



Bridging Epistemologies: Exploring Common Threads In Muslim And Hindu Thought

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Abstract: Epistemology that talks about philosophical truth and falsehood, validity of knowledge, limits of knowledge and nature of knowledge, the knower and the known etc. and is commonly described as study of knowledge and justified belief. This paper explores the rich epistemological traditions of the Muslim and Hindu thinkers and how there are transparent strands connecting these two deep traditions. Analyzing historical readings, philosophical ideas and findings through history, the paper seeks to shed light on the commonalities of the ways in which both the traditions view truth, knowledge and the way things are. It also explores the ways in which conversations between thinkers of the two traditions have not only led to mutual understanding and a deepening of the intellectual discourse by the two schools. When approaching the issue of managing modern-day dilemmas of interfaith relations, the paper focuses on the possibilities of these mutual epistemological frames to become a force of collaboration and dialogue. By recognizing the commonalities in thought, this study advocates for a deeper engagement between Muslim and Hindu communities, promoting a spirit of coexistence and respect in an increasingly pluralistic world. Finally, the study aims at making its contribution to a larger conversation about interfaith dialogue by demonstrating the potential of inter-epistemological bridging to between-and among-beliefs understanding and connectivity.

Keywords - Epistemology, Similarities, Muslim, Hindu, Islam, Hinduism, Interfaith Dialogue

I. INTRODUCTION

Epistemology, which is defined as the philosophical study of knowledge, explores the nature, origins, and limits of human understanding. This field transects with several dimensions including psychology, cognitive science, and metaphysics that offers understanding the processes of reasoning and perception. The word “*Epistemology*” is derived from the two Greek words “*episteme*” means knowledge and “*logos*” means reason (Stroll, A. and Martinich, A.P, 2024). Epistemology also discusses the different stages of knowledge and it also explores the gap between knowledge and information. It addresses basic questions regarding knowledge such as how knowledge is defined, what are its constituents, how it is acquired, and what are the criteria for its justification? In addition to being academic in nature; these questions also influence how people understand the reality, morality and their place in the world. In an era where communalism and religious hatred is on rise exploring the epistemological similarities between Muslim and Hindu traditions is a tantamount to enhancing Muslim-Hindu harmony and offers a unique opportunity to foster interfaith dialogue. Hindu epistemology is related to that of the other Indian tradition, classical Indian philosophy, and some schools of thought treat the concept of knowledge one way, while others treat it another. Gautama was the founder of the Nyaya school, which systematized the organized logic and established the four main

Pramāṇas, or Ways of Knowledge: Perception (*Pratyakṣa*), Inference (*Anumāna*), Comparison (*Upamāna*), and Testimony (*Shabda*) (Matilal, 1986). Its exponents, including Sankara, emphasized self-realization (none of this creative speculation and experience of Brahman—all knowledge is in the end one with Brahman). Mimāṃsā, under the leadership of theologians such as Kumarila Bhaṭṭa, advocated that the Vedas were a source of valid knowledge. Similarly, Muslim epistemology, particularly in Islamic philosophy, is based on Qur'an, and Hadith, Aristotelian logic, and Sufi mysticism. It concentrates upon Revelation (*Wahy*), Reason (*'Aql*), Spiritual Intuition (*Kashf*) and Sensation (*Hawa'as*) (Nasr, 2013). Muslim philosophers have made substantial contributions to a number of debates in the philosophy of religion. For Al-Farabi, Islamic thought and Aristotle's philosophy were integrated, and he put greater emphasis on knowledge gained through reason (Reisman, 2005, Ibn Sina's (*Avicenna*) epistemology was developed through the consideration of Aristotle's, and to a lesser extent, Neoplatonist, views on the role of the faculty of the soul is receiving the formal intelligible species of an object, although it also demonstrated a marked contrast with his thinking on the issue of how the wherewithal of individuals affects their reality (Fakhry, 2004). Al-Ghazali refuted pure rationalism, arguing that reason and spiritual experience, particularly through Sufism, were complementary in the pursuit of truth (Gutas, 2014). Ibn Tufail and Ibn al-Nafis were instrumental in the philosophy of science for their additions to the ancient Greek philosophy of the nature of the elements (Ivry, 2012). This intersection of Hindu and Muslim epistemologies was particularly pronounced in medieval South Asia with scholars interpenetrating with each other in deeper intellectual dialectic. If Islamic philosophy benefited from Greek rationalism and Neo-Platonism, by the same token it remained an attempt to reconcile reason with revelation; Hindu thought conducted a speculative metaphysics through the instrument of logic and experiential insight. Now we venture into epistemological domains in Hindu and Muslim thought by examining the methods to knowledge acquisition, the means to establishing the truth, and the place of divine revelation. We will also examine the points of convergence and divergence between the two traditions, particularly in their views on empirical reasoning versus mystical insight.

II. Epistemological Foundations in Muslim Thought

The epistemological bases in Muslim thought lie quite strongly in the Quran, Hadith and intellectual practices that came into being within Muslim world. Epistemologists have tried to understand what knowledge is, the foundations of knowledge and its boundaries as a part of an intellectual system that reconciles the divinely revealed and the human intellect. The single most important element of this undertaking is actually the conviction that God (Allah) is the giver of knowledge and the ultimate giver of all true knowledge. The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes the importance of seeking knowledge, as seen in verses such as "*Read, (O Prophet) in the Name of your Lord Who created.*" (Quran, 96:1) and "*Are those who know equal to those who do not know?*" (Quran, 39:9). Furthermore, verses such as "*And Allah brought you out of the wombs of your mothers while you knew nothing, and gave you hearing, sight, and intellect so perhaps you would be thankful.*" (Quran, 16:78) underscores the value of senses and intellectual inquiry. Muslim epistemological thinking draws a distinction between two main branches of knowledge, that is, revealed knowledge (*Naqli*) and rational or empirical knowledge (*'Aqli*). The revealed knowledge According to the teaching of the Quran and the Sunnah (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH), revealed knowledge is infallible as well as authoritative. It also gives directions on metaphysical, moral and spiritual issues that are beyond human reason. Scholars like Al-Ghazali have explained in degrees of certainty that range between the kinds of knowledge that is most likely to be probable in everyday life to the absolute certainty, which is linked to ultimate Truth and clear perception. It is stated that there are two types of ilm; first one is the conventional knowledge (*ilm al-din*) and knowledge of the actual Reality (*ilm al-haqiqah* or *ilm al-marifah*). Sufi philosophers, especially, focused on the importance of a spiritual experience and the inner enlightenment as a path to achieving the higher truths which cannot be accessible to reason. The other aspect to note is the use of the intellect (*'Aql*) enormous power as the tool of knowing the truth. A good example is the Mu'tazilite school, which stressed highly the strength of human whereas the Ash'arite school was more moderate in their views and defended more the doctrine of revelation than the use of un-aided human reason. In short,

in Islamic epistemology, Revelation (*Wahy*), Intuition (*Kashf*), Reason (*'Aql*) and Sensation (Hawa'as) are the four basic sources of knowledge and are considered as the key principles each contributing uniquely to the understanding of truth. Revelation is the primary and most authoritative source, encompassing the Qur'an and the Sunnah whereas Intuition is considered as spiritual insight, the Reason is the intellectual faculty granted by Allah and the Sensation are the five senses through which humans perceive the external world. Let's discuss these one by one:

(1) Revelation (Wahy): In Islamic epistemology, revelation subjugates the central position as the fundamental and most authoritative source of knowledge. It refers to the divine connection as well as the communication from God to humanity, primarily conveyed to the Prophet in the form of the Qur'an, which is regarded as the literal word of God (Allah), and the Sunnah, the teachings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). As per the Holy Quran the divine knowledge is revealed on the Prophet and then he teaches it to people, guides them, purifies them and let them what they don't know (Quran, 2:129). It also comes in a Hadith that Prophet described himself a teacher and declared learning and teaching a superior activity than the worship (Mishkat Al-Masabih, 257). *Wahy* provides infallible and absolute guidance on matters of faith, morality, law, and the unseen, addressing questions that transcend human reason and empirical observation. It is considered the ultimate source of certainty (*Yaqin*) and serves as the foundation for all other forms of knowledge. Revelation is distinct in its ability to offer insights into metaphysical and spiritual realities, such as the nature of God, the afterlife, and divine will, which cannot be fully grasped through reason or sensory experience alone. By integrating revelation with reason and intuition, Islamic epistemology achieves a holistic understanding of truth, balancing divine guidance with human inquiry. Thus, *Wahy* is not only a source of knowledge but also a moral and spiritual compass for Muslims.

(2) Reason ('Aql): In Islamic epistemology, reason or intellect is a fundamental tool for acquiring and interpreting knowledge; reason is a divine gift given by God that serves to discern the knowledge of revelation, and the knowledge of the natural world. It involves rational thought, critical analysis and intellectual reflection and makes the human capable of analyzing, reasoning, deducing and making sense of the complex reality. Islamic philosophers such as: Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (*Avicenna*) and Ibn Rushd (*Averroes*) stressed that *'Aql* is central to addressing philosophical, scientific and theological concerns and that there is no real contradiction between reason and revelation but that they are complementary. Ibn Rushd maintained that rational inquiry and philosophy could coexist with religion, both of which aimed to establish the truth which could be reasonable, based as it is on revelation. His writings tried to reconcile between faith and reason and pursued the connection to knowledge by means of logical treatment. But the Islamic scholars are also aware of its limits, and they believe that reason on its own is not able to capture the metaphysical or spiritual truths and the revelation will help. Philosophers such as Al-Ghazali warned about an extreme dependence on reason, and the need to find a more balanced position between rational search and divine revelation. In the end, *'Aql* is interpreted as one of the God-given powers, and in case one is used through the projection of Islamic values, he/she will understand the truth even better and strengthens the faith. It highlights how Islam promotes intellectual activity and how it is combined with the ideals of spiritual and moral virtues.

(3) Intuition (Kashf): In Islamic epistemology, intuition (*Kashf*) refers to direct, experiential knowledge attained through spiritual insight and inner illumination. Sometimes related to Sufism, *Kashf* is beyond the range of senses and thinking in that it allows to gain access to divine knowledge which is not otherwise obtainable. It is superior type of knowledge, and it can be obtained by means of spiritual purification, devotion and divine grace. Sufi scholars such as Al-Ghazali and Ibn Arabi stressed *Kashf* as a path of achieving gnosis (*Marifa*), or knowing God with an intimate knowledge that exceeds the intellectual knowledge. *Kashf* is the supplement to revelation (*Wahy*) and reason (*'Aql*), as it gives personal and experiential aspect of faith. While *Wahy* guides the believer authoritatively and *'Aql*

provides an angle of logical reasoning, Kashf enables the seeker to have a spiritual awareness with spiritual realities leading to a deep sense of connection with the almighty. This type of knowledge is commonly referred to as transformative bringing a soul to a state of peace both internally and morally and enhanced perception of life. Nevertheless, Intuition is not understood as a substitute of revelation or rationalism but as an add-on to Islamic epistemology. It highlights the importance of spiritual discipline and the pursuit of inner truth, enriching the holistic approach to knowledge in Islam (Wolfson, 1973). Relationship between faith and reason is one of the key themes of Islamic epistemology.

(4) Sensation (Hawa'as): According to Islamic epistemology sensation (*Hawa'as*) is an essential element since it is a leading source of knowledge. With its philosophical and theological roots, sensation can be viewed as the process by which man acquires the understanding of outside world. Such Islamic philosophers as Ibn Sina and Al-Farabi also insisted on using the five external senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell) as means of obtaining empirical information. The internal senses like imagination and memory then work on these sensory inputs to create coherent perceptions. Sensation is commonly mentioned along with reason, because Islamic epistemology aims at balancing empirical discovery and rational treatment. While sensation provides raw data about the material world, reason interprets and elevates this information to higher levels of understanding (DeBoer, 1983). Such linkage between sense perception and thought explicates the totality of Islamic thought that appreciates both empirical and metaphysical aspects of knowledge. Sensation thus is not simply a passive experiment of the stimuli but it is also an active agent in the quest of truth and wisdom.

III Epistemological Foundations in Hindu Thought

Hindu conceptions of epistemology lie deep in the implications of knowledge (*Jnana*) to find out reality and achieve liberation (*Moksha*). The Hindu philosophy points out some valid means or sources of knowledge (*Pramanas*) which are as follows: such as perception (*Pratyaksha*), inference (*Anumana*), testimony (Shabda), comparison (Upamana), presumption (Arthapati) and non-apprehension (Anupalabधि). These *Pramanas* make available an exhaustive guide in the methods of gaining and proving knowledge so that not only the strength of empirical experiences but also a resort to logical deductions, as well as scriptural authority could go hand in hand. Hindu epistemology not only has a theoretical concern but it is highly practical and the goal of this practical concern is that of liberation (Moksa) by a discernment of truth (Satya). It combines the empirical, logical and religious directions, providing the general methodology of knowing the world and self-realization. It is a comprehensive theory that speaks of the richness and diversity of Hindu philosophical traditions. These methods are studied systematically in schools like Nyaya, Vaisheshika and Mimamsa which give a lot of importance to their part in knowing the truth. Such epistemological plurality characterizes the comprehensive nature of Hinduism and the ways in which the ideas about the nature of the things and the self could be sought through sensory experience, thought, and the spiritual revelation. Let's discuss these sources of knowledge (*Pramanas*) one by one:

(1) Perception (Pratyaksha): Knowledge gained through sensory experience.

One of the main sources of knowledge is *Pratyaksha*, which is the perception. It means immediate, first hand cognition by

Senses that gives first-hand experience of the external world (Philosophy Institute, n.d.). *Pratyaksha* can be taken as a trusted source of knowledge because of the fact that it deals with direct observation with no considerations of inference or word of testimony. But there must be a condition that the senses should be in good working condition as they are actually the ones supposed to make the human mind think in the right way. Another idea related to this perception and conception is that senses only work as per their nature while they don't know anything; it is mind or the person who actually knows through senses (Zhihua Yao, 2002). Hindu epistemologists such as *Nyaya* or *Vaisheshika* schools focus on its vitality yet recognize that there are some shortcomings of this knowledge which could be illusions or sensory

mistakes. Pratyaksha is basic, in that it becomes the foundation of others Pramanas such as inference (*Anumana*) and testimony (*Shabda*).

(2) Inference (Anumana): Logical reasoning based on observed phenomena.

Anumana or inference is an important source of knowledge which draws conclusions through logical thinking. It entails reaching at a conclusion based on facts or premises that have been observed based on the association of cause and effect; such as in the case of smoke and deduction of fire. Schools applying one of the most well-known exponents of *Anumana* are *Nyaya* which includes a systematic method consisting of five stages: hypothesis, reason, example, application and conclusion. *Anumana* can be seen as a good source of knowledge in case it is based on the reliable perception and universal truths. It fills in what is perceived as openings in direct perception and is critical to the perception of abstract propositions, morals and metaphysical things within the metaphysical realities in Hindu thought.

(3) Testimony (Shabda): Knowledge derived from authoritative texts and teachers.

Shabda or testimony is also an important source of knowledge which involves authority verbal or written source. It is thought of as a sure means of acquiring knowledge, particularly where both direct perception and inference cannot be used, such as ethics, spiritual and metaphysical realms (Parrott, 1990). *Shabda* encompasses religious scriptures such as Vedas, Upanishads, and sages teachings that are thought to be revealed by God and thus they cannot lie. The importance of *Shabda* is stressed within schools *Nyaya*, and *Mimamsa*, which assume that without *Shabda*, it would never be possible to access the truths that would be otherwise inaccessible. Trust in the source and clarity of communication is key to its validity (Lutsyshyna, 2012).

(5) Comparison (Upamana): Knowledge derived from analyzing similarity.

Upamana or comparison is the method of analogy that is another source of knowledge described in Hindu epistemological tradition (Philosophy Institute, n.d.). It involves acquiring information through making a comparison among an unfamiliar object to a familiar one. As an example: inferring that a wild cow is compared to a domestic one. *Upamana* applies especially well when there are restraints in direct perception of relationships and attributes. The relevance of this is emphasized by the school of *Nyaya*, where it is argued that it is dependent on the antecedent knowledge as well as verbal testimony in drawing inferences. *Upamana* is different with respect to perception and inference since it is not as straightforward as those two; however, it plays a crucial role in expanding understanding through relatable and comparative reasoning (Mills, 2015; Sharma, 1981).

(5) Presumption (Arthapati): Knowledge based on the presupposition.

Arthapati or presumption, is a method of cognition which aims to resolve a contradiction or unsolved facts by making a necessary assumption. It occurs when an observed fact cannot be accounted for without inferring another fact. As an example, one may suppose that when an individual is fasting, but he or she is healthy, there must have been some food consumption at night. Of special interest in the *Mimamsa* school is *Arthapati* and its application to the interpretation of Vedic texts and also to removing contradictions. As opposed to inference (*Anumana*), where the cause-effect relationships are quite direct, *Arthapati* addresses the cases, when the explanation is not so clear at first but is logically required to explain the given phenomenon.

(6) Non-apprehension (Anupalabधि): Knowledge based on non-existence of object.

Anupalabधि, or non-apprehension, is one of the sources of knowledge and that means knowing something through its absence or non-existence. It is the knowledge that something is absent on grounds that nothing was perceived in circumstances which favour perception. For example, realizing the absence of a book on a table where it is actually placed. The *Mimamsa* and the school of *Advaita Vedanta* accepts *Anupalabधि* as a valid source of epistemological content, especially of negative knowledge or vacuity. It

complements other *Pramanas* (sources of knowledge) by providing insight into what is not perceived, thereby enriching the understanding of reality through both presence and absence (Brooks, 2018).

The Upanishads and the basic texts of Hindu philosophy go into the intricacies of knowing the essence of the ultimate reality (*Brahmah*) and the nature of the true self (*Aatma*), and it stipulates that the individual soul does not form a distinct entity when compared with the universal consciousness but is actually united with it in its core being (Chandogya Upanishad, 6.8.7). This principle of non-dualism (*Advaita*) constitutes the core of various Hindu metaphysics and marks that the liberation (Moksha) is seen to be the product of recognizing this uniqueness (Maṇḍukya Upaniṣhad, 1.2). These reflections go on and also offer practical means of achieving a state of self-realization in Bhagavad Gita that is regarded as one of the most crucial texts in the Mahabharata. It tells about different yogic practices like *Jnana Yoga* which means the path of knowledge (Bhagavad Gita 2.39-53); *Dhyana Yoga* a technique of mental discipline exploring the power of meditation (Bhagavad Gita 6.10-17); *Bhakti Yoga* explores the path of worship and is considered as the most perfect and supreme form of Yoga (Bhagavad Gita, 12.1-5) and *Karma Yoga* the path of selfless actions that results into the achievement of the ultimate wisdom and self-bliss (Bhagavad Gita, 3.1-9). The teachings of Advaita Vedanta, which can be seen as systematized by the philosopher Adi Shankara (8th century CE), typify this experiential approach. In his commentaries *Shankara* tells of the falsehood of the phenomenal world (*Maya*) and the promotion of *Jnana* (knowledge) based on introspection/meditation which results in the direct realization (Aparoksha Anubhuti) of Brahmah as one entity, seamless reality.

IV. Common Threads in Muslim and Hindu Epistemology

Although Muslim and Hindu thoughts are the products of dissimilar orientations in cultural and religious context, they do have a number of epistemological similarities in their approaches to knowledge. Both the traditions advance consideration to a variety of approaches to knowledge, by combination of empirical, rational, and spiritual methods to comprehend reality. This allows a holistic approach as there has been a mutually held notion that there are various ways to find the truth, each a contribution to the understanding of existence. Let's discuss the similarities between the Muslim and Hindu epistemological traditions:

- **Acknowledging the Divine Source of Knowledge:**

One key similarity is the recognition of divine/transcendent origins of the knowledge. The acceptance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah as revelation (*Wahy*) gives the authority of the truth in Islam which gives guidance in situations proceed beyond what a person can reason. The same can be applied to Hinduism as testimony (*Shabda*) is treated as an authoritative and never-faulty source of knowledge and into the metaphysical and spiritual realities, especially, in the Vedas . Both traditions circumscribe sacred texts as the foundational source of knowledge in their epistemological frameworks.

- **Considering 'Reason' as a tool for Intellectual Inquiry:**

Another shared feature is the fact that reason is cherished as an instrument of thought. Such scholars as Ibn Sina and Al-Farabi within Islamic circles and Hindu philosophers from the *Nyaya* School stress on the importance of logic and inference to understand the world and interpret the sacred books. Both traditions are also aware of the insufficiency of using reason in and of itself, as it is reasoned with divine guidance or spiritual insight.

- **Quest for Ultimate Reality:**

Both traditions emphasize the pursuit of ultimate truth – Allah in Islam and Brahmah in Hinduism. The search is the core of their philosophical and spiritual heritage. Both Hindu and Muslim epistemologies are concerned with the search of ultimate reality, just through a different context. In Islam, the ultimate reality is Allah, the transcendent, omnipotent Creator revealed, by revelation (*Wahy*), reasoning (*'Aql*) and spiritual intuition (*Kashf*). Likewise, in Hinduism the information on

Brahmah (Ultimate Reality) also obtains through the scripture (*Shabda*), contemplation and direct inner insight (*Anubhava*). This quest is central to both Hindu and Muslim epistemologies, though approached through distinct frameworks advocating for a combination of intellectual inquiry, divine guidance, and inner transformation to attain true knowledge of the ultimate reality.

- **Significance of Personal Experience:**

Both Muslim and Hindu epistemologies acknowledge the role of the personal experience and intuition towards achieving knowledge. Spiritual insight or intuition (*Kashf*) is esteemed in Islam and especially in Sufism as a way of achieving higher reality. To the Hinduism the key to Brahmah, the ultimate reality beyond the daily life of the senses is direct spiritual experience (*Anubhava*). All these experiential dimensions emphasize on the significance of personal metamorphosis and interiorizing with regard to acquisition of truth. Both, Sufi mysticism and Hindu yogic tradition recognize and emphasize on the importance of direct spiritual experience.

These philosophical principles are common to both the Muslim and Hindu epistemology which is further complemented by history of exchanges between the two communities. That is why the ultimate purpose of the two traditions is not only the intellectual enlightenment but spiritual revelation and psychic growth. This epistemology discourse is usual because of the similarity of knowledge and truth in human beings. As a form of illustration, the medieval India Sufi-Bhakti movements created an atmosphere of respect and tolerance between neighbours, suggesting the prospects of interfaith recognition. Ultimately, both traditions seek a balance between faith, reason, and experience, aiming not only for intellectual understanding but also for spiritual enlightenment and moral growth.

V. Implications for Interfaith Dialogue

The similar epistemological frameworks of Islam and Hinduism Islam provide a very base for interfaith dialogue. By pointing out common axis in epistemological approaches, the study shows that in Islam as well as in Hinduism, acquisition of knowledge are a divine obligation and that higher knowledge is a matter of divine revelation as well as of rational inquiry. This agreement can become the starting point of negotiations and replace discussions over the theological differences with an emphasis on common intellectual and spiritual values. Muslim and Hindu communities will be able to get past the superficial points of departure and can have a meaningful discussion around value sets and common agendas.

- **Common Epistemological Frameworks as a Foundation for Interfaith Dialogue**

Both the epistemological frameworks of Islam and Hinduism have significant similarities that can be highly used as the very foundation of interfaith dialogue. The two traditions share the concern that knowledge must be brought through divine mandate and thus they combine revelation and rational inquiry. According to Islam, knowledge is sacred to the followers as the Quran constantly encourages the people to think, reason, and learn. The Hindu scriptures such as Vedas and Upanishads likewise maintain the knowledge as the path to the spiritual freedom and the greatest of all purification methods. (Bhagavad Gita, 4.38). This shared emphasis on divine knowledge and critical pursuit of truth offers a neutral yet deep domain of conversation to start a new focus on discussing their common intellectual and spiritual ideals instead of theological differences.

- **Moving Beyond Superficial Differences to Principled Convergence**

The interfaces between Hindu-Muslim are not new but have predominantly been overshadowed by political and theological conflicts. Nevertheless, if topics are focused on similarities between the epistemologies, communities will be able to pass over superficial disputes and start having an important dialogue about common ethical and philosophical issues. Both traditions accept that there are several valid sources of knowledge:

- Perception/Sensation (Pratyaksha in Hinduism, Hawa'as in Islamic philosophy) – Direct empirical perception.
- Inference (Anumana in Hinduism, 'Aql in Islam) – Logical reasoning.
- Testimony (Shabda in Hinduism, Wahy or Naql in Islam) - Scripture and textual authority.

Such a tripartite epistemological structure emphasizes mutual fidelity to both rational inquiry and revealed truth so that scholars and practitioners could seek convergences, ground rather than conflicts.

- **Philosophical and Spiritual Bridge-Building by means of Epistemic Dialogue**

Through their discourses on such epistemological similarities in the two faiths, the scholars and the practitioners on both sides can develop bridges of philosophical and spiritual realms via such discourses. More philosophical interest can be engaged in interfaith dialogue based on epistemology. For instance:

- Islamic Ma'rifa (Gnosis) and Hindu Janna Yoga (Path of Knowledge) both dwell upon experience based intuitive knowledge rather than intellectualizing.
- Sufi and Vedantic traditions share metaphysical inquiries regarding the nature of reality and divine unity (Tawhid in Islam, Advaita in Hinduism).

Drawing on these comparisons, researchers have been able to create comparative platforms that both admire theological differences whilst noting similarities in intellectual inheritance.

- **Practical Applications for Modern Day Interfaith Initiatives**

This study suggests practical pathways for dialogue as follows:

- Joint Scholarly Collaborations: This can be done in the form of interdisciplinary works realized through comparative studies of the Islamic *ilm* and Hindu *jnana*.
- Educational Programs: These epistemological similarities can be included in the interfaith educational curricula in order to establish mutual understanding between students.
- Community Dialogues: Such structures allow Grassroots efforts to transform an atmosphere of polemic to an explorative ethical and spiritual adventure.

- **Toward a Collective Intellectual and Spiritual Future:**

Putting interfaith dialogue on the grounds of epistemological resemblances, Hinduism and Islam will be able to establish a more sophisticated, respectful relationship. This is not a way out of theological disagreements but rather a way of establishing a positive environment whereby the differences begin to understand each other thus leading to cooperation in view of a more pluralistic world. Future studies ought to investigate how such epistemic correlations are mistranslated into ethical, social and mystical aspects, further enriching interfaith understanding.

By recognizing these common principles, Muslim and Hindu communities may join hands to engage in matters relating to education, social justice and environmental sustainability and through their epistemological understanding, they may develop solutions to these problems that are holistic. This knowledge can be the driving force to interfaith movements of celebrating diversity and promoting unity to lead towards more inclusive and peaceful societies.

VI. Conclusion

The comparison of the Muslim and Hindu epistemology indicates the profound convergence of their approaches to knowledge domain in spite of their different theological and cultural premises. Such integrated style highlights a common apprehension that truth is multiple and could be approached in a variety of ways, all of which could result in achieving a complete picture of beingness. Through the comparison of the epistemological structures of Islam and Hinduism, one can identify the major areas in these religions that

have many common grounds pointing out to the universal human need of knowledge, wisdom and spiritual satisfaction. The respect of divine or transcendent sources of knowledge is one of the most conspicuous similarities that exist between the two traditions. Within the Islam, revelation (*Wahy*) in the Quran and Sunnah is considered a supreme source of truth that is infallible over those issues that cannot be resolved by the human mind. On the same note, Hinduism holds in high esteem the testimony (*Shabda*) as a source of truth and eternity, with its wisdom contained on the Vedas giving enlightenment on metaphysical and spiritual realities.

- Both Muslim and Hindu traditions of epistemology regard the sacred books, which form the roots of the epistemological traditions, as having an important role of considering divine guidance when seeking the truth.
- Both traditions stress the significance of multi-causality of the sources of knowledge combining the methods of empirical, rational and spiritual comprehension of reality.
- Both traditions however identify the constraints of reasoning deployed as an isolated application and recommend that it should be combined with divine revelation or spiritual intuition so as to establish a balanced view of reality.
- Both traditions perceive knowledge as the way to transcendence, leading people to having the closer contact with the divine and more significant life.
- These two traditions are both practical in the sense that they do not seek understanding of things merely intellectually but also in the sense of morality and spiritual development.

In conclusion, similarities between Muslim and Hindu epistemologies demonstrate that both traditions share commitment to integrating faith, reasoning and experience on the way to truth. Such similarities point to the universality of human search in knowledge and the depth with which various cultural and religious traditions answer basic questions of what exists, of what is real, and of what the divine is. As demonstrated in the paper, Muslim and Hindu epistemologies are replete with rich epistemological terrains upon which we found certain converging patterns that connect these two ancient traditions. On the basis of primary sources, crucial philosophical notions, and historical exchanges, the paper has explored universal focus on pursuit of ultimate reality, the role and essence of personal encounter, and the relationship of faith and reason. These shared epistemological frameworks can be used as formidable base of interfaith dialogue, fostering mutual understanding and respect on the part of each other in a more pluralistic world.

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