Religious Pluralism and Inter-Faith Relations in Somalia: A Mixed Methods Inquiry

Abdikadir Kalsoom[1]**, Isca Dahir**[2,3]**, Faaliyu Hoggosho**[1,4]

[1] Benadir University

[2] Department of Advanced Studies, Benadir University

[3] University of Hargeisa

[4] Department of Research, Somali National University

Author notes

Abdikadir Kalsoom is affiliated with Benadir University and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Isca Dahir is affiliated with Department of Advanced Studies, Benadir University and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Faaliyu Hoggosho is affiliated with Department of Research, Somali National University and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Abstract

Religious pluralism in Somalia is a complex phenomenon influenced by historical, cultural, and political factors. The country's diverse religious landscape includes Islam, Christianity, and indigenous beliefs, with significant minority populations of each faith. The research employs a combination of semi-structured interviews with religious leaders and community members as well as sociological surveys covering demographic information and perceptions of inter-faith interactions. Data analysis includes thematic coding for qualitative content and statistical tests to identify correlations between variables. Interviews reveal diverse perspectives on inter-faith dialogue, with some communities advocating for more inclusive religious practices while others express concerns about minority rights. Survey data shows a moderate level of social cohesion across faith groups, although there are notable variations in specific regions and age demographics. While inter-faith relations in Somalia exhibit potential for positive engagement, persistent tensions highlight the need for targeted interventions to enhance mutual understanding and support among religious communities. Policy recommendations include fostering community-led initiatives promoting dialogue and education on shared values, alongside governmental efforts to ensure legal protections for minority rights and encourage civic participation across faith lines.

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Theoretical   *Concepts:*
Religious Pluralism, Inter-Faith Relations

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