CONSTRUCTION OF *TASAMUH* CONCEPT INTO ISLAMIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM AT ISLAMIC COLLEGE OF MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

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Abstract: This article describes how the values of *tasamuh* (religious tolerance) are integrated into the Islamic private learning curriculum and manifested in the social life of the people in Australia. Islamic values are believed by both Muslim and non-Muslim communities to create social stability, amidst the phenomenon of Islamophobia and securalization in Australia. Not only integration, but Islamic values are realized in schools and social life so as to form a harmonious and anti-conflict life order. This research is qualitative with a phenomenological approach. Data were collected from interviews and documentation studies. The findings show that Islamic education in Australia has experienced rapid development since the time when the education curriculum internalized tasamuh in social life. The integration of the concept of tasamuh in the Islamic College of Melbourne Australia educational institution is in the form of the inclusion of the value of *tasamuh* (tolerance), *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and *ta'aruf* (getting to know each other). These values are internalized in the curriculum, especially in the aspects of learning and output. Third, the construction of the concept of *tasamuh* at the Islamic College of Melbourne Australia is realized in the school and social environment through extracurricular activities, social care and national events.

Keywords: Curriculum, Islamic Education, *Tasamuh*.

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Introduction

Since 1974, Islamic education has experienced fantastic growth, reaching 30 institutions in Australia.[1] Islamic educational institutions provide a harmonious social life. Although Islam is a minority religion, Australian Muslims and non-Muslims believe it to be a tolerant and accommodating religion. The Islamic education system in Australia is able to accommodate and reflect the values of peace in their lives. This value of peace can ensure the rights of Muslim students in undergoing education in line with their beliefs, but also to strengthen inclusivity and pluralism in Australian society.[2]

In Australia, the public education system is based on secular principles that emphasize inclusivity, equality and religious neutrality. However, for the Muslim community, there is a fundamental need to see that Islamic values are also recognized and integrated into the curriculum. This includes aspects such as a correct understanding of Islam, respect in worship, halal food and an environment conducive to *tasamuh*. This is in keeping with the primary value of Islamic education, as one of the means through which cultural and religious values are transmitted to the younger generation.[3]

However, the process of integrating the Islamic value of *tasamuh* in Islamic education in Australia is not free from problems. One of the crucial problems is the distortion of the teachings of secularism and the need for education with a religious identity. In addition, there are concerns among some Muslim communities that the introduction of Islamic values in education may conflict with universal values embraced in the Islamic education system in Australia,[4] such as gender equality and individual freedom.

In addition, Islamic education institutions in Australia also face the internal challenge of designing a curriculum that is balanced between religious and general education. On the one hand, the curriculum must reflect Islamic values in a way that is authentic and relevant to Muslim students. On the other hand, the curriculum must also meet the Australian

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[1] M Broer, "Socioeconomic Inequality and Educational Outcomes: An Introduction," *IEA Research for Education*, 2019, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-11991-1_1.

[2] A Rehayem, "Infant Feeding Beliefs and Practices of Arabic Mothers in Australia," *Women and Birth* 33, no. 4 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wombi.2019.07.004.

[3] E Rowe, "Reading Islamophobia in Education Policy through a Lens of Critical Race Theory: A Study of the 'Funding Freeze' for Private Islamic Schools in Australia," *Whiteness and Education* 5, no. 1 (2020): 54–73, https://doi.org/10.1080/23793406.2019.1689159.

[4] T Zulfikar, "Islamic Education and Religiosity: Voices of the Indonesian Muslim Communities in Australia," *Ulumuna* 24, no. 1 (2020): 24–56, https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v24i1.388.

government's national education standards, which emphasize academic competence and relevant life skills in a multicultural society.[5]

In this position, Islamic education in Australia must be able to stand above all interests. Islamic education is designed to provide an education that not only meets national academic standards, but also equips students with a deep understanding of Islamic teachings. However, this is not an easy endeavor, with many challenges, including the pressure to balance religious and general education, and meet strict government regulations.[6] In this case, the construction of Islamic values in education becomes a complex process, where schools must be able to respond to the needs of the Muslim community while still complying with prevailing national policies.

Another challenge arises from the concerns of some Australians regarding the integration of Islamic values in education. On the one hand, there is a view that the introduction of religious elements in education could undermine the principle of secularism on which the government education system is based. On the other hand, there was also concern that teaching too focused on specific religious values could hinder social integration and foster segregation among students.[7] These issues have led to intense debate about how Islamic values should be constructed in education without violating the basic principles embraced by Australian society as a whole.

These conditions suggest that the construction of Islamic values in Australian education is a multidimensional and dynamic process, involving interactions between government policies, community needs and the broader social context.[8] This research is therefore important to identify the various factors that influence such constructs and to evaluate their impact on Muslim students and the community as a whole. The research is also expected to provide useful recommendations for policymakers, educators and other stakeholders in building an education system that is inclusive, equitable and responsive to religious diversity in Australia.

Previous research on Islamic education in Australia did not examine the construction of the concept of integration of Islam into the curriculum, mostly examining the existence of minority Islamic educational institutions.

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[5] M Broer, "Methodology: Constructing a Socioeconomic Index for Timss Trend Analyses," *IEA Research for Education*, 2019, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-11991-1_3.

[6] Y Foroutan, "Education's Economic Return in Multicultural Australia: Demographic Analysis," *Journal of Sociology* 59, no. 1 (2023): 120–41, https://doi.org/10.1177/14407833211049479.

[7] G Stahl, "The Pursuit of 'the Good Life': Muslim Masculinities and the Transition to Higher Education in Australia," *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 28, no. 7 (2024): 1007–21, https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2021.1971310.

[8] Z Keskin, "Islamic Studies in Australia's Universities," *Religions* 12, no. 2 (2021): 1–16, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12020099.

Sabir Jamaluddin, Fakhrul Adabi, Sadad Mahmud, examined the resilience of minority Islamic education in the midst of secular interventions through community strength.[9] Jaelani reveals the history of Islamic migration to Australia through active learning in small forums.[10] Islam in Australia prioritizes social patterns to maintain living arrangements so as not to conflict, Islamic education is used as a means of culture.[11] Gurr sees that Islamic education in Australia can be developed through family education.[12] The previous research did not examine the construction of Islamic moderation, which is the main entity of Islamic education in Australia, so it is significant in this study.

The research method is a natural setting, where research is directed at social conditions and educational institutions without intervention from researchers. This research style is in line with the qualitative research method which prioritizes in-depth phenomena. Primary data is taken from documentation studies of research results and books, supported by interviews with teachers in educational institutions. Primary data were submitted by a random sample and considered by the researcher to be key informants. The final data is confirmed by source triangulation, thus forming a valid and reliable cluster of research results.

Australian Muslim Community Typology

The Muslim community in Australia has grown rapidly, with a history rooted in the early 19th century when Muslim traders and laborers, such as "cameleers" from Afghanistan, first arrived in Australia.[13] Over time, larger waves of immigration occurred after World War II, particularly with the arrival of refugees from conflict-torn countries. These Muslim communities have grown within the multicultural social, political and cultural context of

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[9] M Nathie, "Courses Preferences and Occupational Aspirations of Students in Australian Islamic Schools," *Religions* 11, no. 12 (2020): 1–18, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11120663.

[10] N Ghamra-Oui, "The Semiotics of an 'Islamic' Education: Engaging with the Concrete Realities of Muslims in Australia," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 40, no. 2 (2020): 318–31, https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2020.1773102.

[11] Subandi, "Pesantren-Based Transformational Leadership: Strategies toward International Superior Madrasah in Indonesia," *Webology* 18 (2021): 1023–40, https://doi.org/10.14704/WEB/V18SI05/WEB18279.

[12] M M J Alabdulhadi, "Practices of Islamic Education Teachers in Promoting Moderation (Wasatiyyah) Values among High School Students in Kuwait: Challenges and Obstacles," *Cogent Education* 11, no. 1 (2024), https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2365577.

[13] M D H Rahiem, *Religion, Education, Science and Technology towards a More Inclusive and Sustainable Future: Proceedings of the 5th International Colloquium on Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies (ICIIS 2022), Lombok, Indonesia, 19-20 October 2022, Religion, Education, Science and Technology towards a More Inclusive and Sustainable Future: Proceedings of the 5th International Colloquium on Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies (ICIIS 2022), Lombok, Indonesia, 19-20 October 2022*, 2024, https://doi.org/10.1201/9781003322054.

Australia, creating a need to understand how the typology of Muslim communities in the country formed and developed.[14]

One way to understand this typology is to look at the ethnic origins of the Muslim community in Australia. The country's Muslim community is extremely diverse, comprising more than 60 different ethnic groups.[15] Among them, communities from Lebanon, Turkey, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Somalia are the most prominent. Each of these groups brings their own religious and cultural traditions, which influence the way Islam is practiced in Australia. For example, the Lebanese Muslim community, which is one of the largest groups, has significant influence in the establishment of mosques, Islamic schools and community organizations. They also play an active role in local politics, especially in cities like Sydney and Melbourne. In contrast, Muslim communities from Indonesia, which are smaller, often practice Islam in ways influenced by local Javanese and Sumatran traditions, which tend to be more moderate and syncretic.[16]

In addition to ethnic origins, the typology of Muslim communities in Australia can also be categorized based on their religious practices. While all of these groups embrace Islam, the way they practice it can be very different. There are notable differences between Sunni and Shia Muslims, as well as between groups such as Sufis, Salafis and reformist movements. Salafi groups, for example, are known for a more strict and literal approach to religious texts, often avoiding adaptation of local cultures that do not fit their strict interpretation of Islam.[17] Sufi groups, on the other hand, emphasize the spiritual and mystical aspects of Islam, and are often more inclusive of different cultural traditions.

Social and economic roles are also important dimensions in the typology of Muslim communities in Australia. Some Muslim groups, especially those who have been in Australia for generations, have achieved a high level of social and economic integration. They act as successful

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[14] A Smith, "Gender Gap in STEM Pathways: The Role of Gender-Segregated Schooling in Mathematics and Science Performance," *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies* 59, no. 1 (2024): 269–87, https://doi.org/10.1007/s40841-024-00320-y.

[15] M O'Connor, "Strengthening Muslim Community Leaders' Understanding of Palliative Care in Australia," *Progress in Palliative Care*, 2024, https://doi.org/10.1080/09699260.2024.2307708.

[16] I Afidah, "Community-Driven Initiatives to Enhance Religious Awareness among Migrant Communities in Malaysia, Australia, and South Korea," *Journal of Religious and Theological Information*, 2024, https://doi.org/10.1080/10477845.2024.2307729.

[17] R J Markwell, "Religion as a Motive - Does Australian Terrorism Law Serve Justice?," *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy* 12, no. 3 (2023): 1–14, https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.2686. Also see Hariyanto, in "The contribution of KH. Said Agil Siradj's leadership in fighting radicalism: a language communication strategy", *Islam Realitas: Journal of Islamic and Social Studies*, 2020, http://dx.doi.org/10.30983/islam_realitas.v6i2.3766.

professionals, entrepreneurs and academics and are actively involved in interfaith dialogue and social activities.[18] However, there are also Muslim groups who still face significant challenges in terms of social and economic integration, especially refugees and new immigrants who often face discrimination, economic hardship and language barriers. Mosques and Islamic organizations often serve as a refuge and source of support for them.

Muslim communities in Australia face challenges related to identity, integration and public perception. Islamophobia and negative stereotypes of Muslims, reinforced by media coverage and global politics, often lead to tension and polarization.[19] This creates challenges for Australian Muslims, especially for the younger generation, who must navigate their identity between two different worlds. However, despite these challenges, there are great opportunities for the Muslim community in Australia to play a positive role in this multicultural society. With a growing and increasingly educated population, Australian Muslims are well-positioned to contribute to the social, cultural and economic life of the country.[20] Education, interfaith dialogue, and participation in political and civic life are some of the ways in which Australian Muslims can strengthen their position in society.

The typology of the Muslim community in Australia reflects the complexity and diversity of this community. With diverse ethnic backgrounds, varied religious practices, and different socio-economic roles, Australian Muslims offer a rich portrait of how Islam is practiced and understood in this multicultural country. Despite facing various challenges, the Muslim community in Australia also has great opportunities to contribute to the country's social and economic development, and to strengthen social cohesion through dialogue and collaboration.[21]

Thus, insights into the importance of understanding the internal and external dynamics of the Muslim community in Australia are not only relevant for academic studies but also for public policy and more inclusive social integration strategies. By understanding this typology, we can better appreciate the contributions and challenges faced by Australian Muslims, as

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[18] L Zannettino, "'Gatekeeping Family Violence': The Role of Religious and Community Leaders in the Afghan Migrant Community in South Australia," *Religions* 14, no. 9 (2023), https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14091208.

[19] H Daun, "Globalisation and Islamic Education," *Third International Handbook of Globalisation, Education and Policy Research*, 2021, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66003-1_25.

[20] J A Ali, "STUDYING ISLAM AND ITS ADHERENTS IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 2 (2021): 137–48, https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v7i2.15773.

[21] H.M.u.D. Qadri, *Contemporary Issues in Islamic Social Finance, Contemporary Issues in Islamic Social Finance*, 2021, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003050209.

well as support them in achieving their full potential in this pluralistic and dynamic society.

The Symbiosis of Islamic Education in Australia

The development of Islamic education in Australia has undergone a significant transformation since its inception until today.[22] Initially, the Muslim community in Australia consisted of small groups who came as migrant workers, sailors and traders in the 19th and early 20th centuries. They brought with them Islamic traditions and values that later became the foundation for the development of Islamic education in the country.[23]

As the Muslim population grew through immigration and local births, the need for education in line with Islamic values became more pressing. In the 1970s and 1980s, Muslim communities began to establish weekend schools and madrasas that focused on teaching the basics of religion, such as reading the Quran, fiqh, and Islamic history.[24] These institutions are usually established and run by local communities with limited resources, but play an important role in maintaining Muslim identity and cultural heritage in Australia.

It was in the late 20th century when the Muslim community began to establish full-time schools that were officially recognized by the Australian government. These schools not only taught the Australian national curriculum but also incorporated Islamic religious education into their programs. This step was taken to fulfil the need for a holistic education that encompasses both academic and spiritual aspects for Muslim children. One of the early examples was the opening of King Khalid Islamic College in Melbourne in 1982, which was later followed by the establishment of various other Islamic schools across Australia.[25]

The establishment of these Islamic schools faced various challenges, including funding, accreditation and social acceptance. However, with the hard work and dedication of the founders and the Muslim community at large, many of these schools have managed to grow and thrive. They offer a supportive learning environment where students can pursue academic

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[22] S Satterley, "Fields of Educational Interest and an Islamist Orientation in Australia," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 35, no. 3 (2023): 694–711, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2021.1970542.

[23] S N A Akhwan, "Acculturation Challenges Faced by Malaysian Muslim Students Studying Abroad," *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 29 (2021): 337–53, https://doi.org/10.47836/pjssh.29.s1.18.

[24] Rowe, "Reading Islamophobia in Education Policy through a Lens of Critical Race Theory: A Study of the 'Funding Freeze' for Private Islamic Schools in Australia."

[25] Zulfikar, "Islamic Education and Religiosity: Voices of the Indonesian Muslim Communities in Australia."

excellence while staying connected to their Islamic values and identity.[26] In addition, these schools also play a role in promoting cross-cultural understanding and tolerance through various programs and activities that engage the wider community.

In the 21st century, Islamic education in Australia continues to grow with the emergence of higher education institutions offering Islamic studies and Middle Eastern studies programs. Universities such as the University of Melbourne and Griffith University have introduced programs that allow students to delve academically into Islamic studies.[27] In addition, the emergence of research centers and think tanks focusing on issues relevant to the Muslim community indicates an increased interest and recognition of the importance of Islamic studies in academic and social contexts.

Technological developments and digitalization have also played an important role in the transformation of Islamic education in Australia. Online learning platforms and digital resources have made Islamic education more accessible to a wide range of people, including those living in remote areas.[28] E-learning programs, webinars and mobile applications have enabled more flexible and interactive learning, addressing the challenges of geographical and time constraints.

Nevertheless, Islamic education in Australia still faces challenges, including issues related to stereotyping, Islamophobia and social integration. Some Islamic schools face pressure to prove that they contribute positively to Australian society as a whole and do not isolate students from the wider community.[29] To address this, many Islamic schools and educational institutions are active in building partnerships with other schools, interfaith organizations and government agencies to promote dialogue, cooperation and mutual understanding.

In addition, the Islamic education curriculum is undergoing changes to reflect contemporary needs and realities. Topics such as citizenship, ethics, and Muslim contributions to global history and science are increasingly being integrated into the learning program. This approach aims to equip students

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[26] Keskin, "Islamic Studies in Australia's Universities."

[27] Nathie, "Courses Preferences and Occupational Aspirations of Students in Australian Islamic Schools."

[28] Ghamra-Oui, "The Semiotics of an 'Islamic' Education: Engaging with the Concrete Realities of Muslims in Australia."

[29] M Nathie, "Are Australian Islamic Schools Elitist?," *Journal for Multicultural Education* 15, no. 2 (2021): 184–200, https://doi.org/10.1108/JME-07-2020-0069.

with the knowledge and skills necessary to participate actively and constructively in Australia's multicultural society.[30]

Overall, the development of Islamic education in Australia reflects the Muslim community's journey in establishing their identity and role in a diverse society. Through dedication and adaptation, Islamic education has become an important component of the national education landscape, providing a platform for young Muslims to develop their full potential while maintaining Islamic values and traditions.[31] By continuing to face and overcome challenges, Islamic education in Australia has the potential to continue to grow and contribute positively to social harmony and progress in the country.

In the modern era, Islamic education in Australia is at a more mature and established stage compared to previous decades. The Muslim community has successfully established an education system that not only meets the spiritual and academic needs of Muslim students but also contributes to social cohesion in a multicultural society.[32] Islamic schools are now spread across all Australian states and territories, with some being well-established and nationally recognized. These schools offer an education that combines the Australian national curriculum with Islamic religious education, including the study of the Quran, Arabic language, fiqh and Islamic history.[33]

Islamic education in Australia is more inclusive and adaptive to contemporary challenges. Islamic schools are now increasingly involved in cross-cultural initiatives, where students are introduced to the concepts of global citizenship, tolerance and cultural diversity. This is an effort to ensure that graduates of Islamic schools not only understand their Islamic identity but are also able to play an active and positive role in the wider Australian society.

Islamic higher education has also flourished. Several leading Australian universities offer Islamic studies and Middle Eastern studies programs, as well as in-depth research on various aspects of Muslim life in the modern world. These programs attract not only Muslim students but also students from various backgrounds who are interested in understanding

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[30] Alabdulhadi, "Practices of Islamic Education Teachers in Promoting Moderation (Wasatiyyah) Values among High School Students in Kuwait: Challenges and Obstacles."

[31] Daun, "Globalisation and Islamic Education."

[32] T Lovat, "Islamic Education Today and Yesterday: Principal Themes and Their Potential to Enlighten Western Education," … *on Teaching and Learning Paths in Islamic Education*, 2020.

[33] T Lovat, "Values Education, Efficacious Learning, and the Islamic Connection: An Australian Case Study," *Encyclopedia of Teacher Education*, 2022, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-8679-5_186.

more about Islam and its role in the contemporary world.[34] Universities such as Melbourne University, Griffith University, and Sydney University have become centers of excellence in Islamic studies, focusing not only on theological but also social, cultural, and political aspects.

Alongside formal education, non-formal and informal education, especially through digital platforms and social media. Islamic organizations and community centres are active in providing online classes, webinars and short courses covering a range of topics from Quranic tafsir to Islamic ethics in the business world. This provides an opportunity for Muslims across Australia, including those living in remote areas, to stay connected to Islamic education without having to physically attend classes.[35]

At the same time, the Islamic education curriculum continues to adapt to the times, including the integration of technology in teaching and learning. Islamic schools are now more open to utilizing digital technology to improve the quality of education, whether through the use of digital tools in the classroom, distance learning, or even the use of artificial intelligence to personalize education.[36]

Overall, Islamic education in Australia focuses not only on the religious aspect but also on the academic achievement and character development of students. With support from the community, government and educational institutions, Islamic education in Australia continues to strive to equip young Muslims with knowledge, skills and Islamic values that help them contribute positively in a diverse and dynamic society. Amidst global challenges, Islamic education in Australia continues to serve as an important foundation for the formation of a strong, inclusive and adaptive Muslim identity.

Integrating *Tasamuh* into the Curriculum: Islamic College of Melbourne

As the Muslim community grows, Islamic education institutions in Australia have experienced a significant increase in students. According to Australian Islamic Education in Schools data, there are currently more than 30 Islamic schools throughout Australia. One of the fastest growing states in Australia is New South Wales (NSW). The data states that the number of

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[34] H Rane et al., "Islam in Australia: A National Survey of Muslim Australian Citizens and Permanent Residents," *Religions* (mdpi.com, 2020).

[35] H Rane, A Duderija, and J Mamone, "Islamic Studies in Australia's Higher Education Sector," *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies*, 2021.

[36] A Hadi and K Mikail, "… Management in Madrasa (Islamic School) Through Compliance of National Standards of Education: Learn from The Australia Education Partnership with Indonesia …," *Ilkogretim Online*, 2021.

Islamic schools in NSW has tripled in the last 15 years to 30 institutions. Likewise, the student population of Islamic schools also increased by almost 200 percent to more than 10-thousand students.[37]

The increase in the number of Islamic schools is due to two reasons. First, the Muslim community is known as a peace-loving community and respects everyone. Second, the Muslim community is helpful, and there is no conflict.[38] Islamic schools in Australia are very different from Islamic schools in Indonesia. Islamic values in Australia are not clearly stated in school documents, but can be applied as a set of values in the form of ethics and school operations.

The Islamic College of Melbourne Australia system is open to non-Muslim students and teachers. Not all of them are Muslim, 70 percent are Muslim, 30 percent are not. Only the students are all Muslim, but the teachers are not all Muslim.[39] They still learn religious knowledge from Muslim teachers, while non-Muslim teachers transfer academic knowledge and skills, such as how to be independent, be successful, computer engineering, design, animation and other technological developments.[40] Herein lies a form of value integration between the community and the government that gives space to the Islamic College of Melbourne. On the other hand, the children also receive all the lessons as a good thing, which will benefit them in the future.

> "Children must realize that we do not live with only one religion in this world, but we live side by side with those of different religions and children must respect as a diversity. Not only students and teachers, sometimes Islamic schools in Australia are also led by non-Muslim principals. The openness system implemented by the Islamic College of Melbourne aims to maintain that any educational institution in Australia is able to become a place to foster appreciation for the diversity of cultures and beliefs in society."[41]

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[37] M Alhashmi and J Moussa-Inaty, "Professional Learning for Islamic Education Teachers in the UAE," … *Journal of Religious Education*, 2021, https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2020.1853046.

[38] S A Whyte, "Islamic Religious Authority in Cyberspace: A Qualitative Study of Muslim Religious Actors in Australia," *Religions* (mdpi.com, 2022).

[39] Z Lessy and M Arif, "Empowerment in Islamic Schools in Yogyakarta and Sydney," *Journal of International and Comparative Education …*, 2020.

[40] N Ghamra-Oui, "Constructing the Informal Curriculum of Islamic Schools in Australia: Contribution of Contextual Factors and Stakeholder Experiences," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 2022, https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2023.2176068.

[41] Mayani Siwangi, *Interview* (Sydney-Australia, 12 Juli 2024)

A pluralistic school environment is very effective in fostering a sense of tolerance among students. While the impact of teaching a tolerant attitude, fosters mutual respect for other people's beliefs both at school and in the social community. The Muslim community is still a minority group in Australia, about two percent of the total Australian population. The tolerant attitude shown by the Australian Muslim community can be found at the Islamic College of Melbourne. The teaching of tolerance in the Islamic College of Melbourne Australia is one of the important aspects in shaping the character and identity of Muslim students in a multicultural society. Given the diversity of cultures and religions in Australia, the Islamic College of Melbourne actively integrates the values of tolerance in the curriculum and daily life at school.

The Islamic College of Melbourne recognizes the importance of preparing students to live harmoniously in a religious society. Therefore, Islamic teachings on tolerance-such as the principles of respecting differences, peaceful coexistence, and establishing good relations with fellow human beings-are emphasized in the education process. This is not just limited to theory, but also applied in practice through various programs and activities.[42]

> "In the curriculum, the Islamic College of Melbourne teaches the teachings of peace through religious lessons that touch on basic concepts such as *tasamuh* (tolerance), *ta'aruf* (getting to know each other), and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood). Students are taught that Islam encourages its adherents to respect the beliefs and practices of other religions, as affirmed in the Quran and hadith. This is often integrated with other subjects such as history and social studies, where students are invited to understand the contribution of different civilizations and religions to the development of humanity."[43]

Apart from the formal curriculum, the teaching of tolerance is also reinforced through extracurricular activities and school programs. The Islamic College of Melbourne organizes interfaith dialogue events, where students have the opportunity to discuss and interact with students from different religious backgrounds.[44] Programs like this not only help build a

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[42] H Rane, "Introduction to the Special Issue 'Islamic and Muslim Studies in Australia,'" *Religions* (mdpi.com, 2021).

[43] Mayani Siwangi, *Interview* (Sydney-Australia, 12 Juli 2024)

[44] M N Musharraf, J Bhutto, and H Bux, "ENGLISH:'ISLAMIC STUDIES'IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES–AN ANALYSIS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF LOCAL TRAINING OF IMAMS," … *Islamic Academic Research Journal*, 2019.

deeper understanding of other religions, but also encourage students to respect and appreciate differences.

The Islamic College of Melbourne's relationship with the local community is also a means of practicing tolerance. Many schools actively participate in community activities, such as charity events, environmental projects and cultural festivals, involving a wide range of people. Through this participation, students are taught to be active and responsible citizens, who value the contribution of every member of the community.

Amidst challenges such as rising Islamophobia and negative stereotypes towards Muslims, the Islamic College of Melbourne strives to teach tolerance as a response to misperceptions and misunderstandings that may exist in the community.[45] By emphasizing that Islam is a religion that promotes peace and coexistence, these schools seek to combat prejudice and build bridges of understanding between the Muslim community and the wider society.

The teachings of tolerance within the Islamic College of Melbourne are also applied at the teaching level of teachers and school staff. Professional training for teachers often includes modules on how to teach the values of tolerance and inclusiveness in classes that may consist of students with various cultural and religious backgrounds.[46] These teachers are also encouraged to be role models in terms of respecting differences and promoting open dialog in the classroom.

However, despite these efforts, the Islamic College of Melbourne also faces challenges in implementing the teachings of tolerance, especially when it comes to dealing with external narratives that sometimes demonize the Muslim community.[47] Therefore, these schools continue to adapt and find new ways to ensure that the values of tolerance are not only taught but also lived and practiced by the entire school community.

Overall, the teaching of tolerance at the Islamic College of Melbourne is a vital component that helps Muslim students develop into individuals who value diversity and contribute positively in a multicultural society. By instilling these values early on, the Islamic College of Melbourne seeks to shape a generation that is not only strong in faith, but also open, inclusive and ready to live harmoniously in an increasingly connected and diverse world.

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[45] H Gunawan and E S Jaya, "Multicultural Education In The Perspective of National And Islamic Education," … *Pendidikan Islam*, 2023.

[46] Gunawan and Jaya.

[47] M A Bakar, K A Umroh, and F Hameed, "Improving Quality Islamic Education for Today's Generation," *At-Tadzkir: Islamic Education …*, 2023.

Construction of *Tasamuh* in the Curriculum at the Islamic College of Melbourne

The concept of *tasamuh*, which is integrated into the Islamic College of Melbourne Australia's educational institutions in its curriculum, is not only felt by students and other school environments, but has an impact on social life. In Melbourne and Sydney, which have a large Muslim population, the integration of *tasamuh* has been carried out to accommodate the special needs of Muslim students. For example, the provision of halal food in the school canteen, a designated space for prayer, and a more flexible uniform policy to respect students' religious beliefs. However, for other areas where the Muslim population is smaller, measures are implemented to protect minorities and human rights.

Commonly, the curriculum in Australian public schools is based on the principle of secularism. Although lessons on religion are taught, the main focus is on comparative religious studies in general without giving special emphasis on Islamic values.[48] As a result, many Muslim students feel that their religious identity is not sufficiently recognized or valued in this educational environment. This feeling can exacerbate Muslim students' sense of alienation and lack of involvement in school activities, especially when they feel that their religious practices are not well facilitated.[49]

Therefore, the principle of *tasamuh* is not only in curriculum integration in schools, but also in the social order, this process is called "construction". Where the curriculum applied at school, is able to be developed in the area of social order. The Islamic College of Melbourne not only provides academic education in accordance with national standards but also emphasizes the in-depth teaching of Islamic values. They serve as community centers that help strengthen students' religious identity while still preparing them to actively participate in society.

The curriculum implemented at the Islamic College of Melbourne is designed to balance religious and general education, with the aim of forming students who are not only knowledgeable but also have noble morals in accordance with Islamic teachings. However, this research also found that Islamic schools face many challenges, especially in terms of ensuring that they remain academically competitive and comply with strict government regulations.

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[48] H Hifza et al., "The Multicultural Islamic Education Development Strategy on Educational Institutions," *Jurnal Iqra' …*, 2020.

[49] N Selim, "Arabic Teaching at Australian Islamic Schools: Working with Student Diversity and Curriculum Challenges," *Supporting Modern Teaching in Islamic Schools*, 2022, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003193432-18.

The non-Muslim community's perception of Islamic schools in general, and the Islamic College of Melbourne in particular, is changed through the inculcation of *tasamuh* to students and its implementation in real life in the community. While there are concerns that Islamic educational institutions may encourage social isolation or promote exclusionary views, there are also concerns that Islamic schools may not be able to provide the best education for their students.[50] Collaboratively, the Islamic College of Melbourne strives to establish good relationships with the wider community. The Islamic College of Melbourne has even developed an interfaith program that aims to enhance interfaith understanding and tolerance, in an effort to build bridges between Muslim students and the non-Muslim community. This shows that Islamic schools are not only focused on religious education but are also committed to promoting inclusion and social cohesion.

The construction undertaken by the Islamic College of Melbourne also applies to the digital world. On the one hand, digitalization has opened up new opportunities for wider access to Islamic education resources, such as through Quran learning apps and online classes.[51] However, on the other hand, there are challenges that arise, especially in relation to the digital divide. Not all Muslim students at the Islamic College of Melbourne have adequate access to technology, especially in underprivileged communities, which can exacerbate inequalities in education. This highlights the importance of constructs to bridge the digital divide so that all students, including Muslim students, can benefit equally from technological advancements.

Policy support from the Australian government is generally positive towards religious diversity in education, but the implementation of these policies often depends on local initiatives and individual school awareness.[52] While there are policies that promote inclusion, such as anti-discrimination programs and multicultural education, implementation is variable and often depends on the understanding and commitment of educators on the ground.[53] This emphasizes the need for more extensive training for teachers and school staff in dealing with religious diversity, as well as the provision of more adequate resources to support the teaching of Islamic values in a predominantly secular educational environment.

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[50] S Suyatno et al., "Progressive Islamic Education: Bridging the Gap of Islam, Indonesianness, and Modernity," *The Qualitative …* (academia.edu, 2022).

[51] P A Sulistyaningrum et al., "Multicultural Harmony in Islamic Education: Uncovering The Essence of Implementation in Education," *PILAR*, 2023.

[52] M Munadi, "Preparation of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Secular Countries: A Study in Austria.," *Dinamika Ilmu*, 2020.

[53] M Alam, "A Collaborative Action in the Implementation of Moderate Islamic Education to Counter Radicalism," *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and …* (ijicc.net, 2020).

Thus, the construction of *tasamuh* in Islamic education in Australia is a process full of challenges but also rich with opportunities. Challenges include differences in social acceptance, limitations in the secular curriculum, and the impact of the digital divide. However, opportunities also exist in the form of community support, the development of Islamic schools, and initiatives to strengthen social cohesion through inclusive education. The findings provide a comprehensive view of how Islamic values can be integrated into education in Australia and provide valuable recommendations for policymakers, educators and communities to improve the effectiveness and inclusiveness of education that reflects Australia's religious and cultural diversity.

Conclusion

From the research and discussion above, three important things can be concluded as contributive and novelty findings. First, Islamic education in Australia is experiencing rapid development, due to the internalization of *tasamuh* in social life. Second, the integration of the concept of *tasamuh* into Islamic education at the Islamic College of Melbourne Australia is in the form of the inclusion of the values of *tasamuh* (tolerance), *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and ta'aruf (knowing each other). This Islamic value is internalized into the curriculum in the aspects of learning, goals and outputs. Third, the construction of the concept of tasamuh is applied at the Islamic College of Melbourne Australia in specific aspects, namely internal school, school environment and social through extracurricular activities, social care and national events. Construction is needed to maintain religious and state social relations.

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