

Exploring Home Schooling Practices Among Muslim Families Abroad: Skills, Impacts, Daily Routines, and Growth Activities

استكشاف التعليم المنزلي لدى العائلات المسلمة المقيمة في الخارج: المهارات، والأثر، وساعات العمل اليومية، والأنشطة اللامنهجية من أجل النمو

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الملخص:

تستكشف هذه الدراسة ترايد الإقبال على التعليم المنزلي بين الأسر المسلمة المقيمة في الخارج، وتبحث في تأثيره على النمو الشامل للأطفال. ومن خلال استخدام التحليل النوعي الموضوعي لوجهات نظر الآباء، يحدد البحث المهارات الجوهرية اللازمة للتعامل مع متطلبات المجتمع المعاصر، بما في ذلك التربية الإسلامية، والتفكير النقدي، والتحكم في الانفعالات، والتعلم الذاتي. وقد شدد الآباء على أهمية التربية الإسلامية باعتبارها ركيزة أساسية تعزز الهوية الأخلاقية، وتدعم التحصيل الدراسي، وتنمي المرونة الروحية. وتشير النتائج إلى أن التعلم المنزلي يسهم إيجابياً في رفاه الأطفال؛ إذ أفاد العديد من القائمين على رعايتهم بزيادة مستوى الاستقلالية، وانخفاض القلق، وترسيخ الارتباط بالقيم الدينية. وتتيح مرونة التعليم المنزلي مسارات تعلم مخصصة تحفز الفضول والتفكير التأملي والقدرة على حل المشكلات بأسلوب مرن ومتكيف. كما تتناول الدراسة كيفية توزيع الوقت اليومي، كاشفة عن أساليب متنوعة تتراوح بين الجداول الزمنية المنظمة والروتين المرن الذي يتشكل وفقاً لاحتياجات الأسرة وأنماط التعلم لدى الأطفال. وبرزت الأنشطة اللامنهجية كعنصر هام يدعم النمو البدني والتفاعل الاجتماعي والتطور العاطفي. وبشكل عام، يقدم هذا البحث رؤى حول البيئة التعليمية المتميزة لدى الأسر المسلمة التي تعتمد التعليم المنزلي في الخارج، ويبرز هذا النمط التعليمي كبديل فعال يدعم تكوين أفراد متوازنين وقادرين على مواجهة تحديات العصر مع الحفاظ على تماسكهم بعقيدتهم. كما تؤكد الدراسة على الحاجة إلى إجراء المزيد من الأبحاث حول المخرجات الأكاديمية والآثار التنموية طويلة المدى.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعليم المنزلي، الأسر المسلمة، التربية الإسلامية، التعلم الذاتي، الأنشطة اللاصفية.

Abstract:

This study explores the growing adoption of home schooling among Muslim families living abroad and examines its influence on children's holistic development. Using qualitative thematic analysis of parental perspectives, the research identifies essential skills considered necessary for navigating contemporary society, including Islamic education, critical thinking, emotional regulation, and self directed learning. Parents emphasized Islamic education as a central component that strengthens moral identity, supports academic achievement, and nurtures spiritual resilience. The findings indicate that home schooling contributes positively to children's well being, with many caregivers reporting increased independence, reduced anxiety, and stronger alignment with religious values. The flexibility of home schooling enables personalized learning pathways that encourage curiosity, reflective thinking, and adaptive problem solving. The study also examines daily time allocation, revealing diverse approaches ranging from structured schedules to fluid routines shaped by family needs and children's learning styles. Extracurricular activities emerged as an important element supporting physical development, social interaction, and emotional growth. Overall, this research offers insight into the distinctive educational environment within Muslim home schooling families abroad and highlights home schooling as a viable alternative that supports the formation of well rounded individuals capable of meeting modern challenges while remaining grounded in their faith. The study also underscores the need for further research on academic outcomes and long term developmental impacts.

Keywords: Home schooling, Muslim families, Islamic education, self-directed learning, extracurricular activities.

Introduction

The educational system has notably changed in recent years, particularly within the Muslim demographic, where home-schooling has come forth as a respected and appealing alternative to the long-standing traditional schools. This research seeks to delve into the intricate and multifaceted aspects of home-schooling as adopted by Muslim families living abroad, placing particular emphasis on the various perceived advantages and broader implications that this educational model may have on the holistic development and growth of children within this demographic. Central to this inquiry is the identification of 'crucial skills' deemed essential for navigating the complexities of contemporary society.

Through qualitative thematic analysis of parental insights, this study seeks to illuminate the pivotal role of Islamic education, self-directed learning, and the nurturing of soft skills in fostering independent learners. The findings derived from the research suggest that a considerable number of parents hold the belief that Islamic education serves as a fundamental pillar upon which their children's overall learning experience is constructed, thereby emphasizing its importance not only in facilitating academic success but also in fostering both emotional resilience and spiritual development throughout the formative years.

Moreover, the findings shed light on the substantial effect that home-schooling has on the well-being of children, where parents have observed notable benefits like improved independence, reduced stress-related problems, and a strengthened bond with their religious beliefs and activities. The flexibility inherent in home-schooling allows for personalized learning experiences that cater to individual needs, promoting curiosity, critical thinking, and resilience. Additionally, the investigation scrupulously investigates the specific daily time invested in home-schooling, while also analyzing the considerable role that participation in extracurricular pursuits might play in enhancing and elevating the comprehensive educational experience of learners engaged in this different educational pathway.

By engaging in a variety of pursuits, children develop essential life skills while embracing their cultural heritage. This extensive and well-organized inquiry boosts and deepens the knowledge base pertaining to the unique and complex educational setting that characterizes Muslim families living abroad, thereby supporting a comprehensive and integrative perspective that prioritizes emotional well-being and stability, while also stressing the necessity of spiritual enhancement and community involvement. As families increasingly consider home-schooling, recognizing its potential to empower children and foster well-rounded individuals becomes imperative in shaping the future of education within this demographic.

Literature Review

Homeschooling has emerged as a prominent educational alternative globally, with Muslim families -particularly those living abroad-embracing it at an increasingly notable rate. This section surveys key studies on Muslim homeschooling practices, focusing on the skills parents prioritize for their children to navigate contemporary challenges. It further investigates the perceived impact of homeschooling on the comprehensive development of children, the daily time investment it requires, and the significance of extracurricular activities in augmenting their educational experience.

Leveraging a wide-ranging corpus of scholarly literature, this review amalgamates perspectives with the objective of emphasizing prevalent themes and identifying areas of deficiency. In doing so, it positions Muslim homeschooling not just as an educational choice, but as a purposeful, values-driven model that blends academic growth with spiritual and personal development.

Crucial Skills for Navigating the Modern World: Perceptions of Muslim Homeschooling Parents:

Muslim parents living abroad who homeschool consistently emphasize the importance of equipping their children with a well-rounded skill set-academically rigorous yet deeply rooted in Islamic values. Core competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, and moral integrity are viewed as essential tools for thriving in an increasingly complex global environment (Martinez, n.d.; Guterman et al., 2024). Homeschooling allows parents to personalize instruction and emphasize areas they find lacking in mainstream schools-particularly religious education and character formation (English, 2016).

This educational approach is shaped by a desire to align learning with both individual learning styles and family values. Families in countries such as the United States and Australia often cite dissatisfaction with rigid school structures, which drives their shift toward homeschooling as a more values-aligned and academically enriching alternative (Mitra, 2013; Martinez, n.d.; English, 2016).

Emotional and social competencies also rank high in parental priorities. Skills like empathy, self-discipline, and resilience are cultivated through strong family bonds and active community engagement—hallmarks of many homeschooling environments (Guterman & Rodriguez, 2024; Guterman & Neuman, 2017). These relational dynamics help children develop a sense of identity and social awareness grounded in Islamic ethics.

For many Muslim families, Islamic education forms the backbone of homeschooling. The integration of Qur'anic study, Hadith, and moral teachings ensures children develop a spiritual foundation that informs their worldview and ethical decision-making (Nafi'a & Gumindari, 2021; Hairus, 2020). Parents design

curricula that nurture both intellectual growth and religious consciousness, a dual emphasis rarely possible in conventional settings.

Academic and life skills are also central. Customized instruction enables students to pursue their interests deeply, enhancing cognitive, creative, and practical abilities (Rahmani & Sabda, 2024; Yulianingsih et al., 2023). The enhancement of abilities in time management, critical thinking, and solving challenges unfolds naturally through practical experiences and initiative-taking inquiry.

Finally, many Muslim homeschooling families adopt interdisciplinary approaches, blending secular and religious content. For instance, Islamic history may be taught alongside writing and language arts, allowing learners to develop analytical and literacy skills within a spiritually relevant context (Rahmani & Sabda, 2024). This integrated framework fosters deeper, contextual understanding—preparing learners to navigate both faith-based and secular spheres with confidence.

The Impact of Homeschooling on Children's Overall Development:

Extensive research indicates that homeschooled children frequently perform at par with—or even surpass—their peers in traditional schools in terms of academic achievement. Studies from the United States and the United Kingdom report higher standardized test scores and enhanced academic outcomes among homeschooled students, largely due to the individualized nature of instruction, which allows parents to tailor teaching to their children's learning styles (Pazhwak, 2022; Rothermel, 2002; Holt, 1984).

One example is the “living book homeschooling model” implemented in Indonesia, where students showed marked improvement in literacy and numeracy. This approach—emphasizing conceptual understanding through real-world contexts—has proven effective in promoting academic engagement (Dewantara et al., 2023).

Contrary to assumptions about social isolation, multiple studies highlight the robust social and emotional competencies of homeschooled children. Research in the U.S. and the U.K. found that homeschooled youth demonstrated higher levels of creative thinking, confidence, and social integration compared to their traditionally schooled peers (Madar & BenDavid-Hadar, 2021; Carvalho & Skipper, 2019). Homeschooling environments often foster emotional intelligence, empathy, and self-regulation through strong family bonds and purposeful community involvement (Guterman & Rodriguez, 2024).

The advantages associated with psychological well-being have also been substantiated. In Afghanistan, homeschooled children reported a greater sense of control and responsibility over their education, contributing to higher motivation and achievement

(Pazhwak, 2022). The flexibility of homeschooling allows learners to take breaks, manage their time, and avoid burnout—factors that support mental well-being.

For Muslim families, homeschooling often serves as a means of safeguarding children from influences they perceive as misaligned with Islamic values—such as peer pressure, secular ideologies, and inappropriate behaviours (Farhat, 2024). This protective aspect creates a nurturing, values-centred learning space where religious identity is affirmed.

Engagement of parents constitutes an additional significant advantage. Studies suggest that active parental engagement enhances academic outcomes and strengthens the parent-child bond (Rahayu & Wulandari, 2022). Children can progress at their own pace, which is particularly advantageous for those with learning differences or special educational needs (Farhat, 2024).

Nevertheless, criticisms persist—primarily regarding limited peer socialization. Some researchers caution that without structured group interaction, homeschooled children may miss opportunities to develop communication, conflict resolution, and collaboration skills (Bahri et al., 2023; Madar & BenDavid-Hadar, 2021). These concerns emphasize the importance of extracurricular activities and community programs as complementary outlets for social development.

Homeschooling Schedules and Daily Time Allocation:

Homeschooling's hallmark is its scheduling flexibility, which Muslim parents abroad leverage to align learning with family rhythms, cultural practices, and religious obligations (Martinez, n.d.; English, 2016). Rather than adhering to a rigid school timetable, they craft personalized routines—some block out dedicated hours for each subject, while others integrate lessons organically into everyday life.

Research distinguishes two main scheduling models. Families motivated by academic goals often adopt structured days, assigning specific time slots to math, language, and science. In contrast, those driven by familial or faith priorities prefer a fluid timetable, weaving instruction into routines like meal preparation, community events, or prayer times (Guterman & Neuman, 2017).

Empirical data suggest most homeschooling parents report 4–6 hours of formal instruction daily, though this varies by child age and curriculum choice. Younger learners typically focus on foundational skills—reading, writing, arithmetic—for shorter periods, while older children may engage in deeper, multi-hour study of advanced subjects such as literature and history (Yulianingsih et al., 2023; Rahayu & Wulandari, 2022).

Beyond formal lessons, informal learning—household chores, cooking, and community service—plays a vital role. These activities develop practical competencies (time

management, teamwork, compassion) and reinforce Islamic values through lived experience (Hairus, 2020).

In Afghanistan, homeschooled children demonstrated superior time-management skills compared to their traditionally schooled peers, attributing their proficiency to self-paced schedules and fewer classroom distractions (Pazhwak, 2022). Such findings underscore how varied scheduling approaches not only respect families' cultural and religious contexts but also nurture essential life skills.

Importance of Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular involvement is vital to the holistic development of homeschooled children, offering avenues for physical health, social skills, and emotional growth (Guterman & Neuman, 2017; Carvalho & Skipper, 2019). Muslim parents abroad curate diverse activity portfolios—sports leagues to build teamwork and fitness; community service projects to foster empathy and civic responsibility; and cultural events that celebrate Islamic heritage (Yulianingsih et al., 2023; Fairuza et al., 2023).

Mosque-based initiatives—Quran recitation competitions, youth volunteer groups, and faith circles—deepen religious knowledge while reinforcing communal bonds (Nafi'a & Gumindari, 2021; Wajdi et al., 2020). Simultaneously, secular options like scouting, local sports teams, and arts classes expose children to peers from varied backgrounds, promoting intercultural understanding and broadening social networks (Bahri et al., 2023; Madar & BenDavid-Hadar, 2021).

These planned and organic activities complement formal lessons by strengthening leadership, resilience, communication, and critical thinking skills. They bridge the home learning environment with community institutions—ensuring children not only master academic subjects but also cultivate the practical and interpersonal competencies essential for navigating today's complex world.

Literature Review: Conclusion

This review has shown that Muslim families living abroad are redefining homeschooling as an integrative, values-driven educational model that simultaneously nurtures academic excellence, spiritual grounding, and essential life skills. Parents emphasize critical thinking, creativity, and moral integrity—skills they believe are under-served in conventional schools—while leveraging flexible schedules and interdisciplinary approaches to tailor learning to each child's needs and their family's religious and cultural commitments. Empirical studies underscore the benefits of this model, from improved academic outcomes and time-management abilities to stronger social-emotional competencies and deeper religious identity.

Notwithstanding these advantages, the existing literature indicates several inadequately examined domains that

necessitate additional investigation. Few works systematically examine how Muslim parents abroad balance structured instruction with fluid daily routines, or how extracurricular engagement both complements formal lessons and bridges children to broader communities. Similarly, extensive longitudinal studies are essential to evaluate how this comprehensive methodology prepares learners to confront the social, occupational, and civic obstacles characteristic of the 21st century.

By illuminating this intersection—where Islamic education, life-skill development, and community participation converge—this review identifies a clear gap and lays the groundwork for future research. Educators, policymakers, and homeschooling networks can draw on these insights to support families in designing curricula and extracurricular programs that foster well-rounded learners: intellectually confident, emotionally resilient, and spiritually anchored.

Objectives

This research focuses on retrieving insights from Muslim homeschooling parents living abroad as to their perception of crucial skills needed in children to navigate current world, impact of home-schooling on the child, daily hours of home-schooling and extracurricular activities liked by homeschoolers.

Methodology

Research Philosophy and Design:

Guided by an interpretivist stance, this study treats homeschooling as a lived, subjective phenomenon that varies across families and cultural contexts. This research adopts a deductive, phenomenological design to evaluate propositions drawn from Islamic educational theory and Ecological Systems Theory, while exploring parents' firsthand experiences. Data were gathered in a single cross-sectional timeframe to capture a "snapshot" of perceptions and practices.

Participants and Sampling:

This research recruited N = 45 Muslim parents who are actively homeschooling at least one child of any age and living outside their country of origin.

- Inclusion criteria: Self-identification as a Muslim homeschooling parent, Minimum one year of homeschooling experience, Children of any age range
- Recruitment strategy: Purposive sampling via WhatsApp homeschooling groups, and direct referrals from local Dawah networks in Jeddah Saudi Arabia, Invitations highlighted the study's purpose, confidentiality assurances, and time commitment (15–20 min)
- Response rate and demographics: 45 completed surveys, Mothers = 97.8 %, Fathers = 0%, Guardians = 2.2%; 86.7% hold a bachelor's degree or higher; average of 2 children per family

Data Collection

An online questionnaire (Google Forms) combined:

1. Closed-ended items for demographics and family structure.
2. Open-ended prompts probing:
 - “Which skills are most important for your children’s success?”
 - “How has homeschooling impacted your child?”
 - “Describe a typical homeschooling day in hours.”
 - “Describe the typical home-schooling extracurricular activities?”

Data Analysis

This research conducted thematic analysis in NVivo 12 software using a three-stage process:

- Open coding—identifying initial meaning units.
- Axial coding—collapsing units into sub-themes (e.g., “critical thinking,” “faith integration”)
- Selective coding -grouping sub-themes into four core themes aligned with our research questions (skills, impact, schedules, extracurriculars)

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained electronically, and the participants had the flexibility to withdraw at any time. All collected data was stored on password-protected drives and identifying details were removed prior to data analysis.

Results

Crucial Skills Needed to Navigate the Current World:

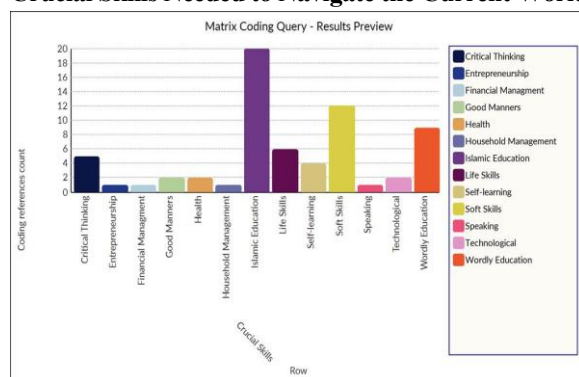


Figure 1: Crucial Skills

Figure 1: illustrates the thematic categories that emerged from parental responses on skills they consider essential for their children’s success in today’s world. These themes include Islamic education, soft skills, academic knowledge, critical thinking, life skills, and self-directed learning. Notably, Islamic education was cited most frequently, underscoring its centrality within the homeschooling paradigm for Muslim families.

Parents expressed strong appreciation for instilling core religious values alongside cognitive and emotional competencies. As one participant noted: “The capacity to partake in autonomous learning is of immense worth. Education is a continuous journey that, regrettably, is often delivered in a manner that resembles spoon-feeding within traditional educational institutions.

Those who can independently gather knowledge... are suitably armed to deal with the intricacies of existence. Alhamdulillah.” (R2)

This perspective reflects the broader sentiment that learners should be equipped not only with foundational religious knowledge but also with the tools to think critically, solve problems, and learn autonomously. These competencies were frequently linked to long-term adaptability and resilience in a rapidly evolving global context.

In conjunction with religious instruction, essential interpersonal competencies—such as empathy, effective communication, and collaborative teamwork—were likewise emphasized. Parents noted that these qualities are integral to personal growth and social participation. Moreover, several responses emphasized the importance of merging practical life skills with academic rigor to create a balanced, real-world-ready learning environment.

Together, these findings support the idea that Muslim homeschooling parents prioritize a holistic skillset that prepares children for both worldly success and spiritual fulfilment. They conceptualize education as not merely an academic challenge but a developmental path that enhances character, belief systems, and the skill of continual learning throughout life.

Home-schooling: Impact on Child:

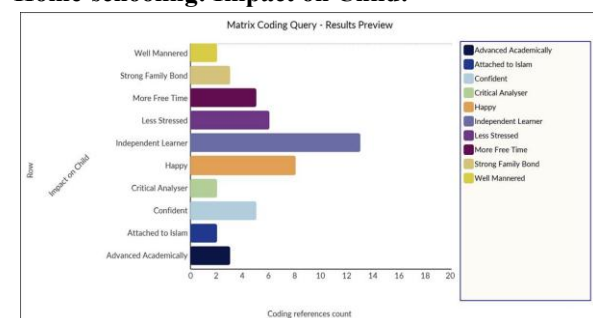


Figure 2: Home-schooling: Impact on Child

Figure 2: summarizes parent-reported outcomes regarding the impact of homeschooling on their children. Responses revealed five consistent areas of development:

- Independent learning: Most parents highlighted that their children had become autonomous learners, motivated by curiosity, and guided by personalized learning rhythms.
- Emotional wellness: Children were characterized as “happy,” “less stressed,” and “more confident,” with numerous families crediting this transformation to the alleviation of institutional peer pressure.
- Academic advancement: Several respondents noted that one-on-one teaching facilitated deeper understanding and faster progression, particularly when children could explore topics at their own pace.
- Spiritual growth: Many families reported stronger religious engagement. Children were described as

more connected to the Qur'an and Islamic values, often initiating their own study of faith-based subjects.

- Social and family relationships: Parents emphasized improved family bonding, maturity, and refined manners, with meaningful interactions replacing competitive school-based environments.

“My child has been free to follow her natural curiosity... She loves learning as she has autonomy over when, how, and what she learns” (R3).

“They are attached towards understanding the Book of Allah. Alhamdulillah” (R13).

“They have calmed down... peer pressure is much less now; they are able to think better for themselves” (R14).

These outcomes align with studies by Gatto (2003), Holt (1984), and Mitra (1999), who have all emphasized the importance of autonomy, emotional security, and intrinsic motivation in effective learning environments. Personalized learning has not only enhanced academic growth but also allowed children to develop a deeper appreciation for their faith and personal values.

While socialization is often framed as a challenge in homeschooling discourse, respondents in this study highlighted improved quality of social interactions-with family, Islamic communities, and select peer groups-rather than sheer quantity.

“In childhood they had much more free time for fun and creativity... I wanted them to have fun and be kids, rather than be tied up in school-going rat-race competition” (R41).

In summary, the reported impact of homeschooling on Muslim children extended beyond academics. It nurtured a more balanced learner - curious, confident, faith-conscious, and emotionally resilient-suggesting that homeschooling offers a uniquely supportive environment for families seeking alignment between education and core values.

Daily Hours of Home-schooling

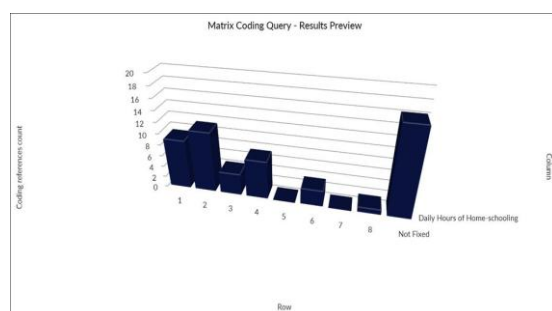


Figure 3: Daily Hours of Home-schooling

Figure 3: presents the reported distribution of daily home-schooling hours among participants. A clear trend emerged: most respondents emphasized that their families do not adhere to rigid or predetermined schedules. Instead, learning is distributed organically

throughout the day, often tailored to family rhythms and children's interests.

Two general patterns were identified

- Short, structured sessions: Many families reported formal instruction ranging from 1 to 2 hours per day. This flexible format aligns well with Islamic routines (e.g., prayer times), and allows space for firsthand, informal, or faith-based learning throughout the rest of the day.
- Extended academic sessions: A smaller subset, particularly families with older children, reported 4 to 6 hours of focused study. This approach was typically used to support deeper engagement with advanced subjects, exam preparation, or project-based learning.

Parents consistently highlighted the value of personalized pacing and adaptable routines. This flexibility enabled them to:

- Accommodate different learning styles,
- Integrate religious teachings with academic material,
- Foster ownership over the child's learning journey.

“We take it at their pace. No rush to learn by a certain day or time... A small question can turn into a science lesson.” (R31)

Learning often extended beyond textbooks. Informal experiences-such as cooking, community activities, or religious study-were viewed as essential complements to structured academics. These organically integrated moments not only promoted deeper subject understanding but also cultivated autonomy, creativity, and critical thinking skills.

Moreover, families noted that flexible scheduling nurtured emotional intelligence and well-being. Children felt safe to express ideas and explore new topics without external pressure or competition—an atmosphere that parents credited with fostering empathy, resilience, and motivation.

In summary, the reported variation in daily home-schooling hours underscores a defining feature of Muslim homeschooling abroad: the ability to align educational delivery with both developmental needs and faith-based values. Whether through short, focused lessons or extended study blocks, this adaptability empowers families to craft enriching, balanced learning environments that are both academically rigorous and spiritually anchored.

Extra-Curricular Activities

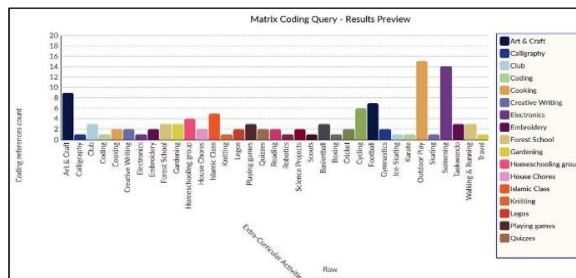


Figure 4: Extra-Curricular Activities

Figure 4: presents the matrix-coded distribution of extra-curricular activities reported by Muslim homeschooling families. Contrary to common misconceptions of isolation, findings indicate rich engagement across physical, creative, and spiritual domains. Outdoor play, swimming, football, cycling, art, and Islamic classes emerged as the most frequently cited activities.

These results reinforce earlier research emphasizing that Muslim families purposefully integrate halal, sunnah-aligned pursuits to support holistic development. Parents described these experiences as extensions of their educational goals—blending faith, physical well-being, and character-building.

Outdoor sports foster teamwork, fitness, and discipline-values underscored in Islamic teachings on health and community service. As one respondent noted, these activities help children develop “a sense of balance between fun, learning, and ibadah.”

Creative arts-such as drawing, performance, and handicrafts-were identified as vital for emotional expression and self-confidence. Parents reported that these pursuits complemented academic studies by nurturing curiosity and helping children communicate more effectively in social settings.

Islamic classes and religious activities were also prominent. Parents valued structured Qur'an study, Hadith discussions, and participation in mosque-led programs, which they saw as key to cultivating ethical awareness and spiritual grounding.

“These activities give them confidence and connect them to their deen... It is not just about textbooks; it is about living what they learn.” (R25)

Socialization was enhanced through team sports, family outings, group projects, and volunteering-contexts in which children learned collaboration, leadership, and empathy. Several families described how these engagements shaped their children's communication skills and sense of community.

Additionally, parents praised the resilience-building aspect of extra-curriculars. Whether through competitive sports or public speaking, children were

seen learning to navigate success, setbacks, and peer feedback with maturity and grace.

In sum, extra-curricular engagement plays a vital role in the home-schooling experience of Muslim families-complementing academic and religious instruction while fostering emotional, social, and ethical growth. This integrative approach reinforces Islamic values and equips children with the confidence, adaptability, and people skills needed to thrive in diverse environments without compromising their spiritual identity.

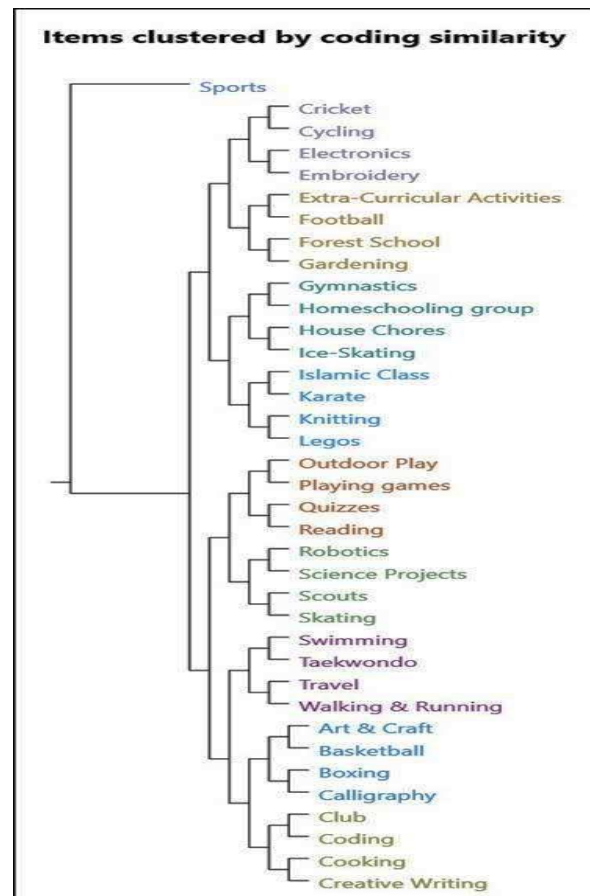


Figure 5: Extra-Curricular Activities (Clustered)

Figure 5: presents a clustered dendrogram displaying the coding similarities of extracurricular activities among children from participating Muslim homeschooling families. The visualization reveals how various activities-such as outdoor play, sports, Islamic studies, and creative arts-often co-occur in family routines, reflecting an integrative approach to physical, emotional, and spiritual development.

Contrary to stereotypes of isolation, the results underscore that children in home-schooling environments engage in a broad spectrum of structured and culturally grounded activities. These combinations reinforce the role of parents as intentional facilitators who align recreational pursuits with ethical, developmental, and religious values.

By clustering related activities, we observed recurring patterns:

- Physical + faith-based pairings (e.g., football and Qur'an class),
- Artistic + social participation (e.g., crafts alongside volunteering),
- Faith-integrated leisure (e.g., storytelling infused with Islamic morals).

These layered engagements create a dynamic and enriching environment where children can explore diverse interests while building character, communication skills, and spiritual awareness.

Additionally, the clustering patterns illustrate how families blend learning with lifestyle. Activities are not viewed as isolated supplements to academics but as essential parts of a child's holistic development. The overlap between physical recreation, creativity, and Islamic education supports the nurturing of self-confidence, empathy, and resilience—traits essential for success in both faith and contemporary society.

This interconnected model of extracurricular engagement suggests that Muslim homeschooling families are crafting intentionally balanced educational experiences—ones that not only meet academic goals but also instil values, purpose, and a sense of belonging.

Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive exploration of the homeschooling landscape among Muslim families living abroad, highlighting the distinct ways in which they prioritize and implement educational practices. Across four key dimensions—crucial skills, perceived impact, daily routines, and extra-curricular involvement—the findings emphasize the role of Islamic values as the foundation upon which holistic learning is built.

Caregivers recognized Islamic education as the paramount component in the growth of their offspring, in conjunction with the development of people skills, analytical reasoning, and autonomous learning. Homeschooling was seen as a means of nurturing independent learners in a stress-reduced, spiritually aligned environment. The flexibility of daily scheduling enabled families to personalize instruction, balance religious commitments, and adapt to each child's unique pace and interests.

The findings also counter common misconceptions about social isolation, revealing that home-schooled children engage actively in a variety of extra-curricular activities—including outdoor sports, creative arts, and faith-based programs. Such opportunities contribute to the enhancement of both physical and emotional health, while simultaneously fostering the cultivation of empathy, collaboration, and resilience. Clustered activity patterns further reflected intentional efforts to align learning with lifestyle, reinforcing a sense of identity, belonging, and moral purpose.

Taken together, these results portray homeschooling as a values-driven, child-centred model that responds meaningfully to both contemporary challenges and spiritual aspirations. As more Muslim families adopt this approach, it becomes increasingly important to recognize its potential—not only for academic excellence, but for cultivating emotionally balanced, socially capable, and faith-conscious individuals.

This study contributes to the growing discourse on homeschooling by highlighting how Muslim families craft integrative, culturally grounded educational ecosystems. It underscores the need for continued research and policy support that acknowledges diversity in educational pathways and encourages environments where all learners—especially those shaped by faith and family—can thrive.

Recommendations

Considering the findings, several focused recommendations can enhance both scholarly understanding and practical support for Muslim homeschooling families:

- Conduct longitudinal studies to examine the long-term academic, emotional, and spiritual outcomes of homeschooled Muslim children. This would validate whether observed short-term benefits translate into enduring success and well-being across adolescence and adulthood.
- Explore the role of local and digital support networks, including homeschooling cooperatives, Islamic centres, and online parent groups. Mapping how community engagement sustains learning and well-being can guide the development of scalable, culturally sensitive support systems.
- Develop context-specific resources and training programs for Muslim homeschooling parents. These could include curriculum toolkits, faith-integrated pedagogical guides, and mentoring initiatives—helping families navigate homeschooling with confidence and clarity.
- Encourage policy dialogues that recognize homeschooling as a legitimate and diverse educational model. Stakeholders in education should consider the needs of minority and faith-based home schoolers when designing curricula, assessment frameworks, or accreditation pathways.

By pursuing these avenues, future research and practice can move beyond generalizations and toward actionable strategies that honour the distinct values, challenges, and aspirations of Muslim homeschooling families worldwide.

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