NAVIGATING HERESY AND MAQASID AL-SHARIAH: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF RESPONSES TO SI HULK'S TEACHINGS IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract

This research examines the intersection of heresy and Maqasid al-Shariah in Malaysia, with a focus on the teachings of Si Hulk, a figure whose beliefs have been declared aberrant by religious authorities. Through the application of Imam Shafi'i's jurisprudential framework, this research seeks to examine exhaustively the theological, legal and sociocultural dimensions of heresy and its responses. The research utilises a literature review, comparative analysis and historical investigation to provide a comprehensive comprehension of heresy, its historical precedents, legal frameworks and sociocultural effects. The results demonstrate the complexities of addressing apostasy in a diverse and multi-religious society, highlighting the need for a balanced approach that includes dialogue, education and tolerance while preserving faith and societal cohesion. Based on these findings, the research provides policymakers, religious authorities and community leaders with recommendations for navigating the challenges posed by heresy, culminating in a comprehensive conclusion that emphasises the significance of upholding the principles of Maqasid al-Shariah while addressing heretical challenges within the unique Malaysian context.

Keywords: Heresy, Maqasid al-Shariah, Si Hulk, Imam Shafi'i, Malaysia

AJARAN SESAT DAN MAQASID AL-SHARIAH: KAJIAN KOMPREHENSIF TERHADAP AJARAN SI HULK DI MALAYSIA

Abstrak

Penyelidikan ini mengkaji persimpangan ajaran sesat dan Maqasid al-Shariah di Malaysia, dengan fokus kepada ajaran Si Hulk, seorang tokoh yang telah diisytiharkan sesat kepercayaannya oleh pihak berkuasa agama. Melalui aplikasi kerangka perundangan Imam Syafi'i, penyelidikan ini berusaha untuk mengkaji secara menyeluruh dimensi teologi, undang-undang dan sosiobudaya bidaah dan tindak balasnya. Penyelidikan ini menggunakan kajian literatur, analisis perbandingan dan penyiasatan sejarah untuk memberikan pemahaman yang menyeluruh tentang ajaran sesat, sejarahnya yang terahulu, rangka kerja undang-undang dan kesan sosiobudaya. Hasilnya menunjukkan kerumitan menangani murtad dalam masyarakat yang pelbagai dan berbilang agama, menonjolkan keperluan untuk pendekatan seimbang yang merangkumi dialog, pendidikan dan toleransi sambil memelihara kepercayaan dan perpaduan masyarakat. Berdasarkan penemuan ini, penyelidikan menyediakan penggubal dasar, pihak berkuasa agama dan pemimpin masyarakat dengan cadangan untuk menyiasat isu yang ditimbulkan oleh ajaran sesat ini yang memuncak pada kesimpulan komprehensif, yang mana menekankan kepentingan menegakkan prinsip Maqasid al-Shariah sambil menangani masalah ajaran sesat dalam konteks Malaysia.

Kata kunci: Ajaran sesat, Maqasid al-Shariah, Si Hulk, Imam Shafi'i, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

The assertions made by Si Hulk, in particular the claim that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) transcends gender and his association with divinity, have raised significant theological concerns (Suri, 2023). The Mufti of Pahang, Datuk seri abdul Rahman Osman said, the teaching is clearly contrary to the word shahadah spokern by Muslims because there is the most obvious contradiction, in the word shahadah we testify that the Prophet Muhammad SAW is the messenger of Allah SWT, so that is clear and becomes the strongest argument that this teaching has deviated too far (Saufi, 2023). Therefore, this clearly shows how dangerous Si Hulks's doctrine and it's affect violately to islamic belief on their followers.

This culminated in the Perak State Fatwa Committee issuing a fatwa condemning Si Hulk's beliefs as contrary to the Islamic principles and doctrines. However, the response to heresy in Malaysia cannot be completely understood without a more in-depth examination of how the principles of Maqasid al-Shariah, as interpreted by Imam Shafi'i's framework, have been utilised to address such challenges.

The principles of Maqasid al-Shariah, which comprise the broader objectives of Islamic law, serve as a guiding light for scholars, jurists and religious authorities in the diverse tapestry of Islamic thought and jurisprudence (Farooq, 2011). Based on the preservation of faith, life, intellect, lineage and property, these foundational goals seek to uphold the Islamic law principles of justice, equity and societal well-being. The intersection of Maqasid al-Shariah and contemporary aberrant movements is a matter of profound importance in Malaysia's vibrant Islamic landscape, where a rich tapestry of beliefs and practises coexist.

This investigation endeavours to explore contemporary heretical movements in Malaysia through the lens of Maqasid al-Shariah, guided by Imam Shafi'i's legal theory (Rauf, 2015). At the centre of this project is the question of how Islamic orthodoxy, as defined by the Maqasid al-Shariah, confronts and reconciles the challenges posed by deviations from established beliefs. The heretical teachings propagated by Suhaini Mohammad, also known as Si Hulk (Musa, 2023), whose beliefs have prompted theological debates within the Malaysian Muslim community, serve as an example.

Imam Shafi'i, one of the most influential jurists in Islamic history, developed a jurisprudential framework that employs qiyas (analogy), ijma' (consensus) and istihsan (jurisprudential preference) as tools for legal reasoning (Mohamed, 1999). This framework provides a lens for analysing Si Hulk's aberrant claims, evaluating the response of religious authorities and assessing the alignment of this response with the Maqasid al-Shariah objectives.

This research endeavours to contribute to a nuanced understanding of how Islamic jurisprudence and theology, as framed by the principles of Imam Shafi'i, intersect with contemporary challenges related to heresy in Malaysia (Hooker, 2003). It seeks to illuminate whether the response to heretical movements effectively upholds the objectives of Maqasid al-Shariah, including the preservation of faith and whether it navigates the delicate balance between maintaining theological orthodoxy and respecting the diversity of belief in Malaysian society.

This research will undertake a journey through literature review, case analysis and comparative studies, culminating in recommendations for addressing heresy within the framework of Maqasid al-Shariah. In doing so, it seeks to contribute valuable insights to the contemporary Malaysian discourse on Islamic jurisprudence, theology and the preservation of Islamic orthodoxy.

RESEARCH ISSUE

The challenge of reconciling the preservation of orthodox Islamic beliefs and the containment of aberrant movements, such as Si Hulk's teachings, within the diverse and multicultural context of Malaysia is one of the most important issues addressed in this research. In a multireligious society, striking a balance between the imperatives of safeguarding theological orthodoxy and preserving faith, as advocated by Maqasid al-Shariah and the need to respect freedom of belief and promote social concord presents a complex ethical and practical dilemma. This issue necessitates the formulation of responses that not only combat heresy but also promote open dialogue, religious tolerance and interfaith understanding while upholding the fundamental principles of Islamic jurisprudence and ethical objectives.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this research is to analyse the phenomenon of apostasy within the context of Malaysia (Ab Rashid, 2019). This entails an examination of heretical beliefs and practises, with a particular focus on the teachings of Si Hulk, which have been identified as deviating from established Islamic orthodoxy. The purpose of this research is to comprehend the theological, legal and sociocultural dimensions of heresy in Malaysia, including the theological assertions made by heretical movements and their potential impact on the faith and cohesion of the Muslim community.

Using the framework of Maqasid al-Shariah, an additional essential research objective is to evaluate the responses to apostasy in Malaysia (Shukri, 2023). This involves evaluating how religious authorities and policymakers have dealt with aberrant challenges in light of the broader goals of Islamic law and ethics. The research aims to assess the compatibility of responses with Maqasid al-Shariah's primary objectives of preserving faith, life, intellect, lineage and property. It seeks to determine whether the responses adhere to the Islamic jurisprudence-based principles of justice, compassion and the preservation of ethical values.

The research also seeks to provide recommendations for effectively combating apostasy in Malaysia while upholding Maqasid al-Shariah principles (Hasim, 2020). These suggestions are intended to assist policymakers, religious scholars and community leaders in navigating the complex terrain of aberrant challenges. The objective of this research is to identify the most effective practises, strategies and approaches for preserving faith, promoting tolerance and cultivating religious diversity within Malaysia's unique sociocultural context. These recommendations will serve as a practical guide for those charged with combating heresy while preserving the ethical and theological integrity of Islamic law and Maqasid al-Shariah principles.

METHODOLOGY OF THIS RESEARCH

The investigation will begin with a comprehensive review of the relevant scholastic works, academic papers, religious texts, legal documents and historical accounts pertaining to heresy, Maqasid al-Shariah and the case of Si Hulk in Malaysia. The purpose of this literature review is to develop a solid theoretical foundation and contextual understanding of the topic. It will also identify the objectives and principles of Maqasid al-Shariah (Islam, 2022). This phase of the research will establish a historical and theoretical framework for the subsequent analysis by delving into existing scholarship and religious discourse.

The research will use Imam Shafi'i's jurisprudential framework, which includes *qiyas* (analogy), *ijma'* (consensus) and *istihsan* (jurisprudential preference), as analytical tools for examining Si Hulk's heretical claims and the responses of religious authorities (Kamali, 1996). This framework will be used to analyse the issue's theological and legal dimensions.

The application of Imam Shafi'i's framework will facilitate a systematic and structured evaluation of the case, allowing for a nuanced comprehension of how Islamic law, as interpreted by this renowned scholar, intersects with contemporary challenges related to apostasy in Malaysia.

As highlighted in the literature review, the research will conduct a detailed analysis of Si Hulk's heretical teachings, paying particular attention to the theological assertions that have been deemed false by religious authorities. This analysis will also entail a critical examination of the fatwa issued by the Perak State Fatwa Committee regarding Si Hulk's beliefs and practises. The research will then incorporate the findings from the literature review, case study analysis and the application of Imam Shafi'i's framework in order to provide religious authorities and policymakers in Malaysia with practical recommendations. The purpose of these recommendations is to effectively combat apostasy while preserving the primary objectives of Maqasid al-Shariah including the protection of faith, life, intellect, lineage and property in the contemporary Malaysian context.

LITERATURE REVIEW
In the context of Islamic theology, heresy refers to beliefs, doctrines, or practises that deviate considerably from the accepted and established theological and jurisprudential norms within the Muslim community (Lewis, 1953). It frequently involves challenges to fundamental tenets of the faith, such as the essence of God, the prophethood of Muhammad (SAW) and the interpretation of fundamental religious scriptures such as the Quran and Hadith. Heresy can range from minor theological disagreements to radical reinterpretations that challenge the fundamental principles of Islam (Henderson, 1998). The essence of heresy is a theological and doctrinal divergence from the Muslim community's consensus.

In Islamic history, there have been precedents for heretical movements, including notable instances of theological disagreements and deviations. These historical events frequently prompted theological discussions, the development of religious doctrines and the promulgation of fatwas to address and combat apostasy. Heretical movements continue to emerge in modern times, influenced by a variety of factors including modern ideologies, intellectual currents and social transformations. These movements may be influenced by contemporary interpretations of Islamic texts, syncretic beliefs that combine Islamic and non-Islamic elements or novel theological constructions (Ghobadzdeh, 2015). Understanding the historical and contemporary manifestations of heresy is essential for determining the extent to which deviations from orthodox beliefs threaten the principles of Maqasid al-Shariah.

In the context of this research, it is essential to comprehend apostasy in order to assess its effects on the broader goals of Maqasid al-Shariah. Heretical beliefs and practises have the potential to undermine the preservation of faith (*hifz al-iman*), one of the central goals of Maqasid al-Shariah. By challenging orthodox beliefs about the essence of God or the prophethood of Muhammad (SAW) (Maher, 2016), heretical movements may pose a threat to the religious faith of individuals within the Muslim community. Understanding the nature and impact of heresy is crucial for determining whether it aligns with or conflicts with the principles of Maqasid al-Shariah especially in terms of preserving faith and other key objectives such as the preservation of life, intellect, lineage and property.

Heretical movements have historical roots within Islamic history, with notable instances of theological disagreements and deviations (Stark, 2007). For example, the early Islamic period witnessed the emergence of sects like the Kharijites and the Mu'tazilites, whose beliefs deviated from mainstream Sunni orthodoxy (Kenney, 2006). These theological deviations led to significant debates and controversies within the Muslim community, influencing the development of Islamic theology and jurisprudence. Historical heresies often

prompted scholars and jurists to respond by formulating religious doctrines and issuing fatwas to address and counteract these challenges to orthodoxy. Understanding these historical precedents is essential for grasping how heretical movements have evolved over time and how Islamic scholars and authorities have historically navigated such challenges.

In contemporary times, heretical movements continue to emerge, shaped by various social, cultural and intellectual factors. These factors include increased access to information and diverse interpretations of Islamic teachings, as well as broader societal changes and interactions with global ideologies. Contemporary heretical movements may manifest in diverse ways, from reinterpretations of Islamic texts to the fusion of Islamic elements with other spiritual or cultural traditions (Kurtz, 1983). Some heretical groups advocate for radical theological positions, while others may question certain established practices and beliefs within the Muslim community. Understanding these contemporary manifestations is vital for assessing how heresy impacts the objectives of Maqasid al-Shariah in a modern context, including its influence on issues related to faith, life, intellect, lineage and property.

It is also important to recognize that heresy can manifest differently in various regions and communities. What may be considered heretical in one Muslim-majority region may not necessarily have the same implications or prevalence in another. Factors such as cultural norms, political dynamics and interactions with other religious and philosophical traditions can shape the nature and intensity of heresy in different contexts (Ainlay, 2013) . Therefore, a nuanced understanding of both historical and contemporary manifestations of heresy is essential for comprehending the complexities of addressing heretical movements within the framework of Maqasid al-Shariah, particularly in the specific context of Malaysia, where unique sociocultural factors come into play.

Maqasid al-Shariah identifies a number of fundamental goals, including the preservation of faith (*hifz al-iman*), life (*hifz al-nafs*), intellect (*hifz al-aql*), lineage (*hifz al-nasl*) and property (*hifz al-mal*). These objectives serve as the Islamic legal system's ethical compass, steering the actions and decisions of individuals and societies (Mohiuddin, 2023). The preservation of faith entails preserving the Islamic faith's central tenets and ensuring the continuity of religious identity and practise. The protection of life encompasses the physical and mental health of individuals, emphasising the sanctity of human life. The preservation of intelligence highlights the significance of knowledge, reason and critical thinking. Property preservation emphasises economic justice and the protection of wealth and property, while lineage preservation emphasises the sanctity of family and lineage.

The framework of Maqasid al-Shariah has significant ethical and societal implications. It promotes moral conduct, social justice and the welfare of individuals and communities (Dusuki, 2007). For instance, the preservation of life implies a duty to protect not only physical safety but also mental and emotional well-being. The preservation of property necessitates moral economic practises and equitable distribution of wealth in order to minimise wealth disparities. By emphasising lineage preservation, Maqsid al-Shariah highlights the significance of family and community cohesion. This framework aims to establish a just and equitable society in which the rights and dignity of all individuals are respected.

Maqasid al-Shariah plays a vital role in Islamic jurisprudence, guiding the interpretation and application of Islamic legal principles to contemporary issues (Saifuddeen, 2007) . When formulating legal rulings (fatwas) and making decisions about matters not expressly addressed in classical Islamic texts, scholars and jurists frequently refer to these goals. The framework permits for the adaptability and applicability of Islamic law in various contexts while preserving its fundamental ethical principles. Maqasid al-Shariah ensures that the Islamic legal framework upholds the goals of justice, compassion and moral values.

Understanding Maqasid al-Shariah is essential for evaluating how responses to heresy align with the broader aims and principles of Islamic law, particularly in terms of faith preservation and other important objectives within the context of this research.

One of the primary goals of Maqasid al-Shariah is the preservation of faith (*hifz al-iman*), which entails safeguarding the tenets of Islamic faith (Bendebka, 2020). By their very nature, heretical movements pose a direct challenge to this objective. When individuals or groups promulgate beliefs that deviate considerably from Islamic orthodoxy, they have the potential to influence the faith of others within the Muslim community. This can result in theological perplexity, doubt and even apostasy, undermining the faith directly. The intersection of heresy and Maqasid al-Shariah necessitates a thorough examination of the impact of heretical beliefs on the faith of individuals and the Muslim community as a whole.

The intersection of heresy and Maqasid al-Shariah reveals a tension between the preservation of faith and the Islamic principles of tolerance and pluralism (Auda, 2022). Despite the fact that preserving faith is a fundamental objective, Islamic tradition also recognises the significance of valuing intellectual diversity within the Muslim community. It is difficult to strike a balance between upholding theological orthodoxy and respecting the rights of individuals to hold different beliefs. It necessitates a nuanced approach that recognises the diversity of interpretations within Islam while preserving the fundamental tenets of faith. In modern multicultural and multireligious societies such as Malaysia, this equilibrium becomes particularly significant.

At the intersection of heresy and Maqasid al-Shariah, legal and ethical responses become of the utmost importance (Arsad, 2020). Scholars and religious authorities are tasked with addressing heresy in accordance with Maqasid al-Shariah's goals. This includes preserving faith while upholding the principles of justice, compassion and religious liberty. Responses to heresy may consist of issuing fatwas, engaging in theological debates or undertaking educational initiatives to clarify orthodox beliefs. The challenge lies in ensuring that responses are not overly punitive, thereby discouraging open dialogue and critical thinking, but instead promote a balanced approach that respects the principles of Maqasid al-Shariah while addressing the challenges posed by heretical movements within the Muslim community.

This research examines contemporary heretical movements in Malaysia, with an emphasis on the case of Si Hulk, through the lens of Maqasid al-Shariah and Imam Shafi'i's theoretical framework. While the primary case study focuses on Si Hulk's teachings and the responses to them (Adnan, 2023), the research also examines how apostasy intersects with the fundamental goals of Maqasid al-Shariah. This includes analysing the preservation of faith, life, intelligence, ancestry and property in the context of aberrant threats. The research includes a thorough literature review, comparative analyses and the formulation of practical recommendations for religious authorities and policymakers.

This research is significant because it has the potential to shed light on the dynamic relationship between heresy, Islamic jurisprudence and the overarching goals of Maqasid al-Shariah. By analysing responses to aberrant movements such as Si Hulk's teachings, this research seeks to contribute to a nuanced understanding of how traditional Islamic principles can be applied to address contemporary theological challenges. Furthermore, the research has far-reaching implications for promoting religious tolerance, pluralism and dialogue among the diverse Muslim communities of Malaysia and beyond (Freedman, 2009). Especially in multireligious societies, it can serve as a paradigm for reconciling theological orthodoxy with respect for diverse beliefs.

This research bridges the divide between Islamic tradition's theoretical principles and practical responses (Abu-Ras, 2008). It applies the principles of Maqasid al-Shariah, which

are frequently abstract in scholarly discourse to a real-world context, providing concrete recommendations for combating apostasy while upholding the goals of Islamic law and ethics. The practical orientation of the research, which is based on the teachings of Imam Shafi'i provides a framework that can assist religious authorities, policymakers and scholars in navigating the complex terrain of aberrant challenges. Ultimately, the significance of this research goes beyond the specific case of Si Hulk to enlighten discussions on the compatibility of Islamic law with contemporary issues and the preservation of faith and religious diversity in Muslim-majority societies.

IMAM SHAFI'I'S FRAMEWORK APPLICATION

The application of Imam Shafi'i's framework in this research functions as a critical analytic instrument for evaluating the theological and legal dimensions of heresy and its responses within the context of Malaysia. Imam Shafi'i (767-820 CE) was a prominent Islamic jurist and theologian whose contributions continue to impact the interpretation and application of Shariah (Ali, 2011).

Qiyas is one of Imam Shafi'i's guiding principles, permitting the extension of existing legal rulings to novel situations not expressly addressed in classical Islamic texts. In the context of heresy, qiyas may be used to draw parallels between past heretical challenges confronted by the Islamic tradition and contemporary cases such as Si Hulk's teachings (Waines, 2003). By analysing historical precedents and analogous reasoning, scholars and authorities are able to make informed decisions regarding how to classify and address heresy within the legal and theological framework. Qiyas enables the research to draw parallels between historical responses to apostasy and those demanded in the contemporary Malaysian context.

Ijma' or the consensus of Islamic scholars plays an important role in Islamic law. Imam Shafi'i regarded ijma' as a source of Islamic law, signifying that when scholars reach a consensus on a particular issue, it is accorded great weight in legal decisions (Hallaq, 1997). Understanding the unanimity among Islamic scholars regarding fundamental theological beliefs and practises is crucial in the context of apostasy. Examining whether a consensus exists on the deviations introduced by heretical movements such as Si Hulk's teachings permits the research to determine the degree of consensus and its implications for addressing heresy within the framework of Maqasid al-Shariah.

Istihsan is the exercise of discretion or preference in interpreting Islamic law when there is a valid reason to do so. Istihsan can be utilised to ensure that responses to apostasy are consistent with the overarching goals of Maqasid al-Shariah (Auda, 2008). By invoking istihsan, scholars and religious authorities are able to make decisions that prioritise the preservation of faith and the protection of the well-being of the Muslim community. Istihsan permits a contextualised approach, permitting responses to apostasy that may not be expressly prescribed by existing legal precedent but are deemed beneficial and ethical within the larger Islamic ethical framework. This application ensures that the analysis of the research remains adaptable to contemporary challenges while adhering to Maqasid al-Shariah principles.

CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

This research's case study analysis plays a pivotal role in examining the specific instance of Si Hulk's teachings and heretical beliefs, allowing for a detailed investigation of the theological and legal dimensions of the case within the framework of Maqasid al-Shariah and Imam Shafi'i's jurisprudential principles.

The case study analysis begins with an examination of Si Hulk's aberrant teachings

(Burrus, 1995). This requires a thorough examination of Si Hulk's claims and assertions, such as those concerning the essence of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the reinterpretation of Quranic verses. This study investigates Si Hulk's theological deviations and their implications for fundamental Islamic beliefs. This analysis provides a thorough comprehension of the specific heretical claims that lead to a fatwa being issued against Si Hulk.

Evaluation of the fatwa issued by the Perak State Fatwa Committee pertaining to Si Hulk's beliefs and practises is a crucial component of the case study analysis (Musa, 2023). This assessment evaluates the theological and legal arguments presented in the fatwa. It seeks to determine how religious authorities have characterised the aberrant nature of Si Hulk's teachings and which theological principles they have invoked to justify their decision. The research scrutinises the fatwa's alignment with Imam Shafi'i's jurisprudential framework and Maqasid al-Shariah principles, particularly in terms of preserving faith and safeguarding the well-being of the Muslim community (Kasri, 2023).

The analysis of the case study also considers the broader sociocultural and political context of Malaysia. It investigates how Si Hulk's teachings have resonated within Malaysian society and whether they have acquired followers or influence among certain segments of the populace. To assess the impact of heresy on faith, social cohesion and the goals of Maqasid al-Shariah, it is necessary to comprehend the sociopolitical dynamics surrounding it (Auda, 2022). Moreover, this contextualization assists in identifying potential obstacles and opportunities for effectively combating apostasy in Malaysia while preserving religious diversity and harmony.

The case study analysis corresponds closely with the primary objective of the research, which is to evaluate the intersection of heresy, Maqasid al-Shariah and Imam Shafi'i's legal framework. It functions as the focal point for implementing Imam Shafi'i's qiyas, ijma' and istihsan principles to the particular situation. By analysing Si Hulk's teachings, the fatwa response and the broader context, this study aims to determine how aberrant challenges are addressed within the context of Islamic law and ethical goals (El Fadl, 2001). This analysis sheds light on the compatibility of traditional Islamic principles with contemporary theological orthodoxy and belief issues.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In this research, historical precedents play a crucial role by shedding light on how heresy has been perceived and dealt with in various historical eras of the Islamic world (Menocal, 2004). Examining historical instances of heresy, such as those during the Abbasid Caliphate, mediaeval Andalusia and the Mamluk era, provides valuable insights into how Islamic scholars, theologians and jurists navigated theological disputes and responded to deviations from orthodox beliefs (Khan, 2023). By examining these historical cases, the research obtains a deeper understanding of the evolution of heresy, the theological debates it generated and the strategies employed to maintain theological orthodoxy. These historical precedents provide a basis for evaluating the responses within the framework of Maqasid al-Shariah and Imam Shafi'i's jurisprudential principles.

Examining legal frameworks and responses to heresy is a crucial aspect of this research (Jørgensen, 2011), as it reveals how distinct Muslim-majority regions have codified and managed aberrant challenges within their legal systems. This comparative analysis examines the function of religious authorities, the formulation and promulgation of fatwas and the legal ramifications of heretical beliefs and practises. To comprehend how various regions have dealt with heresy, variations in legal approaches such as the severity of penalties for heresy, the involvement of state institutions and the mechanisms for resolving theological disputes,

are examined. By analysing these legal frameworks and responses, this research seeks to identify potential best practises and lessons learned that can inform responses to apostasy in Malaysia, while upholding the principles of Maqsid al-Shariah and respecting the diversity of thought within the Muslim community.

Analysing the sociocultural context and outcomes of responses to heresy in various Muslim-majority regions is a crucial aspect of this research (Pintak, 2014). Examining how cultural norms, societal values and political factors have influenced the perception and treatment of apostasy. The sociocultural context determines whether heretical challenges are met with tolerance and interreligious dialogue or with social unrest and conflict. In addition, evaluating the results and effects of these responses provides insight into the efficacy of various strategies employed to preserve faith, maintain social cohesion and uphold the principles of Maqasid al-Shariah. Understanding the complex interplay between heresy, societal context and outcomes provides policymakers and religious authorities in Malaysia with valuable lessons that can guide their efforts to combat heresy while fostering religious diversity and harmony within the country's distinctive sociocultural landscape.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations in this research are of the utmost importance because they translate the findings and insights gained from the analysis of heresy within the framework of Maqasid al-Shariah and Imam Shafi'i's jurisprudential principles into practical guidance for addressing heretical challenges in the Malaysian context.

Promoting open dialogue and educational initiatives to combat apostasy while preserving the principles of Maqasid al-Shariah is a key recommendation (Tajudeen, 2023). Encouraging religious scholars, authorities and community leaders to engage in constructive dialogues with individuals holding aberrant beliefs can assist in dispelling misconceptions and fostering a more informed understanding of Islamic theology. The goal of these dialogues should be to preserve faith (*hifz al-iman*) while allowing for diverse perspectives within the confines of Islamic orthodoxy. Investing in educational programmes that provide a sound religious education and critical thinking skills can enable individuals to distinguish between orthodox and heretical beliefs, thereby reducing their susceptibility to deviant teachings.

A second suggestion is to achieve a balance between legal responses and tolerance. While heresy should not be tolerated, punitive measures should be taken with care to prevent suppressing free speech and religious liberty (McConnell, 1999). The law should be governed by the principles of Maqasid al-Shariah with an emphasis on preserving faith, protecting life and preserving social cohesion. Particularly in multireligious and diverse societies such as Malaysia, it is essential to ensure that legal frameworks for addressing heresy are consistent with Islamic ethical principles. Moreover, establishing mechanisms for dispute resolution and theological debates, supervised by eminent scholars can provide a forum for addressing theological controversies without resorting to punitive measures.

Improving religious literacy and ecumenical engagement is essential for combating heresy (Donner, 2010). By fostering a more informed and nuanced comprehension of Islamic theology and jurisprudence among the general population, individuals are better equipped to recognise and reject heretical beliefs. Interreligious engagement can cultivate tolerance and understanding between diverse religious communities, thereby reducing the likelihood of social tension and conflict resulting from aberrant challenges. Collaboration with non-Muslim communities can foster a harmonious environment that upholds the objectives of Maqasid al-Shariah, such as the preservation of faith and the welfare of society.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes with a comprehensive examination of the intersection of heresy and Maqasid al-Shariah in the context of Malaysia, with a particular emphasis on the teachings of Si Hulk. Through a thorough literature review, comparative analysis and the application of Imam Shafi'i's jurisprudential framework, this research illuminates the multifaceted dimensions of heresy and its responses within the framework of Islamic ethics and law.

The research has revealed the historical precedents of apostasy within the Islamic tradition, illuminating the challenges and responses that have influenced the development of theological orthodoxy. By analysing legal frameworks and responses in various Muslim-majority regions, the research has provided valuable insights into how diverse societies have responded to heretical challenges, emphasising the need to strike a balance between legal measures and tolerance and dialogue.

In addition, the research has highlighted the importance of the sociocultural context in influencing responses to apostasy, highlighting the need for a contextualised approach that respects diversity of thought while upholding the principles of Maqasid al-Shariah. With an emphasis on promoting dialogue, education, tolerance and interfaith engagement, policymakers and religious authorities have been provided with recommendations for addressing heresy.

This research has shed light on the dynamic and intricate relationship between heresy, Islamic jurisprudence and the larger goals of Maqasid al-Shariah. It is a valuable resource for policymakers, religious scholars and community leaders in Malaysia and beyond, providing practical insights into addressing heretical challenges while preserving faith, promoting social cohesion and upholding Islamic ethical principles. This research contributes to the ongoing dialogue on the preservation of faith, the protection of societal well-being and the reconciliation of theological orthodoxy and religious diversity as Malaysia continues to navigate its diverse religious landscape.

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