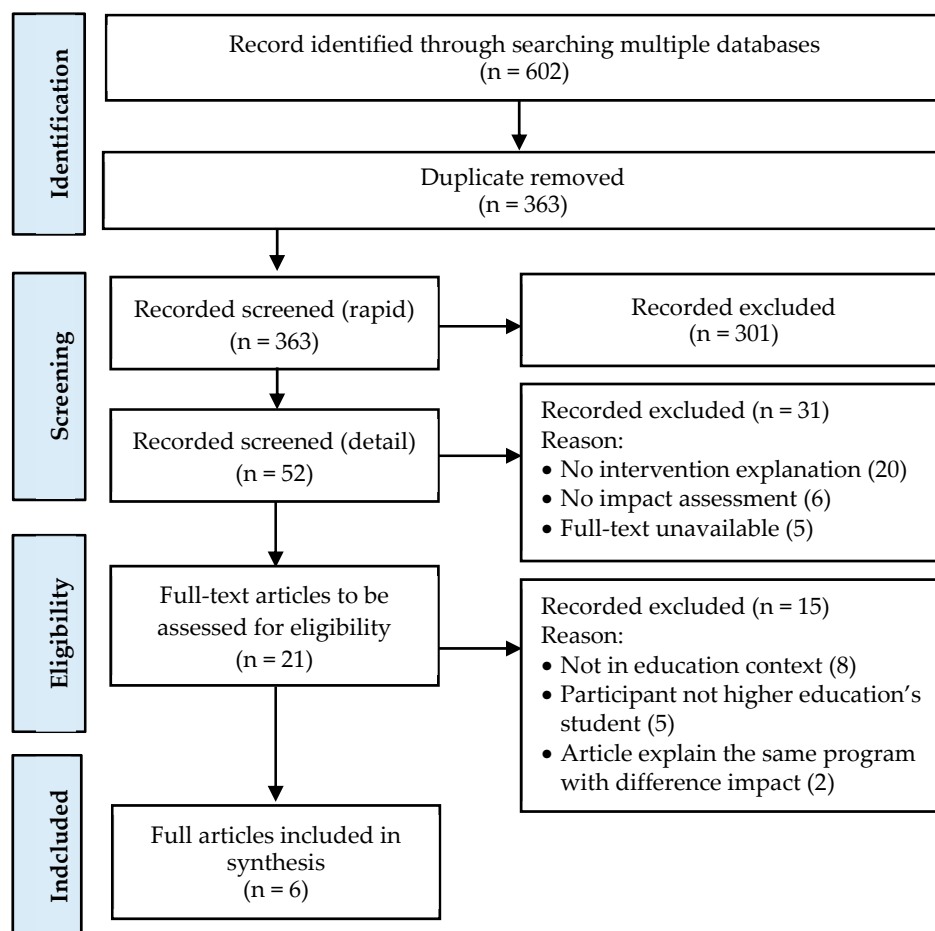


Figure 1. PRISMA-ScR flow diagram.

Stage 4: charting the data

The data from the six investigations was methodically mapped using Microsoft Excel 2016. The following titles in the table were used to categorize the included records: (1) the identity of the article, which includes the author, year of publication, and title; (2) the location/country; (3) the intervention program and research methods, which included the name of the intervention program, objectives, participants involved, research methods, and impact measurement; (4) the terminology used in relation to the intervention program, and the categorization of the intervention program. Only relevant information is included in the table.

Stage 5: collating, summarizing, and reporting the results

The relevant focus categories for each article were defined using the content from the charting step. Table A1 lists the categories previously described in the data charting stage. These categories were used to characterize the article's results and to respond to research inquiries. Using these categories, the most relevant themes found in the articles were then identified, summarized, and further elaborated in the discussion.

3. Results

3.1. Included Record

There were 602 identified records from the six search databases. After similar findings were excluded, 363 records were screened and identified for their conformity with the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The records were excluded because the focus of the studies were not empirical intervention programs. In addition, there were several records outside the educational settings, or full-text articles were not available. Finally, there were 6 records that were included in the synthesis, as summarized in Table A1 (Appendix A).

3.2. Study Characteristics

This scoping review included 6 articles, all of which were empirical types of research. These studies were conducted in various countries—namely, Australia, Israel, Malaysia, and the United Kingdom—with the majority of religions being Islam (Malaysia; [Khambali et al. 2019a, 2019b](#)), Judaism (Israel; [Goldberg 2020](#)), and Christianity (Australia and the UK; [Allen 2016](#); [McCowan 2017](#)). Participants who were involved in the interfaith prejudice reduction intervention program were not limited to adherents of the three Abrahamic religions but entangled participants according to the religion of the students in which each program was implemented. There were two studies conducted in secondary education settings ([Goldberg 2020](#); [McCowan 2017](#)), and another four in higher education circumstances ([Cronshaw 2021](#); [Khambali et al. 2019a, 2019b](#); [McCowan 2017](#)).

3.3. Terminology Used

The findings of this scoping review show that there is no single terminology that is used consistently among researchers to represent the equal intervention programs. To describe the nature of inter-religious relations, two terms were used repeatedly, namely, interfaith, and inter-religious/interreligious. The results of this scoping review showed that of the six studies, five of them used interfaith terminology ([Allen 2016](#); [Cronshaw and Daddow 2021](#); [Goldberg 2020](#); [Khambali et al. 2019a](#); [McCowan 2017](#)), four of which exclusively used interfaith terminology without inter-religious/interreligious ([Allen 2016](#); [Cronshaw and Daddow 2021](#); [Goldberg 2020](#); [Khambali et al. 2019a](#)). The term inter-religious/interreligious was used by the four studies and was inclusive because it was used in conjunction with interfaith terminology ([Cronshaw 2021](#); [Khambali et al. 2019b](#); [McCowan 2017](#)). This may be because in English, both terms are related to belief in the divine or God in which 'faith' is defined as "(1) strong belief or trust in someone or something; (2) belief in the existence of God; religious faith; (3) strong religious feelings or beliefs; a system of religious beliefs-religion" ([Merriam-Webster 2021](#)).

Furthermore, it was found that in the educational context, the word interfaith or inter-religious/interreligious were followed by form of activities such as interfaith learning (Goldberg 2020), interfaith education (Goldberg 2020; McCowan 2017), and interfaith dialog (Cronshaw and Daddow 2021; Khambali et al. 2019a, 2019b; McCowan 2017). Meanwhile, the activities that followed inter-religious/interreligious were interreligious learning (Cronshaw and Daddow 2021), inter-religious education (McCowan 2017), and interreligious dialogue (Khambali et al. 2019b). Although the terms learning and education are inseparable, the two terms show essential differences. Education refers to the process of giving intellectual instruction to individuals. Meanwhile, learning refers to the process of how individuals acquire new understanding, knowledge, behavior, skills, values, attitudes, and preferences (Weiten 2021).

3.4. Forms of Intervention Programs

In the context of education on religious diversity, various forms of intervention programs can be provided to students. The intervention program can only be one type of activity, such as teaching with content modification (Goldberg 2020), or a combination of several activities, such as providing lecture materials, discussing and sharing, having workshops, and visiting places of worship or other religious leaders (Khambali et al. 2019b). By using the typology proposed by Mayhew and Rockenbach (2021), intervention programs to reduce prejudice in educational context were grouped as follows in Table 3.

Table 3. Categories and Forms of Prejudice Reduction Intervention Program in Educational Settings.

Program Category	Form of Interfaith Programs	Findings from Scoping Review
Formal academic	At least one academic course to discuss interfaith cooperation; a class visit to a religious site off-campus; or enrollment in a religion course on-campus, expressly designed to expand one’s awareness of diverse religious traditions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Inter-religious Dialogue in the World of Differences” was an interfaith formal academic program as a part of the religious studies course, with activities consisting of lectures, discussions and sharing, workshops, field experience learning, and storytelling (Khambali et al. 2019a). 2. “Is This the Other Within Me?” was an interfaith formal academic program by providing history teaching materials on interreligious relations to determine the impact of teaching content on perceptions of history, social closeness, and stereotypes on other religious groups (Goldberg 2020). 3. “The Faith and Leadership Certificate” was an interfaith formal academic program of a certified course to increase student understanding of different religions and assist in developing leadership skills in dealing with the challenges of diversity (Allen 2016).
Informal academic	Examining the world’s religious and non-religious diversity via a case study, discussing religious or spiritual matters with instructors, and pondering why interfaith collaboration is important to one’s area of study through a case study.	

Table 3. Cont.

Program Category	Form of Interfaith Programs	Findings from Scoping Review
Formal social	Taking part in a campus interfaith conversation, attending a formal discussion on-campus with people with different worldviews, and learning about religious pluralism on-campus during orientation or other required events.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Scriptural Reasoning” was an interfaith formal social program in which participating students met and read passages from their own sacred texts, discussed, and contextualized sacred texts on contemporary issues. The goal of the program was to help participants have a better grasp of diverse traditions, texts, and judgments (The University of Cambridge’s Inter-Faith Programme, Allen 2016). 2. “Finding Common Ground” was an interfaith formal social program of interfaith dialogue by sharing stories and learning from each other among students from different cultural/religious backgrounds (Cronshaw and Daddow 2021).
Informal social	Meetings with people of different religious and non-religious viewpoints on the principles that we all share, dining with people of different religious and irreligious perspectives, and learning with people of different religious and irreligious perspectives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Camino Peace Pilgrimage” was an informal interfaith social program in which students from diverse religious backgrounds met up by visiting to pilgrimage sites and participating in cross-religious activities such as meditation, worship, self-reflection, and group sessions (University of Edinburgh’s Chaplaincy, Allen 2016). 2. “Storytelling” between Muslim students and seminary students was an interfaith informal social program. Storytelling carried out together among students with different religious perspectives (Khambali et al. 2019b).

The table above shows that of the four forms of interfaith intervention programs to reduce prejudice in educational settings, the most widely used are formal academics ([Allen 2016](#); [Goldberg 2020](#); [Khambali et al. 2019a](#)) because these intervention programs were part of the curriculum, course, or learning ([Goldberg 2020](#); [Khambali et al. 2019a](#)), or as part of a departmental program or center in the educational institution ([Allen 2016](#)). Another form of intervention program that was widely used was formal social interfaith dialogue on-campus through scriptural reasoning as carried out by The University of Cambridge’s Inter-Faith Program ([Allen 2016](#)) or through the ‘Finding Common Ground’ program at Swinburne University of Technology ([Cronshaw and Daddow 2021](#)). Through a literature review, [Paluck et al. \(2021\)](#) confirms that there are two groups of intervention research for prejudice reduction based on research objectives, namely applied and basic research interventions. Applied interventions consist of anti-bias, multicultural, moral education, and diversity training. Cognitive and emotional training, value consistency and self-worth intervention, peer influence, debate and discourse, social categorization, entertainment, face-to-face, extended, and imagined interaction are among the basic research interventions ([Paluck et al. 2021](#)).

3.5. Research Methods

From this scoping review, it is known that there were two research methods used, namely quantitative and qualitative. There were five studies that used qualitative research methods with a single case study approach ([McCowan 2017](#)) or multiple case studies ([Allen 2016](#)), and an interpretive-phenomenological approach ([Cronshaw 2021](#); [Khambali et al. 2019a, 2019b](#)). There was only one study of experimental quantitative methods that used a quasi-experimental pre-post control design ([Goldberg 2020](#)). In these studies, the qualitative method was dominant over the quantitative because the researchers wanted to delve deeper than explain the interfaith intervention programs. As an example, [Khambali et al. \(2019a\)](#) utilized a phenomenological interpretive qualitative method to explore how the storytelling intervention program had a positive impact on the relationship between Muslim and Christian student participants. The case study qualitative method is widely

used because the intervention program is contextual, unique, and may differ in each socio-cultural setting in which the research conducted. The researcher produces an in-depth investigation of a case, program, event, process, or one or more people using case study designs, which are most widely utilized in evaluation (Creswell and Creswell 2014).

3.6. Impact of Intervention Programs

This scoping review showed that all of the six studies of interfaith/interreligious intervention programs in educational settings had a positive impact on knowledge, attitude, and behavior. First, the interfaith programs in three universities in the United Kingdom (Allen 2016) revealed that students who participated in the programs reported growth in both intrapersonal and interpersonal maturity. Interpersonal maturity is shown in an increase in knowledge of values and religious identity. Meanwhile, interpersonal maturity is displayed in an ability to work with different religious believers, having multiple perspectives in decision-making, mediation, and reconciliation. Second, “The Building Bridges through Interfaith Dialogue in Schools” program (McCowan 2017) increased students’ knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of various religious and cultural traditions. Such a program could reduce stereotyping and prejudice due to ignorance about other religions, and increase social inclusion and cohesion. Third, the “Storytelling” program (Khambali et al. 2019a) encouraged the participants from various ethnicities and religions to learn transformatively in peace and harmony. Through constructive storytelling, participants shared their emotions and feelings and experiences. Storytelling facilitated the participants to create harmony and conflict resolution. Forth, the “Inter-religious Dialogue in the World of Differences Program” (Khambali et al. 2019b) could improve the knowledge, attitudes, and skills of the participants from various ethnicities and religions in interreligious relations. Fifth, the “Is This the Other Within Me?” program (Goldberg 2020) could increase the participants perception of history, social closeness, and stereotypes of other religions. Sixth, the “Finding Common Ground” program (Cronshaw and Daddow 2021) could decrease social isolation, increase understanding and knowledge of religion, emphasize diverse cultural and religious heritage, and provide safe support for minority students engaging in campus life.

The findings of his scoping review confirm that through the experience of dialogue with other participants, participants were more critical of their values, beliefs, and world-views that Streib (2010) and Streib and Klein (2014) termed as a religious schema. Religious schema consists of three aspects: truth in text and teaching fairness (ttt); fairness, tolerance and rationality (ftr); and xenosophia/inter-religious dialogue (xeno). Religious schema is a cognitive representation that incorporates structured previous knowledge about a certain topic, including the definition of quality relationships (McIntosh 1995).

Changes in perspective through the interfaith/interreligious dialogue intervention program occur through a transformative learning process (Pope and Nicolaidis 2021; Wielzen and Avest 2017). Transformative learning cannot be separated from the concept of adult education proposed by Jack Mezirow (2003, 2006). The term “transformative learning” refers to the process of changing the frame of reference (mindset, thinking habits, meaning perspective) towards being more inclusive, open, reflective, and guiding action (Mezirow 2006).

Emotionally, interfaith/interreligious interactions with outgroups impact on decreasing feelings of intergroup threat (Aberson et al. 2021; Kanas et al. 2017). Regarding behavior or skills, interfaith/interreligious intervention programs impact on the ability to work together, communicate, and lead in different contexts (Allen 2016); the ability to interact with different groups (Khambali et al. 2019b; McCowan 2017); and the ability to respect and overcome social isolation (Cronshaw and Daddow 2021). In this scoping review, the interfaith intervention program’s impact was categorized into three domains: cognitive, attitude, and behavior/skills. This was in line with the interfaith learning objectives proposed by Visser et al. (2021) that consist of knowledge, attitude, and skill domains at the level of self, other, interaction-personal, and interaction-societal.

This scoping review confirms that learning, education, or interfaith/interreligious dialogue encourages intergroup contact with different religious identities. Positive and intensive interactions with outgroups will reduce prejudice and negative attitudes towards outgroups and increase positive relationships between people with various social identities (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998; Pettigrew and Tropp 2006, 2008). Interfaith contact through learning or dialogue in educational settings becomes more effective because the educational environment optimally stimulates intergroup contact marked by equal status, cooperation between groups, shared goals, and social and institutional support (Allport 1954; Pettigrew and Tropp 2008). In other words, education is a social space to reduce religious prejudice and foster religious tolerance. A conducive university environment and climate encourage the creation of optimal interfaith learning (Mayhew et al. 2020; Mayhew and Rockenbach 2021; Rockenbach et al. 2020).

4. Discussion: Implications for Further Research

4.1. Ontological Implications

Ontology deals with what exists or the nature of reality (Creswell and Creswell 2014; Neuman 2014). This scoping review confirms that ontologically, the nature of interreligious or interfaith reality in the context of education is a diverse reality. Various terminology or concepts are used for interfaith reality, such as learning, education, and dialogue. The difference in the choice of concept or terminology really depends on which side the researcher approaches the reality of the interreligious/interfaith contact.

In explaining the relationship between the intervention programs and prejudice reduction, the issue related to the ontological category that needs to be considered is the category of “relationship” between the two concepts. The “relationship” category asks whether one concept is related to another; then, how the relationship is between these concepts (Neuman 2014). For this reason, further researchers need to consider what concepts or variables explain the relationship between intergroup contact-based intervention programs and prejudice reduction. The relationship can be direct or indirect. If it is indirect, then there are other variables that act as mediators or moderators. The mechanism of the relationship between the concepts can be as causality and/or association, which can be shown in conceptual models as representational illustrations and heuristic tools that visually describe concepts and theories (Elangovan and Rajendran 2015).

Based on previous findings, one of the studies mapping the relationship between intergroup contact interventions with the formation or reduction in prejudice through mediator and moderator variables was conducted by Boin et al. (2021). The variables that can be used to explain the connection between intergroup contact and prejudice reduction are mediator variables. These mediator variables include empathy, perspective taking, trust, intergroup anxiety, intergroup threat, outgroup morality, inclusion of the other in the self, self-disclosure, dehumanization, contact experience, outgroup heterogeneity, stereotypes/metastereotypes, intergroup reappraisal, and deprovincialization. Furthermore, moderator variables can be grouped into personal and contextual variables. The moderator-personal variables include RWA (right wing authoritarianism), SDO (social dominance orientation), NFC (need for closure), conservatism, big five personality traits (especially agreeableness and extraversion traits), and ingroup identification. While the contextual variables are majority–minority status groups (Boin et al. 2021).

Social relations in religious diversity are complex social realities that require an interdisciplinary approach. For example, social psychology, as part of behavioral science, connects social structures at all levels to individual identities and psychological constructs such as beliefs, values, attitudes, and behavior by combining other scientific disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, political science, history, theology, and philosophy (Herriot 2008; Williamson 2010).

This scoping review was conducted on articles published since 2012 that were related to intervention programs aimed to reduce prejudice in educational settings. This assumption certainly has limitations; it is recognized that the search should have been

done exhaustively in previous years so that a clearer timeframe can show the reduction in prejudice from when the educational interventions were first implemented. For this reason, further research could conduct a similar study, including articles published before 2012. In addition, although the results of this scoping review show that the six intervention programs in educational settings can reduce prejudice, the future intervention programs need to monitor the long-term effects of those intervention programs and not be limited to their short-term effects.

4.2. Epistemological Implications

Epistemology is concerned with how we know reality or what makes true statements about reality based on ontological assumptions accurate. What has to be carried out to produce knowledge, and how scientific knowledge appears after it is generated, are both covered by epistemology (Neuman 2014). Based on the ontological principle, a researcher needs to have a clear view of reality to be able to make the right methodological choices (Lohse 2017). The selection of research methods cannot be separated from the research paradigm that comes from the epistemology and ontology adopted by the researcher (Creswell and Creswell 2014).

This scoping review showed that there were two research methods used in included studies, namely quantitative and qualitative. However, in line with the chosen ontology, epistemology, and paradigm, researchers can consider choosing another method *videlicet* mixed-methods, which is a combination or integration of quantitative and qualitative research and data in research (Creswell and Creswell 2014), using a pragmatism paradigm (Lohse 2017; Maarouf 2019). In line with the ontological assumption of the complexity of interfaith relation problems in learning, mixed-methods is a methodological choice that can be considered for providing a broad and in-depth understanding of the complexity of the social reality being studied (Creswell and Creswell 2014).

One of the methodological issues that need attention in any experimental research to determine the effectiveness of an intervention program, including an intervention program for prejudice reduction, is selection bias. Selection bias is related to how participants (students) are enrolled in intervention programs: randomly or not. Another method to consider using when evaluating the effectiveness of an intervention program to reduce prejudice in educational settings is randomized field experiments. By this experimental method, two or more groups are randomly allocated to different intervention programs and one placebo program. This experimental method allows quantifying the causal effect of intervention programs on the outcome of interest with a high level of external validity (Neuman 2014).

4.3. Axiological Implications

Axiology in research refers to what the researcher considers to be worthwhile and ethical, which is enshrined in the research paradigm and guides the researcher's decision-making (Killam 2013). Researchers in the selection of intervention programs need to consider the theoretical and practical benefits for the development of theory and science, as well as in overcoming socio-empirical problems such as prejudice, intolerance, and conflict stemming from religious diversity. For example, the intervention program 'Camino Peace Pilgrimage' was quite an expensive program for student participants and was exclusive, since it prevented many students from being involved in it (Allen 2016). For this reason, researchers or educational institutions need to consider the broader implication of implementing an intervention program design. For example, involving all students by making the program mandatory as part of the curriculum or course.

5. Conclusions

From this scoping review on intervention programs to reduce interfaith prejudice through intergroup contact in interfaith learning in educational settings, several conclusions were drawn:

1. In the context of education, various terminology can be used to describe a prejudice reduction intervention program as a combination of the terms interfaith or inter-religious with learning, education, and dialogue. However, if interfaith learning is based on hypothetical contact theory, then the more appropriate terminology to be used is interfaith/interreligious dialogue because in the dialogue process, there has been contact and a learning process.
2. There are four forms of interfaith learning in educational settings, namely formal academic, informal academic, formal social, and informal social. Intervention program activities can be one or a combination of two or more forms of interfaith learning.
3. Contact theory hypotheses can be applied in interfaith learning in educational settings to reduce religious prejudice through changes in knowledge, attitudes, and skills/behaviors. A reduction in prejudice through interfaith learning in educational settings, particularly at the higher education level, occurs through transformational learning supported by optimal conditions for effective intergroup contact, namely equal status, intergroup cooperation, shared goals, and social and institutional support.
4. To obtain a wider impact of intervention programs on educational settings, intervention programs can be integrated with existing learning/curriculum so that they are compulsory for all students.

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Appendix A

Table A1. Summarized of the six included records.

Researcher, Year, Title	Location/Country	Intervention Program and Research Methods	Terminology, Program Category	Main Findings
(Allen 2016). Achieving interfaith maturity through university interfaith programmes in the United Kingdom.	The United Kingdom (UK)	<p><i>Intervention programs:</i> there were three interfaith programs at three dif-ferent campuses.</p> <p>(1) “The University of Cambridge’s Inter-Faith Program (CIP)”. This program aimed to bond the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian students. The program’s primary technique of scriptural reasoning was created by CIP. Participants met and read excerpts from their own sacred books during the event. Participants discussed the text’s content, other traditions’ interpretations of the text, and how texts affected attitudes on modern concerns. The goal was to inspire participants to have a better grasp of diverse traditions, texts, and interpretations.</p> <p>(2) “The London School of Economics and Political Science’s Faith Centre: The Faith and Leadership Certificate”. This program was an approved extracurricular course that sought to broaden participants’ awareness of many religions while also assisting in the development of leadership abilities for students as future leaders facing the difficulties of diversity in the twenty-first century. This course lasted seven times.</p> <p>(3) “University of Edinburgh’s Chaplaincy”. Every summer, the chaplaincy unit facilitated the ‘Camino Peace Pilgrimage’ program. The purpose of this pilgrimage program was to strengthen the spirit of peace among the participants. Interfaith activities such as meditation, worship, self-reflection, and group meetings were led by two interfaith leaders along the pilgrimage route.</p> <p><i>Participants:</i> students at the three universities involving program managers, activity facilitators, and resource people. <i>Research method:</i> qualitative, multiple case study and the impact measurement used interviews with participants and program managers.</p>	<p><i>Terminology:</i> interfaith programs, interfaith maturity. <i>Program category:</i> formal academic.</p>	<p>Program 1 (CIP): Students who participated in the program reported growing in cognitive maturity as a result of having a critical attitude toward their own traditions as well as the capacity to employ a variety of cultural frameworks and worldviews. One of the shortcomings of the CIP was that the program focused primarily on the three Abrahamic religions (Christian, Judaism, and Islam) which did not reflect the broad range of religious traditions in the UK.</p> <p>Program 2 (Faith and Leadership Certificate): Through conversation, contemplation, and training in decision-making, mediation, and reconciliation, the program was able to shift the participants’ viewpoint from a single/rigid worldview to a more diversified one. There was an increase in intrapersonal maturity (knowledge of values and religious identity) and interpersonal maturity in the setting of interfaith growth (ability to work with participants with different religious beliefs and perspectives during training in decision-making, mediation, and reconciliation). Limitations of this program: (1) limited only to three major religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam); (2) participants may not have enough time to reach interfaith maturity in the three developmental dimensions (cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal).</p> <p>Program 3 (Camino Peace Pilgrimage): The shared experience in joint activities made this program useful according to the stage of interfaith development of each participant. The limitations of this program include that the cost was expensive enough to prevent many students from enrolling, limiting the impact of the program on all students. Furthermore, due to the short voyage, participants were unable to progress through all phases of interfaith maturity growth.</p>

Table A1. Cont.

Researcher, Year, Title	Location/Country	Intervention Program and Research Methods	Terminology, Program Category	Main Findings
(McCowan 2017). Building bridges rather than walls: Research into an experiential model of interfaith education in secondary schools	Australia	<p><i>Intervention program:</i> “The Building Bridges through Interfaith Dialogue in Schools Program (BBP)”. This program was an experience-based program by visiting different schools. The BBP program aimed to bring together students from different cultural and religious backgrounds, conducted over six sessions per year. Each two-hour session involved interactive activities, a shared meal, a short presentation about the host school’s religion or culture and small group sharing facilitated by a trained mentor.</p> <p><i>Participants:</i> a total of 96 students in grades 10 and 11 from 16 of the 25 schools participated in the program, which were Catholic, Protestant, Islamic, Jewish, and state schools. There were 19 teachers and 15 facilitators involved.</p> <p><i>Research method:</i> qualitative case study, and impact measurement used semi-structured interviews and questionnaires for students, and interviews were used for teachers and facilitators.</p>	<p><i>Terminology:</i> interfaith education, inter-religious education, interfaith dialogue. <i>Program category:</i> formal social.</p>	Students’ knowledge, comprehension, and appreciation of various religious and cultural traditions improved because of intervention programs. Programs could reduce prejudice due to ignorance and stereotypes about other religions and increased social inclusion and cohesion.
(Khambali et al. 2019a). Storytelling as a peace education in interfaith dialogue: An experience among selected university students.	Malaysia	<p><i>Intervention program:</i> “Storytelling”. This program involved Muslim students from the University of Malaya, the Malaysian National University, and Christian students of the Malaysian Theological Seminary. Storytelling was carried out by Muslim students visiting a Christian theological seminary. Participants were given three topics: self-telling, experiences interacting with different groups, and expectations about multicultural nations and societies.</p> <p><i>Participants:</i> 38 Muslim students and 47 Christian theology students.</p> <p><i>Research method:</i> qualitative—phenomenological interpretive, and impact measurement using interviews, observation, and participant self-report.</p>	<p><i>Terminology:</i> interfaith dialogue. <i>Program category:</i> formal academic.</p>	Storytelling was effective in interfaith dialogue that encourages transformative learning in peace and harmony among various ethnicities and religions. Constructive storytelling in sharing emotions and feelings and experiences encouraged participants to build peace and harmony. Storytelling was a joint action among participants to create harmony and conflict resolution, especially in interfaith dialogue.

Table A1. Cont.

Researcher, Year, Title	Location/Country	Intervention Program and Research Methods	Terminology, Program Category	Main Findings
(Khambali et al. 2019b). Inter-religious dialogue activity: An experience among undergraduate students in selected universities in Malaysia.	Malaysia	<i>Intervention program:</i> "Inter-religious Dialogue in the World of Differences". This program aimed to improve knowledge, attitudes, and skills in interreligious relations. This program was part of the religious studies course, with activities including lectures, discussions and sharing, workshops, field experience learning, and storytelling. Workshop and storytelling activities were carried out across religions. Field experience learning activities were carried out by visiting religious leaders (priests, monks, brahmins) and the results presented in reports and videos were shared in class. In one week of lectures (6th week), religious leaders shared their experiences in understanding the scriptures, history, and religious practices. <i>Participants:</i> students from four universities. Program implementation involved lecturers and external parties such as religious leaders. <i>Research method:</i> qualitative interpretative phenomenological, and impact measurement by interview, observation, participant self-report.	<i>Terminology:</i> inter-religious dialogue. <i>Program category:</i> formal academic.	The findings of this study revealed that diverse interfaith interaction models and designs were dependent on distinct types and goals. Interfaith discourse activities included lecture activities, debates and sharing, seminars, field experience learning, and storytelling. From this research, three main themes were found. First, the environment is a significant factor influencing the experience of participants. Second, the relationships formed through sharing and storytelling strengthened participants' experiences. The experience of inter-faith dialogue strengthened the religious and non-religious traditions of the participants.
(Goldberg 2020). Is this the other within me? The varied effects of engaging in interfaith learning.	Israel	<i>Intervention program:</i> "Is This the Other Within Me?" This program was a modification of teaching content to measure the impact of teaching content on perceptions of history, social closeness, and stereotypes against other religious groups. <i>Participants:</i> Jewish and Muslim students (N = 1.286). <i>Research method:</i> quasi-experimental pre-post control design with three groups: control, commonality (topic about similarity and harmony between religions), and conflict (topic about religious conflict). The impact measurement using self-report through a questionnaire that measures perceptions of history, social closeness, and stereotypes.	<i>Terminology:</i> Interfaith learning, interfaith education. <i>Program category:</i> formal academic.	There is a significant change in the dependent variables (perception of history, social closeness, and stereotypes). Compared to the group that received the topic of religious similarity and harmony, participants who received the topic of religious conflict showed a more negative perception of the history of other religions ($t(76) = 2.19, p < 0.05$) and an increase in negative stereotypes against other religions ($t(76) = 2.17, p < 0.05$). In the control group, there was no change in the three dependent variables.

Table A1. Cont.

Researcher, Year, Title	Location/Country	Intervention Program and Research Methods	Terminology, Program Category	Main Findings
(Cronshaw and Daddow 2021). An elephant in the room: University chaplains cultivating healthy religious diversity through respectful dialogue.	Australia	<p><i>Intervention program:</i> 'Finding Common Ground' (FCG). This program aimed to promote interfaith dialogue by encouraging students from various cultural and religious backgrounds to share their stories and learn from one another to decrease social isolation, to upsurge understanding and knowledge of religion, to assert diverse cultural and religious heritage, and to provide safe support for students engaging in campus life. This program was offered twice in 2018, and each period was carried out 5 times including one meeting for program evaluation.</p> <p><i>Participants:</i> 28 students consisting of Agnostics, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, and Sikhs.</p> <p><i>Research method:</i> qualitative-phenomenology, and evaluation method using thematic with interviews.</p>	<p><i>Terminology:</i> interreligious learning, interfaith dialogue, interfaith interaction. <i>Program category:</i> informal social.</p>	<p>FCG's intervention program elicited personal narratives, created safe spaces and respectful dialogue, and overcame social isolation. The program also supported the development of intercultural literacy in participants which could increase knowledge and experience of other religions. The program encouraged the participation of students from minority groups.</p>

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