

## Conflict Transformation of Forced Hijab Practices in Educational Settings: A Lederach's Perspective Through A Systematic Literature Review

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**ABSTRACT:** This study examines the dynamics of hijab coercion in educational settings through Lederach's conflict transformation framework. Using a systematic literature review of 38 articles published between 2020 and 2025, this research analyzes how biased media framing and symbolic polarization generate early prejudices that stigmatize both hijab-wearing and non-hijab-wearing students. The findings reveal that conflict transformation becomes possible only when educational institutions acknowledge discriminatory practices, rebuild trust, facilitate interfaith dialogue, promote collaborative negotiation, and consolidate long-term reconciliation. The study offers a theoretical contribution by integrating communication perspectives—particularly media framing—into Lederach's model, thereby providing a reframing lens for understanding religiously embedded social conflicts. Methodologically, it expands the application of systematic literature reviews in communication and conflict studies. Practically, the findings underscore the need for inclusive school policies, multicultural curricula, and institutionalized interfaith dialogue to reduce symbolic discrimination and cultivate sustainable peace. The study recommends that policymakers, educators, and civil society actors adopt communication strategies that emphasize tolerance, empathy, and the protection of individual rights. Future research may explore field-based empirical studies, longitudinal perception assessments, or comparative cases beyond Indonesia to strengthen context-sensitive models of conflict transformation.

**KEYWORDS:** Conflict Transformation; Hijab; Interfaith Communication; Peace Consolidation; Reconciliation

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Plural societies evolve within dynamic landscapes shaped by processes of social conflict and transformation. Religious conflicts in Asia are notably complex and multifaceted, shaped by historical, political, and social factors (Berthelot-Guiet, 2018; Chen et al., 2025; Jin & Kim, 2025). The region is characterized by a high degree of religious pluralism, the presence of organized groups, and a persistent intersection between religion and violence, all of which intensify the complexity of these conflicts (Herman & Salehudin, 2025). In Indonesia, religious diversity serves as a unifying foundation of the nation; however, frictions among religious groups are often exploited for political and social interests, further amplified by media dynamics (Butt, 2020). Social media, in particular, not only shapes public opinion but also facilitates the circulation of hoaxes, hate speech, and identity-based political narratives (Jones-Jang et al., 2021; Sharma & Singh, 2024). These dynamics exacerbate social polarization and trigger interreligious tensions (Chen et al., 2025; Poole, 2025).

Within the Indonesian context, one salient form of religiously driven conflict is the coercive imposition of religious attributes, particularly the hijab in formal schools. This phenomenon violates humanistic values, widens social distance among students, and reflects Lederach's predisposition stage, in which symbolic polarization generates tension prior to the outbreak of overt conflict. Even in the Special Region of Yogyakarta—widely recognized for its harmonious social fabric—similar challenges persist. Data from the Yogyakarta Office of National and Political Unity (Kesbangpol DIY) indicate recurring cases of forced religious attire, including hijab mandates, over the past decade. These findings suggest that religious conflicts are not incidental but cyclical, driven by symbolic polarization, media framing, and political interests.

This study focuses on the dynamics of religiously nuanced social conflict linked to the coercive enforcement of hijab use in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. Although the region is known for its strong cultural traditions and relatively harmonious religious diversity, it continuously faces challenges in sustaining interfaith coexistence. Conceptually, conflict is understood as a condition of opposition between parties with differing interests. Religious-based social conflicts often originate from divergent interpretations of normative–theological teachings that are understood in exclusivist ways.

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## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Although scholarly work on religious conflict is extensive, this study departs from previous research in one crucial aspect: there has been no investigation that specifically links media framing to cases of enforced hijab use in schools and analyzes them through Lederach's conflict transformation framework. Media framing not only shapes public opinion but also constructs discursive coalitions and reinforces symbolic polarization, as evidenced by studies employing Discourse Network Analysis in the examination of digital media transformation in Indonesia (Bakry & Ardianto, 2025). Earlier research has predominantly focused on physical violence or legal frameworks, whereas the role of media narratives in shifting actors' perspectives remains understudied. In fact, reframing processes hold significant potential as entry points for fostering more sustainable conflict transformation.

Building on this gap, the present study aims to explore the transformation of religiously nuanced social conflict by analyzing how actors' perspectives change in response to media coverage, with particular attention to the case of hijab coercion in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. This study seeks to identify actors' initial constructions of meaning, examine the effects of media framing, and explain how shifts in perception contribute to conflict transformation. Consequently, this research offers a theoretical contribution to communication-based conflict studies, enriches Lederach's approach to the transformation of religious conflicts, and provides practical recommendations for educational policymakers and religious institutions seeking to foster harmonious relations within a diverse society.

Over the past decade, records from the official website of the Yogyakarta Office of National and Political Unity (Kesbangpol DIY) document multiple intra- and inter-religious conflicts, ranging from disputes over houses of worship to the coercive imposition of religious symbols in public institutions, including cases where schools compelled female students to wear the hijab (Kesbangpol, 2025). These phenomena underscore the urgency of adopting a new approach to conflict management—one that emphasizes structural change and the transformation of human relationships rather than short-term resolution. Religious conflicts in the Special Region of Yogyakarta are not incidental; they reveal recurring predispositional patterns driven by symbolic polarization, media framing, and political interests. This pattern reinforces the relevance of employing Lederach's conflict transformation perspective, which moves beyond short-term settlement toward building enduring structural change and sustainable relational transformation.

Lederach emphasizes that religious conflict cannot merely be suppressed; it must be transformed into new and sustainable relationships. The cases emerging in the Special Region of Yogyakarta illustrate an early analytic stage of conflict and social predisposition, in which tensions arise from the symbolic polarization of religious markers and media framing. This situation necessitates continued engagement in subsequent stages—acknowledgment of wrongdoing, interfaith dialogue, collaborative negotiation, and peace consolidation—to build long-term and sustainable reconciliation. Conflict transformation highlights the need for fundamental changes in social structures and power relations. In this process, the roles of individual, community, and institutional actors are crucial in fostering sustainable peace (Graf et al., 2008; Rugo, 2024). Furthermore, communication plays a central role in shaping perceptions, building mutual understanding, and co-constructing meaning in conflict resolution.

Despite the extensive body of research on religious conflict, a significant gap remains in understanding how actors' perspectives evolve throughout the conflict transformation process. Previous studies have tended to focus on physical violence or legal frameworks, with limited attention to shifts in perspective driven by communication, particularly media framing. The fundamental questions raised concern how actors involved in conflict reinterpret the situation and how reframing processes can contribute to sustainable conflict transformation.

This study aims to explore the process of transforming religiously nuanced social conflict by analyzing shifts in actors' perspectives in response to media coverage in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, particularly in cases involving the coercive imposition of religious attributes within pluralistic social environments. The objectives of this research include identifying the initial construction of actors' viewpoints regarding the conflict, examining the impact of media exposure on the reframing of these perspectives, and explaining how such perceptual shifts contribute to the broader process of conflict transformation. The research addresses two central questions: (1) How are actors' perspectives formed in cases of hijab coercion as influenced by media framing? and (2) How do shifts in perspective occur throughout the conflict transformation process related to hijab enforcement?

This study offers a theoretical contribution to the field of communication and conflict studies, particularly within the domain of religious conflict transformation through a framing–reframing approach to understanding the dynamics of hijab coercion. It enriches the communication scholarship by highlighting the role of perception and narrative in shaping social realities. The findings of this study are expected to serve as a reference for policymakers, educational institutions, and religious organizations in designing communication strategies aimed at reducing potential conflicts and fostering harmonious relations within a diverse society.

## III. RESEARCH METHODS

This article employs a systematic review approach to analyze previous studies by systematically collecting, evaluating, and synthesizing existing research on religious conflict transformation. A systematic review is a structured research method designed to provide a comprehensive and up-to-date summary of primary studies in order to thoroughly answer specific research questions (Higgins et al., 2008). Analyzing the contemporary literature provides insights into the scope and depth of existing scholarship while

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helping to identify areas that require further exploration (Bimaro, 2023). The review process followed the guidelines of the PRISMA statement (García-Peñalvo, 2022), utilizing the PRISMA 2020 checklist, which is specifically designed for conducting systematic literature reviews (Fajrie et al., 2022).

The thematic selection of articles included in this analysis was based on the following criteria:

- 1) The primary topic must directly relate to interreligious or intrareligious conflict, including religiously driven social tensions, symbolic polarization (such as hijab, worship practices, and rituals), and identity-based conflicts rooted in belief systems.
- 2) The study must contain elements of conflict transformation aligned with Lederach's stages: *Predisposition* (initial analysis and root causes of conflict), *Confession* (acknowledgment of wrongdoing and early reconciliation), *Exploration & Dialogue* (interfaith exploration and dialogue), *Negotiation* (negotiation and locally grounded mediation), and *Consolidation & Reconciliation* (restoration and sustainable peace).
- 3) The research must involve civil society actors or local community figures in conflict management, such as religious leaders, teachers, educators, community leaders, or interfaith organizations.
- 4) The study must employ a communication-oriented approach grounded in socio-cultural perspectives rather than purely political or legal frameworks.
- 5) The study must be empirical or systematic in nature, including community-based case studies and relevant meta-analyses.

## A. Identification

The identification phase was conducted through an extensive exploration of diverse sources related to the research topic, using synonyms, variations, and terminologies associated with the primary keywords of the inquiry: social and religious conflict, dialogue in religious conflict, transformative justice and religion, religious tensions and perceptions, and communication strategies for fostering interreligious harmony. This methodological approach broadens the analytical framework by incorporating previous studies requiring in-depth review. The search activities employed Boolean operators, truncation techniques, wildcard symbols, and phrase searching across major databases such as Scopus, Sage Publications, Emerald, and Google Scholar. Scopus provides both basic and advanced search functionalities that allow users to refine results using multiple criteria. In parallel, Google Scholar enhances article retrieval through its user-friendly interface, unrestricted accessibility, and accelerated search results (Rus et al., 2023).

## B. Screening

The initial journal search using the terms “religious conflict,” “interfaith dialogue,” “transformative conflict,” and “religious peacebuilding” via the Publish or Perish software connected to the Scopus database yielded a total of 514 scholarly articles. To refine these results and focus on studies relevant to the research themes and the questions outlined in Section 3.1, additional keywords were applied. This supplementary search generated 120 articles from Scopus, Sage Publications, Emerald, and Google Scholar. The selection methodology—guided by a framework aligned with the research objectives and thematic focus—ensured that the review process was systematic, rigorous, and deliberate. The final set of selected articles covers the publication period from 2020 to 2025, with the aim of advancing discourse and enriching contemporary knowledge.

## C. Eligibility

The search parameters included subject areas, publication language, time range, and type of literature. The primary focus was directed toward English-language sources to avoid bias and minimize risks of misinterpretation. The selected articles covered the publication period from 2020 to 2025 in order to capture the most recent and relevant studies aligned with the current research topic. This comprehensive evaluation ensured alignment with the research focus, particularly on themes such as religious conflict transformation, peacebuilding in religious contexts, and interreligious conflict. A total of 38 articles (Figure 1) were selected for in-depth analysis, while non-English articles and books excluded from the dataset. Three conference proceedings were also included to ensure a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Table 1 presents the eligibility criteria applied in this study.

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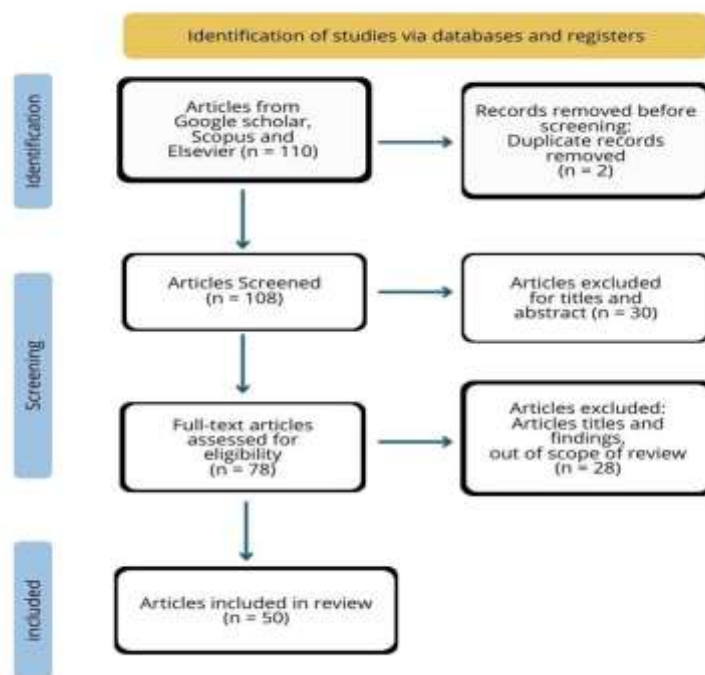


Figure 1: PRISMA Flow

Table 1. Eligibility Criteria

| Criterion          | Eligibility                                     | Exclusion                |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Type of literature | Peer-review journal articles                    | Book chapters and books  |
| Language choice    | English language                                | Non-english publications |
| Time range         | 2020-2025                                       | Publications before 2020 |
| Country            | Studies conducted in any country (global scope) | None                     |

## IV. RESULTS

### A. Characteristics of Studies

Before presenting the visual distribution, it is important to outline the overall characteristics of the reviewed studies to provide contextual grounding for the subsequent analysis. The selected articles exhibit a diverse yet coherent focus on the dynamics of religious conflict and its transformation, particularly within frameworks that emphasize actor perspectives, symbolic polarization, and communication-based peacebuilding. The temporal distribution of publications reflects a growing scholarly interest in examining how conflicts rooted in religious identity, coercive practices, and socio-cultural tensions evolve within contemporary societies. These characteristics highlight not only the relevance of Lederach's conflict transformation paradigm but also the increasing academic attention toward understanding how media framing, actor reframing, and intergroup dialogue contribute to sustainable peace processes.

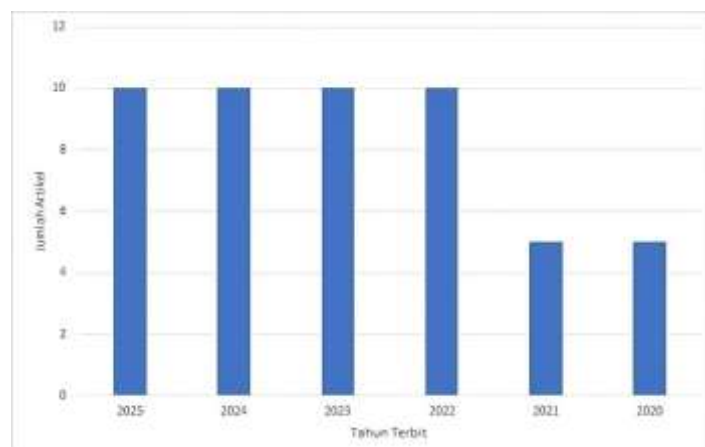
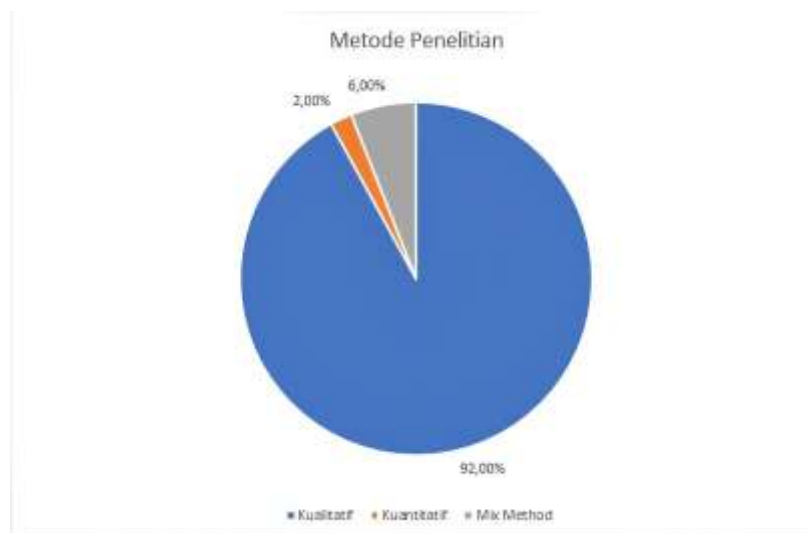


Figure 2: Distribution of Publication Years

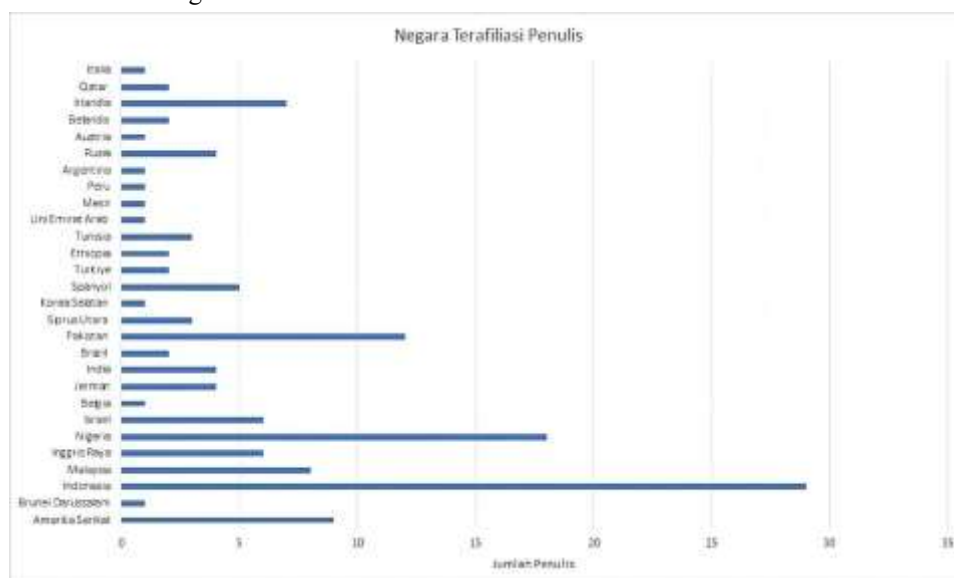
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Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of publication years among the analyzed articles. Across the 2020–2025 timeframe, scholarly contributions have examined key themes such as early-stage conflict analysis and social predisposition, shifts in actors' perspectives during conflict transformation, and the role of transformative communication grounded in Lederach's framework. The year 2025 records the highest number of publications, totaling 10 articles, which may reflect a growing academic concern with interreligious peacebuilding, including issues of discrimination and coercive enforcement of religious attributes. The years 2022–2024 also show substantial output with 10 publications each, while 2021, 2020, and 2023 contribute five articles respectively.



**Figure 3: Data Collection and Research Methods**

Figure 3 presents the methodological approaches employed across the reviewed articles. A total of 92% (46 articles) adopted qualitative data collection methods, while 6% (three articles) utilized quantitative approaches, and 2% (one article) applied mixed methods. This distribution likely reflects the predominance of conceptual and interpretive studies that examine prior literature on early-stage conflict analysis and social predisposition, shifts in actors' perspectives within conflict transformation processes, and the role of transformative communication grounded in Lederach's framework.



**Figure 4: Contribution by Country**

Figure 4 visually presents the distribution of research contributions by country, offering insights into the geographical scope of the studies and the institutional affiliations of the authors. Indonesia emerges as the most prominent contributor, likely due to its extensive experiences with religious conflict transformation and its longstanding commitment to fostering tolerance within a pluralistic society. Other significant contributors include Italy, Qatar, Ireland, the Netherlands, Austria, Russia, Argentina, Peru, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Türkiye, Spain, South Korea, Northern Cyprus, Pakistan, Brazil, India, Germany, Belgium, Israel, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and the United States. These countries

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actively contribute to scholarship exploring transformative approaches to religious conflict, encompassing early-stage conflict analysis, social predisposition, shifts in actors' perspectives during conflict transformation, and the role of communication in Lederach-inspired transformative peacebuilding.

### ***B. Current Landscape of Lederach's Perspective on Conflict Transformation in Cases of Hijab Coercion within Educational Settings***

In examining the transformation of religiously rooted conflicts, this study identifies five thematic categories within the reviewed literature: (1) Early Conflict Analysis and Social Predisposition, (2) Acknowledgment of Wrongdoing and Relational Healing, (3) Interfaith Dialogue and Joint Exploration of Solutions, (4) Collaborative Negotiation and the Role of Local Actors, and (5) Peace Consolidation and Sustainable Reconciliation. These five themes collectively highlight the dynamics of early-stage conflict analysis, shifts in actors' perspectives during the transformation process, and the role of communication-based transformative practices grounded in Lederach's framework. The following sections present the key findings for each theme. In the discussion section, we address existing knowledge gaps and respond to shortcomings in the relevant theoretical perspectives.

#### ***Early Conflict Analysis and Social Predisposition***

Actors' perspectives in religious conflicts are strongly shaped by media representation. Studies indicate that media coverage is often biased and tends to reinforce societal prejudices regarding religious symbols—for instance, the assumption that all Muslim women must wear the hijab (Nwigwe et al., 2025). Media outlets frequently prioritize conflict over peace-oriented narratives, resulting in public discourse dominated by tension rather than harmony. Empirical evidence from Nigeria illustrates this tendency: media narratives influenced by stakeholder identities have contributed to heightened religious tensions (Adamu et al., 2025; Ibrahim, 2020; Loomis et al., 2025). Such biased reporting causes actors involved in conflict to enter situations with preconceived misconceptions. An illustrative example can be seen in the extensive media coverage of court rulings on hijab use in public schools, which has fueled divisions among religious communities, demonstrating how media framing can exacerbate societal disputes (Nwigwe et al., 2025).

Beyond media influence, symbolic forms of segregation is evident in cases of hijab coercion in schools and public institutions. The forced use of religious attire functions not only as a discriminatory practice but also as a mechanism that widens social distance between groups. Similar phenomena have been documented in Pakistan, where the hijab becomes a marker of both hypervisibility and invisibility for Muslim women (Lyausheva et al., 2021; Regus, 2022). It renders the wearer highly visible as a religious identity symbol while simultaneously restricting access to certain social spaces (Nwigwe et al., 2025). These conditions demonstrate that social segregation is not solely spatial but also emerges through imposed religious symbols that constrain cross-group interaction (Altıntaş, 2025). In the context of schools in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, cases of hijab coercion risk fostering psychological separation among students, reinforcing stereotypes, and reducing opportunities for natural intergroup encounters.

Conspicuous religious symbols associated with out-groups can also trigger emotional reactions and reinforce prejudice. Research in Israel demonstrates that exposure to majority religious symbols—such as Jewish icons—can heighten intergroup interaction anxiety among Muslim minority groups (Shamoa-Nir & Razpurker-Apfeld, 2020). These findings suggest that salient religious symbols from out-groups may generate anxiety during intergroup encounters. Similarly, religious attributes such as the hijab are often accompanied by negative stereotypes (for example, the perception that hijab-wearing women are fanatical or less professional). Such stereotypes enable prejudice toward hijab-wearing Muslims to be expressed openly rather than suppressed (Dinhof et al., 2024). In other words, the visibility of religious identity symbols tends to widen social distance, as out-groups frequently hold preexisting and deeply rooted biases.

Due to these intersecting factors, intergroup and interpersonal interactions are already shaped by deep-seated social distance and bias from the outset. These findings collectively highlight that social predispositions—mediated through media exposure, community segregation, educational institutions, and religious symbolism—construct particular cognitive frameworks for actors even before overt conflict emerges (Loomis et al., 2025; Nwigwe et al., 2025). Religious identity and group values are often internalized early through socialization within families and communities (Akgun-Citak et al., 2020). As a result, societal narratives and perceptions tend to become polarized along existing group boundaries (Payir et al., 2024). In such circumstances, public discourse on interreligious issues is likely to reinforce one's own group position while simultaneously fostering suspicion toward other groups.

Even amid contemporary global challenges, identity differences can become increasingly politicized and radicalized (Lyausheva et al., 2021). For instance, public health policies during the pandemic were contested by certain groups under the pretext of defending religious freedom (Regus, 2022). These phenomena demonstrate that biased media framing and socially embedded predispositions have the potential to intensify conflict—an important characteristic of the early stage of conflict within Lederach's framework of religious conflict transformation. At this initial stage, deeply rooted social biases—reinforced by media narratives, identity symbols, community organizations, and even educational institutions—tend to widen intergroup divides and trigger further escalation long before peacebuilding efforts can take place.

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Lederach's cycle of religious conflict transformation—which includes acknowledgment of wrongdoing and relational healing—illustrates how actors experience shifts in perspective during conflicts involving hijab coercion in educational contexts. Within this cycle, actors move from adversarial stances toward the rebuilding of trust. The process culminates in dialogue and joint problem-solving across faith boundaries. Interfaith communication plays a pivotal role by reframing how individuals perceive one another, enabling them to see the other party as a partner rather than an opponent.

Perspective transformation continues as actors progress toward shared understanding and practical solutions facilitated through community-based mediation and collaborative negotiation, where local actors actively participate. Ultimately, the cycle leads to long-term visioning in which former adversaries are viewed as integral members of a peaceful and cohesive community, reflecting the consolidation of sustainable peace and reconciliation.

### ***Acknowledgment of Wrongdoing and Relational Healing***

Religious actors can either exacerbate or mitigate conflict; however, when conditions allow, they can also facilitate dialogue and reconciliation. Rabbi Menachem Froman, for instance, was a Jewish religious leader who helped political figures and Muslim academics communicate in efforts to advance Israeli–Palestinian reconciliation (Dindin et al., 2025; Mashuri et al., 2024). In addressing ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria, community leaders have recommended that kings, religious authorities, and political actors regularly gather in consultative forums (Amadasun, n.d.). Education likewise plays a crucial role in cultivating tolerance. Educators have opposed segregated schooling systems and incorporated multicultural principles into their curricula (Dindin et al., 2025). To reduce identity polarization, policymakers have even suggested replacing religious schools with integrated secular institutions (Kapshuk & Deitch, 2023). In post-conflict Poso, integrated schools enabled Muslim and Christian teachers and students to interact daily, successfully fostering harmonious cooperation that transcends religious and ethnic differences (Dulin, 2022; Kapshuk & Deitch, 2023). From the outset, these educational institutions instilled values of respect and unity, thereby strengthening the foundations for sustainable interreligious peace.

Beyond formal institutions, community members also build peace through everyday relationships. In northern Nigeria, Muslim and Christian families maintain harmony through dialogic communication rooted in compassion and empathy (Jamo et al., 2024). Faith-based grassroots initiatives highlight the importance of trust-building and the acknowledgment of emotional and spiritual dimensions of social change—dimensions often overlooked by technocratic approaches (Chen et al., 2025). Among the Ao Naga community in India, the aksü ritual is performed to repair fractured relationships. As a symbol of peace, community leaders sit together, eat from the same plate, and drink from the same cup (Lemtur, 2025). This ritual involves sharing stories of peace and renewing their commitment to ending hostilities. Embedded in these actions are religious values such as love, forgiveness, and repentance, which help transform community attitudes toward peace (Kapshuk & Deitch, 2023). Even informal interactions—such as warm conversations over shared meals—can foster a culture of peaceful coexistence within society.

### ***Interfaith Dialogue and Joint Exploration of Solutions***

Interfaith dialogue serves as an essential instrument for reducing conflict and fostering trust among religious, cultural, and civil society groups. Studies conducted in Southeast Asia show that transnational religious organizations such as Religions for Peace have successfully promoted diversity and tolerance by establishing networks that span multiple faith traditions. These networks are sustained through interfaith forums involving women, youth, and community leaders (King & Owen, 2020). Everyday practices in Ethiopia likewise support these dialogic mechanisms. Muslims and Christians in these communities maintain harmony not by expressing open opposition, but by communicating respectfully and exchanging greetings—behaviors that function as principles of coexistence (Dulin, 2022). Research on Palestinian–Israeli relations further reveals that both Palestinian Muslims and Israeli Jews believe that the other group's faith in God motivates generosity and an appreciation for life. This sense of trust increases the likelihood of interfaith cooperation (Shackleford et al., 2024). Taken together, these insights illustrate that interfaith dialogue does not occur solely within formal forums; it is also embedded in positive perceptions and everyday communicative practices.

Interfaith dialogue occurs not only at the formal level but also within the social interactions of local communities. This is evident in cultural traditions that emphasize kinship and brotherhood. A study in Ambon found that interreligious communication between Muslim and Christian communities in Pasar Mardika facilitates symbolic social interaction. The *pela gandong* tradition, which underscores notions of brotherhood and equality, enables such symbolic interactions. This approach has been shown to reduce the likelihood of conflict (Sakinah et al., 2024).

Similarly, the aksü ritual performed by the Ao Naga community in Northeast India serves as a peace feast that helps repair ruptured relationships. According to Lemtur (2025), the ritual restores relationships through expressions of friendship, solidarity, and shared commitment. Meanwhile, in Nigeria, various civil actors have contributed to advancing interfaith dialogue. Sustainable development policy solutions grounded in peaceful coexistence have been developed by religious figures, traditional leaders, government authorities, and non-governmental organizations (Dindin et al., 2025). Thus, interfaith dialogue does not only generate discussion forums but also inspires policy innovations and improved social practices. Through cultural, social, and political interactions, the outcomes of interfaith engagement strengthen cross-community solidarity and reinforce the sustainability of peace.

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## *Collaborative Negotiation and the Role of Local Actors*

In the resolution of religious conflicts, numerous local actors—including traditional leaders, religious figures, and civil society members—work collaboratively to prevent conflict escalation. Research in Nigeria shows that conflicts within interfaith marriages between Muslims and Christians can be resolved through dialogic communication, deliberation, and interpersonal negotiation supported by family and community networks (Jamo et al., 2024).

In Malaysia, cases of religious conversion demonstrate how Sharia courts, religious leaders, and NGOs enter social negotiation forums to accommodate religious norms and civic values beyond formal judicial settings (Seo, 2023). Meanwhile, Rabbi Menachem Froman in Israel emphasized that religious leaders often play a greater role than politicians in creating a public environment conducive to negotiation. By initiating interfaith gatherings such as the Alexandria Declaration, their influence becomes even more significant (Dindin et al., 2025). Findings from Poso, Indonesia, reveal that school principals, teachers, and non-governmental organizations collaborated to rebuild multicultural education in the post-conflict period as a means of achieving peace and restoring social relationships (Dindin et al., 2025).

All of this evidence demonstrates that hybrid and traditional local-wisdom mediation methods can strengthen the foundations of peace by enabling the participation of diverse actors at the local level. Religious institutions, deliberative forums, and community workshops serve as important spaces for building collaborative cooperation. In Ethiopia, for instance, imams and pastors calm their followers by drawing upon local wisdom to lead community deliberations and act as mediators in ethno-religious conflicts (Dindin et al., 2025).

In Europe, the HeritACT project employs a similar approach; co-creation workshops bring together municipal governments, civil society organizations, and local communities to develop shared visions for reactivating public spaces and enhancing community resilience (Coco & Eckert, 2020). These methods highlight that locally grounded conflict resolution helps reduce tensions and establish sustainable strategies by involving multiple stakeholders in negotiation, deliberation, and joint action. Therefore, collaborative negotiation that integrates social innovation, religious leadership, and local traditions has proven to be a vital mechanism for advancing reconciliation and achieving lasting peace.

## *Peace Consolidation and Sustainable Reconciliation*

Peace consolidation underscores the importance of sustained reconciliation involving interfaith actors, non-governmental organizations, and civil society to ensure long-term peace. Research in Nigeria highlights that interfaith dialogue must be strengthened and institutionalized as a community-based mechanism that brings together traditional rulers, religious leaders, government authorities, and NGOs to cultivate a society grounded in peaceful coexistence (Dindin et al., 2025). These findings align with Rabbi Menachem Froman's vision in the Israeli–Palestinian context, which asserts that religion can serve as the foundation for mutual understanding. According to him, peace agreements must be rooted in religious sanctity rather than political or economic interests alone, as genuine and enduring reconciliation can only be achieved through religiously grounded relationships (Dindin et al., 2025). Evidence from Ethiopia further shows that religious institutions promote values such as empathy, forgiveness, and humility, which consistently support long-term social well-being (Dindin et al., 2025). Thus, interfaith organizations and religious institutions do more than resolve conflicts; they also strengthen the foundations of peace for long-term reconciliation.

In addition, social, cultural, and educational practices across identity boundaries reinforce sustainable peace models. Findings from Poso reveal that multicultural religious education in post-conflict schools helps integrate values of tolerance, interreligious collaboration, and humanitarian solidarity. This contributes to a peace culture that not only resolves immediate conflict but also instills intergenerational reconciliation (Dindin et al., 2025). Similarly, cross-racial religious alliances within Christian hip-hop communities in the United States demonstrate that collective moral identity can foster reconciliation and strengthen community solidarity (Poole, 2025). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, NGOs have developed strategic initiatives using storytelling approaches that connect art, education, and youth participation to build a cross-sector culture of peace (Dindin et al., 2025). These findings collectively indicate that achieving sustainable reconciliation amid global challenges requires a holistic model of peacebuilding—one that spans educational, social, cultural, economic, and religious dimensions.

## **V. DISCUSSION**

### *A. Formation of Actors' Perspectives in Hijab-Coercion Conflicts as Shaped by Media Framing*

From Lederach's perspective, the early stage of conflict transformation—predisposition—emerges from the ways actors frame and interpret reality before conflict becomes overt. The findings of this study demonstrate that media plays a significant role in shaping social predispositions by framing the hijab as a religious symbol constructed as a universal obligation (Ibrahim, 2020; Nwigwe et al., 2025). Media narratives that highlight controversy rather than coexistence encourage the public to interpret the hijab not merely as a personal choice but as a marker of dominant moral identity that must be adhered to (Altıntaş, 2025; Dinhof et al., 2024).

In the Indonesian context of hijab coercion, media reporting has hardened actor positions—some interpret the practice as a form of religious obedience, while others view it as a violation of individual freedom. This aligns with findings from Nigeria and Pakistan,

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where religious symbols intensify social distance, creating both *hypervisibility* and *invisibility* for hijab-wearing women (Dinhof et al., 2024).

From a conflict transformation standpoint, predispositional framing becomes particularly problematic because it establishes the early cognitive bias through which conflict unfolds: non-hijab-wearing students are perceived as “disobedient,” while hijab-wearing students are stereotyped as “fanatical” (Nwigwe et al., 2025). In this way, media framing (Ibrahim, 2020; Loomis et al., 2025) and religious symbolism co-construct a prejudicial mental framework that forms the initial arena of conflict in cases of hijab coercion within schools.

On the other hand, this situation also generates debates between pro- and anti-hijab groups, revealing spaces for potential transformation. The pro-hijab group emphasizes that wearing the hijab is a religious expression that protects Islamic identity in public spaces; thus, media legitimization of hijab use is perceived as reinforcing majority moral values. Conversely, the opposing group criticizes hijab coercion in schools as a form of symbolic domination that disregards children's rights to express themselves. This critique aligns with Lederach's view that polarized social predispositions can only be transformed when there is room for acknowledgment of wrongdoing and dialogue. This suggests that biased media framing requires reframing through peace journalism—highlighting individual choice rather than collective obligation.

Within the educational sphere, schools can function as multicultural learning environments that allow students to understand peers who choose to wear the hijab and those who do not. Therefore, the pro–contra tensions that arise may serve as a momentum for creating the *communicative space* envisioned by Lederach, in which narratives of religious freedom are placed alongside values of tolerance. The conflict over hijab coercion does not remain trapped in polarization but is directed toward reconstructing more equitable and inclusive relationships.

Within Lederach's framework, the conflict surrounding hijab coercion in schools reflects a shift from social predisposition to the stage of acknowledgment, where actors begin to recognize the discriminatory effects of symbolic policies. Cultural transformation becomes evident when practices of religious symbolic domination in educational settings are questioned and subsequently reconstructed through interfaith dialogue and multicultural curricula emphasizing inclusivity. At the same time, personal transformation occurs among actors—students, teachers, and the broader community—as prejudice and stereotypes gradually give way to empathy, recognition of individual rights, and the rebuilding of trust. Thus, conflict is no longer understood merely as external friction but as an opportunity to reshape social, cultural, and spiritual relationships toward sustainable reconciliation, as emphasized by Lederach.

Furthermore, the negotiation space in problem-solving constitutes a critical element in Lederach's cycle of conflict transformation. Lederach emphasizes that every conflict—regardless of scale—requires a negotiation mechanism so that it does not remain trapped in polarization. Negotiation is not merely a matter of practical compromise; it is a process of constructing a *communicative space* in which parties can acknowledge wrongdoing, listen to one another's experiences, and formulate collective solutions. When this stage of negotiation is neglected, conflicts tend to solidify into unequal power relations in which students become mere objects of policy, deprived of opportunities to negotiate their identities or individual freedoms.

Accordingly, it is essential to underline that the conflict surrounding hijab coercion cannot be reduced simply to debates about coercion versus recommendation. Rather, it must be understood as a transformative dynamic encompassing personal, cultural, and structural dimensions. Negotiation, as emphasized by Lederach, is the key to shifting conflict away from polarization toward sustainable reconciliation. At this juncture, the involvement of local mediators, teachers, and school communities becomes crucial in cultivating an inclusive dialogic space—one in which students are no longer confined within rigid conflict logics but are instead guided toward more equitable, peaceful, and enduring relationships.

### **B. Perspective Shifts in the Conflict Transformation Process of Hijab Coercion in School Settings**

Shifts in actors' perspectives within the conflict over hijab coercion in schools highlight the importance of the stages of acknowledgment and relational healing. When schools or educational authorities recognize that enforcing the hijab infringes upon children's rights to express themselves, a space is created to rebuild previously damaged trust. This stage of acknowledgment is not merely an administrative formality; it symbolizes a willingness to rectify unequal relationships. Empirical evidence shows that post-conflict multicultural education—such as in Poso (Mashuri et al., 2024)—effectively reduces identity segregation by integrating interfaith interactions into daily curricula (Dindin et al., 2025).

Subsequently, the stage of interfaith dialogue and joint exploration of solutions allows students, teachers, parents, and religious leaders to discuss the hijab issue within a framework of religious freedom rather than symbolic domination. At this juncture, actors begin to see the “other” not as a threat to their faith but as legitimate partners (Seo, 2023) in shaping a more inclusive school culture. Nevertheless, it is crucial to note that dialogue alone is insufficient if not accompanied by policy reform; without an institutional framework, interfaith conversations risk remaining rhetorical rather than transforming discriminatory realities in classrooms.

From Lederach's perspective, structural transformation should not end with mere mechanical compliance to rules but should create systems capable of nurturing social relationships between teachers and students. These relationships must be guided toward

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dialogic partnership, in which rules are followed not solely due to hierarchical obligation, but because of a shared understanding emerging from transformative communication. Thus, school structures should not be viewed as rigid boundaries but as flexible frameworks that allow space for values of tolerance, freedom, and relational justice.

Only through such an approach can structural transformation be realized—when teachers and students jointly reinterpret rules as tools for building an inclusive learning community, rather than disciplinary mechanisms that suppress difference. Further transformation occurs during the stage of collaborative negotiation (Adamu et al., 2025; Fairey, 2024; Mashuri et al., 2024), in which local actors—such as religious leaders, NGOs, school principals, and parent committees—serve as mediators in formulating practical compromises. In this context, uniform regulations can be renegotiated to become more flexible, allowing students to choose whether or not to wear the hijab without facing social or administrative sanctions. Such negotiation processes signal a shift in perspective from enforcing uniformity to recognizing diversity as an essential component of social justice practices (Kapshuk & Deitch, 2023; Shemer, 2021).

Ultimately, peace consolidation and sustainable reconciliation require a shared long-term vision. Former opposing groups—both militant pro-hijab advocates and those rejecting coercive practices—are repositioned as integral members of a cohesive school community. This consolidation can be strengthened through interfaith student forums, joint extracurricular activities, and the integration of tolerance-based values into the curriculum. Within Lederach's framework, reconciliation does not end with temporary compromise but aims to create an intergenerational peace culture that safeguards freedom of expression.

It is important to emphasize that such transformation is only possible if educational institutions consistently oversee implementation rather than merely drafting written policies. In this way, students' rights become non-negotiable and are institutionally protected. Thus, conflict is no longer viewed merely as external friction but as an opportunity to reshape social, cultural, and spiritual relationships toward sustainable reconciliation, as underscored by Lederach.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that Lederach's conflict transformation cycle is highly relevant for understanding the dynamics of hijab coercion within educational settings. The findings show that biased media framing and symbolic polarization shape initial prejudices that stigmatize both hijab-wearing and non-hijab-wearing students. Conflict transformation can only occur when educational institutions acknowledge wrongdoing, rebuild trust, facilitate interfaith dialogue, engage in collaborative negotiation, and consolidate long-term reconciliation.

Theoretically, this study contributes by integrating communication perspectives—particularly media framing—with Lederach's model, offering a new lens for analyzing how actors' perspectives are reframed in religiously driven social conflicts. Methodologically, it expands the application of systematic literature review in communication and conflict studies. Conceptually, it develops an integrative framework that bridges media scholarship with conflict transformation theory.

Practically, the findings highlight the importance of inclusive educational policies, multicultural curricula, and institutionalized interfaith dialogue in schools to reduce symbolic discrimination and promote sustainable peace. The recommendations of this study call upon policymakers, educators, and civil society actors to adopt communication strategies that emphasize tolerance, empathy, and the protection of individual rights.

Future research may extend this inquiry through empirical field studies involving students, teachers, and parents; longitudinal approaches to assess shifts in perception; or comparative cases beyond Indonesia. Such efforts will strengthen the development of a more robust and context-sensitive model of conflict transformation in plural societies.

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