

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE HARMONY PROGRAM AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TOWARDS DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUNDS ON TELEVISION IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract: *Dialogue Harmony is the first interfaith dialogue program that officially broadcasted on television. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the importance of the Dialogue Harmony (DH) program on television with demographic factors. The sample was drawn randomly from 290 respondents among various races and religions who have already watched the interfaith Dialogue Harmony program. Results of the quantitative analysis indicated that age, race, religion and academic backgrounds have a significant relationship with the importance of interfaith Dialogue Harmony program among multiple religions ($p < 0.05$). The study established that demographic factors had a significant relationship between both the importance of the Dialogue Harmony program and demographic*

factors such as age, race, religion and academic backgrounds of the viewers. In addition, this program contributes to serving as a major platform in enlightening the prevailing misconceptions among multiple races, nations, cultures, and religions in Malaysia. Therefore, interfaith Dialogue Harmony is one program that enables us to foster and cultivate a sense of respect among other religious adherents in Malaysia. The implications of the study show that the media played an important role in enlightening the 'interfaith dialogue' based on demographic factors in the Malaysian context.

Keywords: *Interfaith Dialogue Harmony program (IDPH), Interfaith Dialogue, Television*

Introduction

Dialogue Harmony is an interfaith dialogue program as Malaysia's first officially broadcasted on television. In line with the objectives of TV Al-Hijrah stations; it is to unite a community and foster racial unity in Malaysia. Based on the program broadcasting on TV Al-Hijrah, Dialogue Harmony is one of a new program which can unite multiracial citizen in Malaysia. Azizan Baharudin (2008) describes that we are now facing problems regarding interfaith issues in our country and for the sake of that dialogue showed it can make the relationship between harmony and integration of people. It also will be the main key in order to maintain peacefulness. In addition, Leonard Swidler (1992) says that dialogue is a word being used in this era as a meeting and discussion between certain individuals or different groups and ideologies. The main objective is to get understand each other amongst participants until they can get it improved into another better level of understanding clearly.

Malaysia is a multiracial country that consists of citizens of different religions, ethnicities, races, and cultures. Therefore, these differences may create the existence of different perceptions, thoughts, and feelings especially the bad ones between its citizens. Thus, the Dialogue Harmony program is seen as a good mechanism to unite the citizens of multiple religions in Malaysia. It can also be used as a medium to create a harmonious and peaceful living among all religions in this country. The role of Dialogue Harmony program can create a feeling of loving others, being kind, and peacefulness in the society. Having a dialogue session can be one of the best ways to prevent sensitive issues to become worse in the future.

Apart from that, according to Syafinaz et al., (2011), who recommend that this kind of interfaith dialogue should be broadcasted on the television so that its content can be spread to all people in this country. Furthermore, they also mention that such dialogue has always been conducted in higher educational institutions in Malaysia. But, the scope of this dialogue should be broader so that the society can get benefits from this TV program. Syafinaz et al. (2011) strongly believe that television is a crucial way to help people not to be prejudice and bias towards other religions.

Henceforth, television has been playing its roles as a medium to spread information in order to educate people about the understanding of living in multiple religions in Malaysia. In other words, someone is able to know, learn, and gain knowledge about other religions and thus, they can be more open-minded about other religions. The mass media such as television can be an effective way to harmonize and unite people regardless of their different religions. Television can play its role by organizing a dialogue like the one that has been broadcasted on TV Al-Hijrah which is Dialogue Harmony as the program allows the speakers of different religions to sit together and discuss certain religious and racial issues. They can contribute ideas and opinions on how to live harmoniously and peacefully (Khadijah, 2005).

Moreover, Khairulnizam (2005) explains that the implementation of such dialogue is seen as a method to create a peaceful living and thus sensitive issues can be prevented and hindered. Consequently, this kind of dialogue plays important roles in creating peace between all the citizens in our country. Based on the outcomes of the Dialogue Harmony program, this study is quite important in order to know about the audiences' perceptions towards the Dialogue Harmony program as it has been a good mechanism to discuss about different religions in Malaysia. The Dialogue Harmony program has invited many famous panelists and they are from different ethnicities, religions, beliefs, and cultures. All of the panelists are Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs. Tengku (2014) mentions that the Dialogue Harmony program is a good program that gives a better understanding as a medium to gain knowledge about other religions. Meanwhile, all of the citizens can get exposures about different culture and living style of multiethnic people in our country.

As stated by Siddique (1997), "dialogue can be alluded as vary from person to person, depending upon the areas from where they come and the nature of the encounter they are facing" While, Rahimin et al., (2011) point out that "dialogue is an element of communication and medium of interaction that involves meeting and discussion of an issue to raise different of ideas, doubt and misunderstanding between different communities that live together". Dialogue is not just limited to matters discussed upon conflict and confusion in society, but a dialogue is also accountable for nurturing equality and sharing life to live in harmony and together. The goal of dialogue can be seen in the context of featured as dialogue as a trigger sense of together belonging and will foster solidarity (Fredericks, 2007).

Thus, the program of Dialogue Harmony was broadcasted on Malaysian station television (TV Al Hijrah). It is an interfaith dialogue program that emphasizes on a dialogue between various religions and races in Malaysia. All of the panelist of this program constitutes from different faiths such as Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, and Sikhs. Interfaith Dialogue Harmony program is the medium of having a dialogue pleasantly and to share to the communities about the ways to learn multiple religious knowledge from different faiths and beliefs through television channel (Rosmawani, 2013; Tengku, 2014). Television is an important media that can cultivate as sense of respect and mutual understanding among various different faiths. It can be used as a medium to share the information and give knowledge to the society. Zulkiple et al. (2011) mentioned that television is a popular communication medium and the role of television in spreading messages to society by both visual and audio is undeniably vital. Therefore, it is hoped that the findings of this study could be one of the ways to make the multiple religions realize the importance of living in unity among multiple races and religions based on demographic backgrounds in this country.

Literature Review On The Importance Of Interfaith Dialogue In Malaysian Context

Interfaith dialogue in the context of Malaysia is very important. It is because through interfaith dialogue it will promote a people of various backgrounds in this country to live in harmony and peaceful. Dialogues are very important in discussing some important issues and it should be done formally. It can also be spread to the public and its scope should be broadened. It can also be used to focus on the politics, economy, education, law, and the sociocultural in Malaysia (Khadijah, 2005).

In Malaysia, there is non-Muslim religious leaders primarily of religious officials from the four main religions had come to a consensus to form Malaysia Consultative Council of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism (MCCBCHS) which was also known as the Consultative Council on Religion Malaysia (Ahmad Munawar Ismail & Wan Kamal Mujani, 2012). The main interest of this establishment is to addresses inter-religious issues and social

issues that affect the religious life of minority religious group in the country. This shows that how much concern has been given from the government to them related the unity and religious harmony among multiple religions in this country. In some way it reflects fairness and tolerance to live in harmony and peace. Each religion's in Malaysia has right to voice out their opinions in their religious life in Malaysia.

Unfortunately, after unexpected incidents occurred such as the pig's head provocation at one of the mosques in Kuala Lumpur lately has causing great tense between other religions adherents in this country. Those are some of several examples which affect the tension between religious adherents in Malaysia (Rahimin Affandi Abdul Rahim et al., 2011). Recently in 2014, the continuous controversy related to the use of the word "Allah" for non-Muslims and bomb blast incident type (Molotov cocktail) at a church in Penang (Farid Alatas, 2014). The incidents occurred above are some examples that can be taken as a lesson to all of us.

Thus, TV Al-Hijrah took an action by broadcasting Dialogue Harmony as a way of one approach to relieve this unconditionally tense and giving explanation to people. In the same time this program is hoped to be one of the ways to make us realize the importance of living in unity among multiple races and religions in this country. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the interfaith dialogue harmony program and its relationship towards demographic backgrounds on television in Malaysia context.

According to Rosmawani (2013) who is the producer of the Dialogue Harmony program mentions that TV Al-Hijrah is the only government TV station that broadcasts and shows the interfaith dialogue program. Its concept is to have a dialogue in which all panelists of different religions can sit and discuss some important religious issues. Saifuddin (2014) who is the Chief Executive Officer of the *Gerakan Kesederhanaan Global (GMM)* mentions that the media plays a vital role in making our public become more positive towards some particular things related to the religions. Besides that, Khadijah (2004) quotes the description given by John Alembilla Azumah regarding on the important of the interfaith dialogue or interreligious dialogue which actually is to avoid from the prejudice and obsession one another. In principle, the interfaith dialogue concerns in knowing each other, creates mutual trust and also builds the mutual relationship which in turn creates the peaceful all over the universe.

The dialogue has a specific method to enhance mutual understanding because dialogue is capable of enhance the act of respect between each other and commitment of other religions (Fatmir, 2007). In spite of that, Martin (1971) says that the true dialogue as a kind of interaction that provides understanding through direct experience of the other. Thus, the real purpose of the dialogue as described by Azizan et al., (2005) is to learn from others of a new and different way of thinking, a way to see life and nature with their meaning, not the debate to beat and subdue everyone else, all parties must listen to the feeling empathically in order to understand other's position with as accurate as possible and a course of conduct that is so pure and moral, which in turn demanded men to overcome negative perceptions and low self-esteem as well as honesty and sincerity. Apart from that, according to Osman (1997), knowing about other cultures should be encouraged so that people will be more appreciative about other religions, ready to share, and appreciate other cultures. Rosales & Arevalo (1991), explain that the concept of having a dialogue is not only focusing on the conflicts and problems in our country, it can also be used to instil good moral values as well.

Hans (1992) points out that the peaceful and harmonious living can only be formed if all people of different religions practice the culture of having a dialogue session in society. This is because dialogues can be used as a good way to solve the problems and to form the religious images

and identities. Furthermore, through dialogue, there must be intensive interaction between practicing Muslim and non-Muslims where non-Muslims can observe the action and not only listening to beautiful and sweet words. Many Christian theologians engage in dialogue with Muslims with the intention not to understand more about Islam, but rather to find more opportunity to attract Muslims to Christianity. That is the reason why conversion rarely happens after dialogue taking place (Muhammad et al., 2014).

Based on the above, it can be said that in the context of interfaith dialogue, the purpose of having an interfaith dialogue must be clearly understood by all different parties. The implementation of interfaith dialogue is to give the understanding and explanation about other different faiths and religions. All of the misconception and prejudice about one religion to another religion can be tackled through the mechanism of interfaith dialogue. Therefore, it shows the importance of interfaith dialogue will lead to the mutual understanding among multiple religions and multiracial community especially in this country.

Moreover, Abdel (2008) described through dialogue, it will create a consciousness of person's matures. It is the process of dialectical that moves the 'rejection act' to 'agreement act' which is carried out on a spirit of partnership and mutual respect with sincere interaction. Some of the importance of interfaith dialogue that described by Tayseir (2010) are recognition and basis of equality, tolerance, having mutual respect, and joint cooperation.

Apart from the above points that stated by Tayseir in his work, it can be said that the interfaith dialogue can foster mutual respect and mutual understanding from one to another regardless their religion and belief. By having an interfaith dialogue, it will attain promotes peaceful coexistence between multiple religions and races in this country. It is because in Malaysia we are living in multiple religions such as the religions of Islam, Christian, Buddhism, Hindus, Sikh and so on.

Furthermore, according to Muhammad et al., (2014), through interfaith dialogue it has helped Muslims and non-Muslims in countering negative perceptions in understanding the other religions. Besides that, interfaith dialogue approach is suitable to learn and knowing about other religions. Thus, if people of all faiths know each other, then the confusion can be reduced, and inter-religious harmony can be created. While, Zaki et al, (2013) described that in interfaith dialogue, there should be regularly having a two-way communication links with other religious adherents in order to nurture mutual understanding among each other.

Based on the above statements, we can see that the importance of interfaith dialogue will give the benefits and positive impact to all multiple religions and multiple communities in this country. In addition, through implementing an interfaith dialogue in the context of Malaysia, it will enhance understanding from one to another, getting to know each other (*'li ta 'arafu'*), create a sense of awareness to respect other religions, develop mutual understanding, tolerance and cooperation each other. The most importantly is when we understand and appreciate other different faiths and beliefs we will live in harmony and peaceful ways.

The importance of understanding about other religions will cultivate a sense of respect towards each other. When we have a sense of respect and knowing about multiple religions therefore the misconception, misunderstanding, prejudice and stereotype of other religions can be hindered in a good manner through the mechanism of interfaith dialogue. Hence, the importance of interfaith dialogue can foster unity and solidarity in Malaysia.

Research Methodology

The data was analysed using statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows version 22. The population of this study is the audiences who have been attend during broadcasting the Dialogue Harmony program was conducted at University of Malaysia, Pahang. The producer of this TV program has granted a permission that allows the researchers to distribute a set of questionnaires to the audiences. These questionnaires were given after the broadcasting of Dialogue Harmony program has ended by TV Al Hijrah. The researchers has used a random sampling. According to Chua Yan Piaw (2011), random sampling is easier to use as each respondent has an equal chance to be chosen as a subject of the research. The broadcasting of this program conducted in two days at University of Malaysia, Pahang. All of the respondents that participated in this program were from different races and religions. There were 290 respondents as sampling of this study that have been returned a set of questionnaires to the researchers in this research (Krejcie & Morgan, 1987). The data of this study was analysed using percentage, frequency and inferential statistics via Spearman correlation analysis based on the objectives in this research.

Findings and Discussions

Demographic Respondents

The respondents of this study consist of the audiences from different races and religions who have seen the “Dialogue Harmony” program on television (TV Al Hijrah) in Malaysia. There are 290 respondents who have answered the questionnaires. The demographic information of the respondents is in the part A of the questionnaire. The analysis of the respondents’ demographic information focuses on three parts which are the profile of the respondents such as the gender, age, race, religion and native language, the academic background and the respondents’ occupations.

Based on demographic findings, the respondents of this study consist of audiences from different races and religions who have seen the Dialogue Harmony program on TV Al-Hijrah. There are 290 respondents who have answered the questionnaires. The demographic information of the respondents is in part A of the questionnaire. The discussion on the respondents’ demographic information focuses on six parts which are the profile of the respondents that consisted of gender, age, races, religions, academic background, and the respondents’ occupations.

For the gender from 290 respondents, there are 219 female respondents (75.5%) and there are 71 male respondents (24.5%). It shows obviously that most of the respondents are female. In terms of the respondents’ age, there are 83 respondents (28.6%) who are below 19 years old. While, there are 176 respondents (60.7%) who are from 20-30 years old. Meanwhile, there are 31 respondents (10.7%) who are from 31-40 years old. In terms of races, most of the respondents are Malays and there are 163 Malay respondents (56.2%), followed by 97 Chinese respondents (33.4%). There are 28 Indian respondents (9.7%) and there are 2 Sikh respondents (0.7%).

Therefore, in terms of the religions, there are 160 Muslims (55.2%), followed by 92 Buddhist (31.7%), and 29 Hindus (10.0%). There are 4 Sikh (1.4%) and there are 5 Christians (1.7%). Besides that, in terms of what language do they speak and used for their daily life, there are 163 (56.2%) respondents are using Malay language, followed by 93 (32.1%) respondents are using Mandarin language and 28 (9.7%) respondents are using Tamil language. While, there are 6 (2.1%) respondents are using others language. It shows that most of the respondents are using Malay language. It can be related with most of the respondents in this study the race is from Malay. Furthermore, through the data analyzed, it provides the academic background of

respondents. There are 20 respondents (6.9%) are from Malaysian certificate of Education. While 88 respondents (30.3%) are Malaysian Higher School Certificate holders and 54 respondents (18.6%) are from matriculation holders. Whereas, 68 respondents (23.4%) are from Diploma and 53 respondents (18.3%) are from Degree holders. However, only 7 respondents (2.4%) are from Master level. It shows that most of the respondents in this research the education background is from Malaysian Higher School Certificate holders.

In addition, in terms of respondents' occupations, there are 23 respondents (7.9%) who work for the government sectors, followed by 30 respondents (10.3) who work for the private sectors of the non-government organizations, and there are 34 respondents (11.7%) who self-employed. Finally, most of the respondents 203 respondents (69.9%) are from university students who are still learning and studying.

The outcome of this research stated that most of the respondents (more than 69%) are from university students from the population of this study. This is one of the factors that contribute to the high understanding towards the importance of Dialogue Harmony program as a medium of interfaith dialogue among the university level. It is also clearly showing that the Dialogue Harmony program is able to attract the young people to know more and understand better about other religions, beliefs, and cultures in Malaysia. Therefore, the findings of this research are equivalent with the research that have been conducted by Jaffary Awang et al (2007) in the study entitled "Interfaith dialogue and its Importance on the Society Development in Malaysia", they found that 86.6% of the respondents, who are university students, are very open-minded about interfaith dialogues.

Analysis of Inferential Statistics based on Spearman Correlation

The findings depict the summary of the spearman correlation between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony program as a medium of interfaith dialogue in terms of biographical variables: age, race, religion, occupation and academic backgrounds.

Hypothesis: Is there any significant relationship between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) program and biographical variable (i. Age, ii. Race, iii. Religion, iv. Occupation, v. Academic backgrounds) among the audiences.

Below is the details Hypothesis for the Spearman Correlation:

H1: There is a significant relationship between the importance of DH program and Age of the audiences.

H2: There is significant relationship between the importance of DH program and Races of audiences.

H3: There is significant relationship between the importance of DH program and Religions of audiences.

H4: There is significant relationship between the importance of DH program and occupations of audiences.

H5: There is significant relationship between the importance of DH program and academic background of audiences.

Correlation test was used to find the relationship between the dependent variable (the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) program) and independent variable (biographical variables: age, race, religion, occupation and academic background). This study used the Spearman correlation analysis in order to determine the relationship between demographic variables (Pallant, 2011). This study is using the Cohen & Holiday's (1982) rules of thumb in explaining the correlation results.

Cohen & Holiday (1982) suggests for the absolute of r are as below:

Table 1.0: The Interpretation of Correlation Value

Correlation value	Interpretation
0.00	No Correlation
Less than 0.19	Very low
0.20 – 0.39	Low
0.40 – 0.69	Moderate
0.70 – 0.89	High
0.90 – 1.00	Very High

Source: Cohen, L. & Holiday, M. (1982)

Based on the above the interpretation of correlation value it helps to describes the significant relationship between two variables whether there is (1) “no correlation”, (2) “very low” or “very weak”, (3) “low” or “weak”, (4) “moderate”, (5) “high” or “strong”, (6) “very high” or “very strong”. This is the purpose the interpretation of the correlation value. The interpretation value above enables to explains in more details the significant level between two variables.

The first hypothesis is constructed as follows:

H1: Is there any significant relationship between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and Age of Respondents.

Table 2.0: The Relationship Between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and Age

		Importance of DH	Age
Importance of DH	Spearman Correlation	1	.240**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	290	290
Age	Spearman Correlation	.240**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	290	290

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is significant correlation between the importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and age of respondents ($r = 0.240$, $p < 0.05$). Based on the interpretation of correlation value as being proposed by Cohen & Holiday (1982), the correlation value 0.240 is “low” correlation. It is significant because the probability value ($p = 0.00$) less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be described there is low significant correlation between the dimension of the importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and age of audiences. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is supported and accepted in this study.

The second hypothesis is constructed as follows:

H2: Is there any significant relationship between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and race of Respondents.

Table 3.0: The Relationship Between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and Race

		Importance of DH	Race
Importance of DH	Spearman Correlation	1	.276**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	290	290
Race	Spearman Correlation	.276**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	290	290

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is significant correlation between the importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and race of respondents ($r = 0.276$, $p < 0.05$). Based on the interpretation of correlation value as being proposed by Cohen & Holiday (1982), the correlation value 0.276 is “low” correlation. It is significant because the probability value ($p = 0.00$) less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be described there is low significant correlation between the dimension of the importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and races of audiences. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is supported and accepted in this study.

The third hypothesis is constructed as follows:

H3: Is there any significant relationship between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and religion of Respondents.

Table 4.0: The Relationship Between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and Religion

		Importance of DH	Religion
Importance of DH	Spearman Correlation	1	.277**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	290	290
Religion	Spearman Correlation	.277**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	290	290

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is significant correlation between the importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and religion of respondents ($r = 0.277$, $p < 0.05$). Based on the interpretation of correlation value as being proposed by Cohen & Holiday (1982), the correlation value 0.277 is “low” correlation. It is significant because the probability value ($p = 0.00$) less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be described there is low significant correlation between the dimension of the importance of

Dialogue Harmony (DH) and religion of audiences. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is supported and accepted in this study.

The fourth hypothesis is constructed as follows:

H4: Is there any significant relationship between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and occupation of Respondents.

Table 5.0: The Relationship Between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and Occupation

		Importance of DH	Occupation
Importance of DH	Spearman Correlation	1	.043**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.469
	N	290	290
Occupation	Spearman Correlation	.043**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.469	
	N	290	290

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is no significant correlation between the importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and occupation of respondents ($r = 0.043$, $p > 0.05$). Based on the interpretation of correlation value as being proposed by Cohen & Holiday (1982), the correlation value 0.04 is no correlation. It is no significant because the probability value ($p = 0.469$) more than 0.05. Therefore, it can be described there is no significant correlation between the dimension of the importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and occupation of audiences. Thus, the alternative hypothesis are rejected in this study.

The fifth hypothesis is constructed as follows:

H5: Is there any significant relationship between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and academic background of Respondents.

Table 6.0: The Relationship Between the Importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and Academic Background

		Importance of DH	Academic Background
Importance of DH	Spearman Correlation	1	.238**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	290	290

Academic Background	Spearman Correlation	.238**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	290	290

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is significant correlation between the importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and academic background of respondents ($r = 0.238$, $p < 0.05$). Based on the interpretation of correlation value as being proposed by Cohen & Holiday (1982), the correlation value 0.238 is “low” correlation. It is significant because the probability value ($p = 0.00$) less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be described there is low significant correlation between the dimension of the importance of Dialogue Harmony (DH) and academic background of audiences. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is supported and accepted in this study.

To sum up, there is significant correlation between the importance of Dialogue Harmony program with age ($r = 0.240$, $p < 0.05$), race ($r = 0.276$, $p < 0.05$) religion ($r = 0.277$, $p < 0.05$) and academic backgrounds ($r = 0.238$, $p < 0.05$). All of these correlation is in low positive significant correlation (Cohen and Holliday, 1982). However, there is no significant correlation between the importance of Dialogue Harmony program with occupation of respondents ($r = 0.043$, $p > 0.05$). Thus, four of the demographic backgrounds such as age, race, religion and academic backgrounds were significant with the importance of Dialogue Harmony program that has been broadcasted on television. It shows that age, race, religion and academic backgrounds considered as four demographic factors that have significant to this program in Malaysian context.

Dialogue Harmony is the interfaith dialogue program that involving the religion of Islam, Christian, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism. Indeed, interfaith dialogue is one of the suitable approaches in consolidating understanding between different religions in Malaysia. In addition, this interfaith dialogue program is able to build unity and harmonize community with multiple backgrounds in order to appreciate and understand the concepts, culture and traditions of the adherents of other religions. Abdel Aziz Bergout (2008) explained that dialogue is an attempt to mature someone and be able to create an awareness of mutual respect. Atifah et al (2018) found that the importance of mutual respect has to be the highest priority indicator that portrays socio-religious harmony and it is the essential aspect for the interaction of multi-religious society in Malaysia (Atifah et al, 2018). Apart from that, Azizan Baharudin (2008) says that dialogue is seen as a mechanism for reconciliation. While, Dina Badri (2004) cited that dialogue is one of the approaches to foster unity in our lives. In addition, interfaith dialogue helps to address common problems or issues for which unity is sought in order to collaboratively solve them (Domenic, 2018). In this way it can reduce misunderstanding among other religions and able to form moral values, develop a sense of respect and promote mutual understanding about other traditions, culture, custom and beliefs of other religious adherents in this country.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, interfaith dialogue is one of the mechanisms that enable to promote mutual understanding and nurture the mutual learning between multiracial communities and different religions. The racial conflicts and problems can be reduced, hindered and prevented if all parties are willing to work together in giving a good understanding to our society about how important it is to live harmoniously and peacefully in a multiple religions country like

Malaysia. Therefore, this study shows that the media played a very important role in enlightening the 'interfaith dialogue' based on demographic factors in the Malaysian context. This indicates that through this program it is able to raise awareness to the people of various backgrounds about understanding and respecting other religions. In addition, this program can provide more explanations, understandings and able to tackle the religious issues between other multiple religions in Malaysia.

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