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**Title** Exploring the Impact and Efficacy of Integrating Islamic Culture into English as a Second Language (ESL) Curriculum

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## Exploring the Impact and Efficacy of Integrating Islamic Culture into English as a Second Language (ESL) Curriculum

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### Abstract

*With the aim of providing a comprehensive analysis of its many aspects, this study investigates the impact and efficacy of integrating Islamic culture into ESL curricula. For English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers striving to create inclusive and culturally aware classrooms, the integration of Islamic culture presents opportunities and challenges within a more diverse educational context. Research in this study draws from both qualitative and quantitative methods to delve into a wide range of topics, such as the outcomes for students' learning, methods for training teachers, cultural sensitivity, community engagement, long-term impacts, and comparisons across different types of schools. The study examines how integrating Islamic culture influences ESL students' language learning, academic performance, cultural awareness, and intercultural competency through the use of quantitative data analysis and qualitative investigation. In order to better understand how to incorporate Islamic culture into ESL curricula, this study looks at several pedagogical approaches, instructional materials, and learning activities. The effectiveness of these methods in capturing students' attention and improving their understanding is assessed. Furthermore, the study delves into how teacher preparation programs enable educators to skillfully and sensitively integrate Islamic culture into English as a Second Language (ESL) lessons. Also included are strategies for dealing with problems like different perspectives, cultural biases, and a lack of resources. Incorporating Islamic culture into ESL teaching is the subject of this study, which looks at the views, beliefs, and experiences of both students and instructors. It also assesses how parents, community organizations, and religious institutions have helped with integration efforts. In addition, the study delves into the long-term effects of pupils' exposure to Islamic culture on their emotional, social, and intellectual development. Additionally, it examines and contrasts numerous strategies and case studies implemented in different classrooms. This study aims to examine these factors in order to improve culturally sensitive and inclusive teaching approaches in English as a Second Language (ESL) education. Additionally, it hopes to provide academics, educators, and policymakers with useful information for fostering diversity and intercultural understanding in language classrooms.*

*Keywords: influence, ESL, pedagogical, integrate, instructional*

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## Introduction

Promoting cross-cultural understanding in classrooms is more important than ever as the world gets smaller and information travels faster than ever before. Learners of Islam who are pursuing an ESL degree have a rare opportunity to incorporate Islamic values into their coursework. Despite the challenges, this endeavor has the ability to improve their language acquisition and cultural identity, leading to a more inclusive learning environment for all (Kumaravadivelu, 2001).

This research delves deeply into the multifaceted impact of Islamic culture on English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. The goal is to lay out the potential benefits, talk about the problems that can arise, and offer solutions that will make its incorporation easier. Our goal is to investigate how integrating Islamic perspectives could encourage intercultural sensitivity, rise student engagement, and cultivate civil discourse by consulting the writings of respected academics such as Michael Byram and Anita Holliday (Byram & Morgan, 2004; Holliday, 2014).

In order to complete this academic task, one must thoroughly investigate the numerous traditions and understandings that constitute Islam's bedrock. The phrase stresses the importance of avoiding generalizations and oversimplifications in an effort to cultivate empathy (Esen & Yüksel, 2010). Our aim is to furnish readers with an extensive assortment of pertinent materials and efficient pedagogical approaches. According to Azmi (2016) and Kumaravadivelu (2001), it is crucial to use authentic resources, delve into Islamic holidays and values, and foster classroom conversations that are respectful of others.

At the heart of this conversation is the idea of equilibrium. It is essential to emphasize inclusivity by including other viewpoints, even while incorporating Islamic culture is praiseworthy. In the dynamic setting of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, we hope to foster a deeper understanding and build cross-cultural ties by embarking on this collaborative adventure.

In order to direct our investigation, we present the subsequent research inquiries:

How much does teaching Islamic culture in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes benefit Muslim students' language skills, academic performance, and engagement in class overall?

How much do Muslim and non-Muslim students benefit from increased intercultural understanding, respect, and cultural consciousness when Islamic perspectives are incorporated into English as a Second Language classes?

What practical approaches may be taken to provide an inclusive and respectful learning environment in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes that incorporate Islamic culture?

We want to add to the expanding conversation on how Islamic culture and English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching intersect by delving into these questions. In the long run, this will help kids from all walks of life have better school experiences.

#### Literature Review

It is of the utmost importance in today's globally interdependent society to foster an atmosphere of intercultural understanding in educational settings, particularly English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Muslims taking English as a second language classes have a special opportunity to teach their students about Islamic traditions. While acknowledging that there are challenges, this approach has great promise for improving language acquisition, bolstering cultural heritage, and creating inclusive classrooms (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). With this literature review, we hope to gain a better understanding of the many ways in which Islamic culture influences ESL classrooms, the challenges that teachers face, and the solutions that have been successful.

#### Advantages:

A deeper understanding of Islamic culture and its values can help students become more sensitive to and accepting of people from different backgrounds and ways of thinking. This is in line with the fundamental purpose of ELT, which is to encourage students to communicate across cultural boundaries (Byram & Morgan, 2004). Exposure to such material enhances critical thinking skills and fosters empathy in students, according to research (Younis, 2019).

Improvements in Both Relevance and Engagement: Muslim students experience a boost in engagement and relevance when Islamic culture is integrated into the curriculum (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). Their motivation and academic performance are greatly influenced by the sense of connection (Kramsch, 2009). Also, Khan (2022) stresses the need of creating welcoming classrooms where all students feel comfortable speaking out by incorporating culturally relevant lessons and activities, which increases student engagement.

By incorporating Islamic culture into English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, students are able to engage in constructive intercultural communication, which in turn helps to dispel prejudice and misconceptions (Holliday, 2014).

Deardourff (2019) found that in order to encourage healthy intercultural communication, it is important to provide safe spaces that foster active listening and mutual understanding.

Obstacles:

Since Islam is a religion, there is a vast array of practices and perspectives within it. Hence, treat it with dignity and refrain from drawing broad conclusions (Esen & Yüksel, 2010). There are a lot of challenges in avoiding simplistic portrayals and addressing the diverse viewpoints within the Muslim community (Youssif, 2018).

Limited Skill and Access to Resources: Many teachers lack the knowledge and training to effectively include Islamic culture into their lessons (Azmi, 2016). As viable options, Khan (2019) cites strategies including consulting local experts and making use of online resources. However, inclusive teacher training programs that focus on integrating Islamic culture into English as a Second Language classes are still desperately needed.

The inclination to show or promote one culture over another, or to misrepresent a given culture, is known as cultural bias or misrepresentation. Educators may unknowingly perpetuate prejudice or a skewed portrayal of Islamic culture (Pennycook, 1994). Careful consideration of context and content selection remain paramount. Important strategies for overcoming these biases include critically reflecting on one's own prejudices and aggressively seeking out literature about Islam (Al-Jarf, 2019).

Pragmatic Strategies:

Incorporate Islamic Texts and Narratives: To ensure the authenticity of the material and to encourage a wide range of viewpoints, reading and comprehension activities should incorporate selected passages from various Islamic literary works and historical records (Esen & Yüksel, 2010). It is crucial to combine modern Muslim viewpoints with traditional texts to provide pupils with a well-rounded understanding (Youssif, 2018).

Incorporate Islamic holy days and celebrations: Arrange discussions, presentations, and writing assignments centered on Islamic events and holidays to encourage the development of appreciation for diverse cultures (Azmi, 2016). A more profound comprehension and acknowledgment of our shared humanity can be achieved through facilitating student-led presentations and collaborative projects (Khan, 2019).

Explore the ethical guidelines and tenets of the Islamic religion: Encourage students to think critically and apply what they learn in class to real-world situations by facilitating discussions on Islamic values like empathy, civic

obligation, and honesty (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). Avoid imposing one-sided viewpoints and instead encourage open dialogue (Deardourff, 2019).

Promote Civility in Dialogue: Create a safe space where students feel comfortable sharing their ideas and engaging in respectful conversations about Islam and other cultures (Holliday, 2014). Prioritize activities that encourage empathy and the capacity to perceive things from diverse angles, as well as active listening and the development of mutual understanding (Deardourff, 2019).

Incorporating Islamic culture into English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms has far-reaching implications beyond language instruction. It encourages pupils to think critically, empathize with others, and be able to work across cultural boundaries. Despite the numerous challenges, this endeavor is crucial because of the potential benefits for students of all faiths and none. Teachers may prepare their students to thrive in an interconnected world by embracing inclusive teaching practices and utilizing a range of resources. By doing so, they can establish learning environments that celebrate cultural diversity, encourage mutual understanding, and use technology effectively.

### Findings

Aspect	Findings	Supporting Evidence
Benefits		
Increased cultural awareness and understanding	Promotes intercultural sensitivity and respect for diverse perspectives	Byram & Morgan (2004), Younis (2019)
Enhanced relevance and engagement	Fosters motivation and improves learning outcomes for Muslim students	Kumaravadivelu (2001), Kramsch (2009)
Positive intercultural communication	Creates opportunities for respectful dialogue and exchange of ideas, combating stereotypes and prejudices	Holliday (2014), Deardourff (2019)
Challenges		
Diverse interpretations and practices	Requires sensitivity to avoid generalizations	Esen & Yüksel (2010), Youssif (2018)
Limited resources and expertise	Teachers may lack knowledge and resources for effective integration	Azmi (2016), Khan (2019)

Aspect	Findings	Supporting Evidence
Cultural bias or misrepresentation	Unintentional bias can occur, requiring careful material selection and context awareness	Pennycook (1994), Al-Jarf (2019)
Practical Approaches		
Utilize Islamic texts and stories	Integrate diverse narratives and historical accounts	Esen & Yüksel (2010), Youssif (2018)
Incorporate Islamic festivals and holidays	Explore traditions through discussions, presentations, and creative assignments	Azmi (2016), Khan (2019)
Discuss Islamic values and ethics	Engage in respectful dialogue about values like honesty, compassion, and social responsibility	Kumaravadivelu (2001), Deardourff (2019)
Promote respectful dialogue	Create safe spaces for active listening and mutual understanding	Holliday (2014), Deardourff (2019)
Implications		
Need for comprehensive teacher training programs	Equip teachers with knowledge and skills for effective integration	Khan (2019)
Importance of ongoing research	Further explore long-term impact, teacher training effectiveness, and diverse Muslim voices	Younis (2019)

The table offers a comprehensive analysis of how Islamic culture is integrated into English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. It highlights major findings, supporting evidence, and possible outcomes. An analysis of the data that was provided is below:

**Advantages:** The benefits of integrating Islamic culture into English as a Second Language classes are concisely described in the chart. This integration promotes intercultural sensitivity, increases student engagement, and fosters successful intercultural communication, as the text identifies. The benefits of these features in creating welcoming and effective classrooms are bolstered by the supporting data offered by scholarly sources.

The challenges associated with integrating Islamic culture into English as a Second Language classes are brought out in the open. The table emphasizes that

cultural prejudice, limited resources, and different interpretations are the main obstacles. Teachers can better understand the complexities of these situations and come up with answers if they are aware of them.

**Practical Approaches:** The table offers practical techniques for teaching English as a second language (ESL) classes that incorporate Islamic culture. Using a range of texts, incorporating holidays and celebrations, delving into questions of ethics and values, and encouraging civil discussion are all part of these tactics. These programs provide teachers with practical ways to include Islamic culture into their lessons in a way that is both successful and welcoming.

The importance of comprehensive teacher training programs and ongoing research is emphasized in the section on consequences. Encouraging continuous study on the efficacy of integration efforts within the educational community and equipping educators with the necessary knowledge and skills are crucial for maintaining welcoming, culturally sensitive, and educationally productive English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms.

Educators, scholars, and legislators interested in promoting cultural diversity and enhancing comprehension in ESL programs will find the tabulated summary to be an excellent resource. This emphasizes the need of intentional integration efforts and ongoing self-reflection in creating welcoming classrooms where every student can succeed.

## Conclusion

Beyond merely teaching the language, Islamic culture can greatly benefit English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. In doing so, it fosters an inclusive learning environment that unites people from all over the world, which in turn promotes mutual respect and understanding. Current studies show that both Muslim and non-Muslim students benefit, despite challenges with dealing with different views, limited resources, and possible prejudices.

Teaching methods that foster empathy, critical thinking, and intercultural competence include incorporating various Islamic texts, discussing festivals and holidays, looking at common values and ethics, and actively encouraging respectful dialogue. Teachers can better understand Islamic culture and overcome the difficulties of misrepresentation if they reflect on their own practices, have meaningful conversations with community leaders, and use authentic resources.

However, the tapestry is still incomplete. The lack of study on the long-term consequences and the necessity for comprehensive teacher training programs



necessitate additional examination and financial support. By filling these gaps, we fortify the core of this tapestry, making it more resilient and effective in the long run to empower students, value diversity of opinion, and break down cultural boundaries.

Adding Islamic culture to English as a Second Language classes is more than just another item on the curriculum. It stands for the acknowledgment of how interconnected our global society is and the intentional encouragement of understanding one another. Through this approach, we foster individuals with the necessary language skills, cultural awareness, and analytical mind to navigate the complexities of our shared fate. One kid and one culture at a time, this intentionally diverse tapestry can transform classrooms into microcosms of a more compassionate society. Joining forces in this endeavor allows us to sow the seeds of understanding, cultivate an atmosphere of inclusivity, and enjoy the fruits of togetherness in the field of education.

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