



RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE CONCEPT OF MEDIATION IN ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR) AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION AGAINST RELIGIOUS CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

Religious conflicts are increasingly covered by the media these days, such conflicts if not managed properly can lead to wars and killings as has happened abroad and others have taken the time to use the legal process. Therefore, this article aims to discuss the concept of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mediation and its implementation against religious conflict resolution. Researchers use a qualitative method, which is a literature review and analysis of previous writings. As a result, the study found that the method of mediation in the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is very suitable for dealing with religious conflicts, since it does not take long and can satisfy both conflicting parties to lead to peace.

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Introduction:-

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) has been used since the previous era and its use is still increasing today. This method originally found its origins in China in the practice of mediation in Confucian ethics (Strazisar, 2018). This method has also been used in rural Malaysia since the 16th century, administered by village chiefs whose role includes resolving disputes that arise in society (Bastin & Winks, 1979). But over time, there are professional agencies that have been specially trained in using such a method. This is because the method is becoming increasingly popular to be used in dispute resolution to replace the court proceeding method (Goldberg et al., 1999).

According to Nur Khalidah Dahlan et al. (2020) the use of court procedures is increasingly overcrowded, making them long and expensive. Therefore, both the community and legal practitioners are looking for solutions or methods that take a long time to avoid court cases (Mohamad Hafifi Hassim et al., 2019). This method is an alternative dispute resolution method that does not involve the court procedures that are commonly used to resolve disputes. This alternative solution is divided into three methods: arbitration, conciliation, and mediation (Nur Khalidah Dahlan et al., 2017). However, this article will only discuss the mediation method, as it is seen to be more significant to implement in managing religious conflict.

The effectiveness of mediation in resolving religious conflicts is increasingly being seen abroad but is still unappreciated in Malaysia. According to Abdul Halim Ismail (2014), this matter needs to be addressed as the religious conflict that has taken place in Malaysia has caused inconvenience to the multi-ethnic and multi-religious society. The main cause of religious conflicts in Malaysia lies in the lack of knowledge about the understanding and

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acceptance of other religions, which is also closely related to economic, political, and social factors (Nur Azuki Yusuff, 2015). Therefore, the mediation method is one of the approaches that are suitable for dealing with religious conflicts because it is more community-friendly in dispute resolution. Then, the researchers discuss the concept of mediation in alternative dispute resolution and its implementation against religious conflict management.

Problem Statement:-

Religious conflicts arise due to a lack of religious sensitivity towards adherents of other religions. Siti Khatijah Yasin and Fadzli Adam (2017) state that religious sensitivities are heightened in society nowadays and are greatly feared by all races as conflict or issue affects the sanctity of religion, especially Islam, can cause quarrels between them. According to Nur Farhana Abdul Rahman and Nur Syariah Muhammad Shah (2020), the issues of religious sensitivity can be divided into three parts namely theological, social and ethical issues. From the point of view of the study, the most sensitive issue in the context of theology is the desecration of Scripture and the practice of other religions, while in the social context it is related to the destruction of the house of worship and in the context of ethics, it is an insult to the corpses of followers of other religions.

Considering that the religious sensitivity problem started in the 1990s and continues to this day. This is because there are several issues of religious sensibility that are repeatedly seen and found to have affected relationships between the religion's adherents. One of the problems is the use of the word Allah, which is also a hot topic of conversation between Muslims and non-Muslims. In 2007, the editors of The Herald-The Catholic Weekly used the phrase in their newspaper and said they had permission from the Home Office. However, the statement was denied by the Home Office, causing the church and Home Office to go through various court cases until the federal court in 2014 denied the church's request. They justify that there is no clear law in Islam prohibiting the use of the word Allah (Khairul Azhar Meerangani & Rushdi Ramli, 2016). Let's consider the problem that used the judicial method to resolve the conflict and continues to recur to this day.

While there is also a problem with building a place of worship, as happened in Section 23 Shah Alam, which wants to build a Hindu temple, has angered the Malay Muslims in the area, the majority of whom are Muslim and only 40 are Hindu. According to Azian Aziz (2009), the situation worsened when Muslims protested by wearing a sloppy head while marching towards the Secretary of State's building. As a result, the relationship between Muslims and Hindus has become tenser. Therefore, the temple will be moved to Section 23, where the construction will not be in a residential area, but in Section 23 will be in an industrial area. Because it is important to take into account the views of all parties and the consent of the conflicting parties (Syed Muaz Syed Putra, 2010).

In addition, other problems such as Islam are an exclusive religion, religious freedom, the judiciary, language issues and the Islamic State (Muhamad Faisal Ashaari & Muhamad Ariff Khushairi, 2019). While according to Siti Khatijah Yasin and Fadzli Adam (2017), Hudud Law, the call to prayer and others have had a major impact on religious believers in Malaysia. Zaid Ahmad et al. (2014) added that the issue of offending religion, the issue of child custody, the issue of beneficiaries, the issue of conversion, and the issue of the spread of other religions are also issues raising religious sensitivities. Looking at the religious sensitivity issues discussed above, most of these issues use the judicial method of dispute resolution, which is unable to guarantee the satisfaction of the conflicting parties. This leads to the fact that these problems will keep reappearing and will continue to increase because there is no satisfactory solution and guarantee for their interests.

Basically, Malaysia has two legal systems namely the Syariah legal system and the civil legal system. According to Raymod (1988), prior to the introduction of the two legal systems, it had expressed concern among non-Muslims about efforts to strengthen Sharia courts, which were believed to challenge the dominance of civil courts and increase religious dominance in the country. Meanwhile, Kamal Halili Hassan et al. (2014) note that the methods of court proceedings in resolving religious conflicts have caused some limitations, i.e. there will be an issue of overlapping powers between the civil court and the Syariah court. Then there will be a delay in resolving the conflict, which in turn will take longer. Hence, it has touched both the religious sensitivities and the people involved, and the society following such a case is easily influenced and lead to undesirable things like organizing proselytizing forums, organizing illegal gatherings and so on (Utusan Malaysia 2008). Considering the constraints faced by the courts, there is a need for alternative dispute resolution mediation methods to resolve religious conflicts in Malaysia.

Objective:-

The objective of this article is:

1. To discuss the concept of mediation through an alternative dispute resolution (ADR).
2. To discuss the implementation of mediation in the management of religious conflicts.

Methodology:-

This article uses a qualitative method, namely a literature review and analysis of previous writings. This method serves to understand the concept of mediation through alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and the implementation of mediation in the processing of religious conflicts.

Results and Discussions:-**Mediation concept in alternative dispute resolution (ADR):**

Conflicts or quarrels in this case can happen to individuals, groups, organizations, or communities since conflicts are already human nature living in a variety of races and religions. There are methods of dealing with conflicts, such as the use of the method of trial or justice. According to Kumar (T.th), the judiciary is essentially an all-encompassing phenomenon against the courts. Anything a judge does in the process of upholding justice is called a trial. A court proceeding is a procedure in which a third party (judge/other authority) makes its decision. Procedures and decisions are regulated, restricted and controlled by relevant parties. In the judicial process, judges are asked to decide issues between the conflicting parties that really fall under the law and the constitution.

While other methods are referred to as Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), it is an alternative way of dispute resolution that is distinct from court proceedings. According to Haslina Ibrahim and AinulJariabt.Maidin (2020), the word alternative refers to a process in which a customer is a party to the conflict and chooses to settle their disputes outside of the courtroom, either voluntarily or by order of the court (Haslina Ibrahim et al. 2020). This approach is used to avoid a complicated, time-consuming court process (Brown & Marriott, 1999). According to Abraham Lincoln, in a court case, the winner is the loser as he suffered losses in legal fees, costs and time (Nurul Husnah Omar & RuzianMarkom, 2017).

Auerbach (1983) states that this approach does not overlap with court procedure, as it has its own procedure. However, if this approach is still not considered successful in reconciling the two sides, they can use the court process. This statement is also supported by the Law Reform Commission (2010), which states that alternative dispute resolution is a structured process that is not involved in the judicial process, although it may have something to do with the court and involve an unbiased third party. This alternative settlement approach also differs from court proceedings in terms of the formality, the role of third parties, the presence of a lawyer and the legal status of a settlement reached.

Therefore, ADR is an approach that is considered to be more flexible, the faster the procedure, the more secure its confidentiality and the consideration of the views of both parties. Bok (1983) also noted that this approach is used to open society's eyes to using alternative approaches to court proceedings to lead to better reconciliation. In the mediation process, there is a third person or third party called mediator who helps to resolve the dispute, but the mediator is not a judge, just an intermediary who helps the disputing parties to resolve the conflict (Kamal Halili Hassan et al., 2014).

Furthermore, the third party or mediator has no authority to make decisions against the disputing party, however, according to Brown and Marriott (1999), mediators must use certain procedures, techniques, and specific skills to assist the disputing parties in negotiating and finally reaching an agreement achieve. During the mediation process, the parties to the dispute are allowed to reach an agreement on how to settle the dispute, and they must also agree to enter into an agreement that takes into account the interests of both parties. (Mohamad Hafifi Hassim et al., 2019). Thus, mediation is an informal process in which an unbiased third party assists the disputing party in finding a solution that satisfies both parties (Mohd Ab Malek bin Md Shah et al., 2019).

However, the third party cannot make a decision and can only assist the conflicting parties in an advisory capacity. The mediator must be someone who has the experience and consent to assist the mediation process themselves (Nurul Husnah Omar and RuzianMarkom (2017). However, a mediator does not need to have an academic degree or work experience to be a mediator, so mediators can choose from compose professors, sociologists, therapists, or psychologists (Kazi Abdul Rahman (2012). To become a mediator, a responsible mediator must improve their skills

by attending training courses (Dingle (2013). Several accredited training providers offer basic mediation courses where participants must complete at least 40 hours of in-person mediation training and undergo an assessment. Successful participants will receive a mediation certificate upon successful completion of the training and exam.

There are several elements that must be written in order to conduct the mediation process either before or during the mediation process. In the literature review, the researcher found that several elements are commonly highlighted by scholars based on mediation theories that have been explained as guiding a successful mediation process. Elements include neutrality that is not biased towards either party to the conflict and the use of the position of mediator to equitably balance the distribution of power between the conflicting parties (Cobb & Rifkin, 1991). This is consistent with the theory of Francis Francis (1998); Kadayifci-Orellana Kadayifci-Orellana (2008); Lederach (1995) who stated that in a mediation process involving the intervention of a third party, a mediator must be someone who is trusted by both parties and who can be supported by both parties.

In addition, the mediator must also ensure that the element of self-determination is maintained throughout the mediation process. Radford (2002) notes that the element of self-determination places several requirements on a mediator, including ensuring that all parties can participate in the process and that the mediator need not either start the mediation or end it if one of the parties cannot participate. This self-determination is a voluntary act in which each party to the conflict makes an independent decision and is aware of the process and the outcome. This means that the agreement must be voluntary and each participant has the right to make their own decisions and there is no coercion (Kazi Abdul Rahman 2012).

These elements are emphasized by many researchers to conduct a mediation process and it is also important that the mediation process can run smoothly. This coincides with the established mediation theories such as neutrality, self-determination, no self-interest etc. and is the benchmark for successful mediation. If this is not possible, the mediator must withdraw from the mediation process to protect the interests of both parties to the dispute and to prevent the mediator from being unfair to both parties.

Implementation of mediation in dealing with religious conflicts:

There are different approaches to dealing with religious conflicts, but the method of mediation is an approach that does not involve court proceedings. Mediation can be used for all types of disputes, including religious disputes, whether related to the religion itself or the institution (Haslina Ibrahim & AinulJariabt.Maidin, 2020). According to Sanchez (2012), religious disputes are about matters of belief such as objects such as texts, symbols, principles, images, hate speech, discrimination, and inequality. Meanwhile, Mohd Ab Malek bin Md Shah et al. (2019) state that one of the advantages of mediation is that all negotiations and discussions during the mediation process are non-binding and confidential. The party to the dispute and the mediator may not disclose anything that happened during the mediation process without the consent of the party to the dispute.

This makes mediation more effective because the parties to the dispute feel more comfortable and know they can speak freely and openly with the mediator. Bing (2010) states that mediators must seek answers to questions they receive from disputing parties and offer them alternative options, but the mediator cannot decide and there is no element of coercion in this method. Methods of mediation practice help the disputing parties to communicate directly, to find solutions to problems that arise one after the other and not to question the rights of the other (Hammad Mohammad Dahalan, 2014). For Isola (2014), interreligious dialogue, education and awareness-raising are among the main features of religious mediation, since interreligious dialogue is a form of peacemaking. He also explained that the main goal of religious mediation is to bring about peace.

The examples of the successful use of mediation can be seen in the inter-religious conflict in the Balkans involving the Catholic, Muslim, and Serbian populations. According to Merdjanova et al. (2009) the word peace is disliked by the people of the Balkans because it points to forgiveness, which is something very personal and is the decision of the individual who has been wronged because only he has the power to decide. A mediator named David Steele pointed out the need for different strategies to make them aware of their mistakes. Steele believes that confession of sins is necessary even if it is not done directly by the person confessing it. Which is what he did when he told each group to find space to think. In this mediation process, Steele guided his participants to acknowledge the injustices that had occurred in their communities. Steele rallies them to bring their wrongdoing to their attention, which ultimately gives them room to repent (Haslina Ibrahim & AinulJariabt.Maidin, 2020).

Alongside this, several institutions and agencies have been set up to put a special emphasis on religious mediation, such as Religious and Traditional Peacemakers Network in the Philippines and so on (Haslina Ibrahim & AinulJariabt.Maidin, 2020). The established institutions or agencies have their own goals and expectations. In the Philippines, for example, the Religious and Traditional Peacemakers Network, established in 2013, aims to train facilitators from traditional or religious authorities or civil society leaders who combine religious and traditional elements in their conflict resolution efforts (Mubashir, 2016). Meanwhile, Imam (Dr) Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor (Dr) James Wuye established the International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation in Nigeria in 1995 to guide and train them in mediation skills.

Based on these institutions and agencies, a religious mediator must receive contact with other religions in order to be prepared to deal with problems related to other religions. In Malaysia, the Malaysian Bar Council has established an alternative resolution committee, the Malaysian Mediation Center (MMC), to serve as the arbitration center in Malaysia. Mohamad RidzuanZainudin (2009) states that the mediation approach planned by the MMC is an initiative of the conflicting parties applying and planning according to the suitability of the mediator. However, no legal consequences can be imposed on parties who do not participate in the mediation process. For any contract that states that a dispute must first be resolved through mediation or arbitration, the refusal of either party to the negotiating table allows legal action against that party in addition to the legal effects of breaching the contract.

In Malaysia, too, there is mediation accreditation training recognized by the Malaysian Mediation Center (MMC), in which mediators must complete a 40-hour professional training course and pass a practical exam. The Accord Group of Australia has also provided training for mediators in Malaysia as there is no single professional accreditation body for mediators in Malaysia. Since 2018, however, there has also been special training and accreditation for interreligious mediators by the International Islamic University of Malaysia at the request of the Unity Department. (Haslina Ibrahim & AinulJariabt.Maidin, 2020). The Unity Division also provides training for community leaders through community mediation programs to help them manage conflicts in the community.

Challenges of Religious Mediation:

Although mediation is a long-used approach in Malaysia, it poses major challenges that need to be implemented, particularly in relation to religious conflicts in Malaysia. According to Choy et al. (2016), mediators need professional training and accreditation in mediation. Haslina Ibrahim and AinulJariabt.Maidin (2020) notes that the mediation approach in Malaysia is seen as limited to accredited professional bodies and professional lawyers, while it can be extended to those who qualify if they complete the required training. Mediators must complete any mediation training to develop skills and understanding of the mediation process. Effective mediators must demonstrate competence in three areas, namely knowledge (negotiation theory, mediation strategies, tactics and processes in both negotiation and mediation), skills (analysis, communication while listening and asking questions, organizational and planning skills) and attitude (ethics, values and professionalism) (Cruickshank, 1991).

Also among the most important obstacles and challenges is the question of the professionalism of the mediator, which is about honesty. This is noted by Isola (2014) who demonstrates that some mediators are driven by various reasons leading to conflicts of interest, including related to finance, political privilege and the power bestowed on them through interfaith mediation. According to him, the matter can also affect the public's confidence in the practice of mediation and cause the whole mediation process not to run smoothly and can lead to a failure of the settlement. For this reason, mediators must complete mediation training in order to qualify them to conduct the mediation process. Responsible mediators are also trained to improve their skills and can earn a professional certificate to be recognized as certified mediators.

Apart from the obstacles and challenges mentioned, awareness of the practice of mediation that can be undertaken today is intended to give greater visibility to the success of mediation between believers taking place around the world and the benefits and effectiveness of the practice (Haslina Ibrahim & AinulJariabt.Maidin, 2020). Therefore, government financial intervention is required in providing relevant resources, including the selection of a credible intermediary among religious leaders. This is because religious leaders are respected in society, so they should always be prepared with as much knowledge and skills about the teachings of other religions in terms of doctrine, ethics or law as they are expected to be mediators of different religions are.

Conclusion:-

Mediation is currently growing and becoming famous for conflicting parties to resolve disputes. Because they want to avoid the judicial method of settling disputes. After all, it takes a long time and costs a lot. Therefore, until now there are agencies or organizations that offer mediation methods to resolve disputes, and there are also professional agencies that train mediators who are recognized and certified to carry out the mediation process. Mediation is nothing new, but religious mediation is an approach that has received less attention, especially in Malaysia. This is due to the religious conflict that occurs in Malaysia and does not threaten the country's political stability and harmony. However, given the religious conflicts that have occurred so far, a more meaningful solution needs to be implemented. Therefore, based on his success abroad, the researcher proposed a method of religious mediation to be used in Malaysia to resolve religious conflicts. Mediation can offer a win-win solution to the conflicting parties and prioritize the interests of both conflicting parties. In this way, the solution can lead to peace without arousing hostility. Although Malaysia has significant challenges in implementing mediation practices, they can be overcome with the help and cooperation of the parties involved.

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