Muslim homeschooling parents' instructional practices of applying learner-centred teaching in Australia

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This study explores the instructional practices implemented by two Muslim homeschooling mothers living in Australia. These mothers have homeschooled their primary-aged children for at least one year. The research aims to understand Muslim homeschooling parents' pedagogical practices to apply learner-centred teaching (LCT) to cater for students' learning needs. This study employs Weimer's LCT as its theoretical framework. Data generation is based on a case study design with semi-structured interviews. The results reveal that the participants enact contrasting curricula with four learning models, that is, personalised, collaborative, experiential and game-based learning. Both study participants supported children's learning needs through their chosen approaches, although their practices did not reflect all of LCT's principles. It is expected that other homeschooling parents will be able to learn from these participants' homeschooling practices.

Keywords: Homeschooling; learner-centred teaching (LCT); Muslim; instructional practices; Australia

INTRODUCTION

As an educator in Indonesia, my teaching experience was mainly based in formal schools. Teaching homeschooled children in Australia for several months gave me another perspective on how students learn, causing me to reflect on my experiences in formal education. I realised that my formal education teaching was more grade-oriented than supportive of students' learning needs (Razi, 2016) and overshadowed by a curriculum guide (Thomas, 2016a). In other words, these factors meant I often failed to adopt a student-centred approach and rarely catered to students' learning needs. I aimed to improve my teaching practices by learning from other educators in different contexts, including homeschooling. It particularly attracts my interest as it offers flexibility in choosing the curriculum and approaches. By understanding homeschooling practices, I can learn from homeschoolers to design my teaching practices to support students' learning needs better.

This study highlights issues related to general education goals. The purpose of mainstream education tends to be driven by economic interests, with schools as the provider and parents/students as the consumers (Biesta, 2016; Dill & Elliot, 2019). As a result, teachers' instructional practices might only satisfy the market demands (Biesta, 2016). For this purpose, formal teachers are equipped with various teaching methods, but they are often restricted by a fixed curriculum and standardised testing (Thomas, 2016a). Such limitations may lead to grade-oriented teaching by following a curriculum guide (McKeon, 2007; Razi, 2016; Thomas,

2016a). Consequently, a potential risk is that teachers might fail to integrate a learner-centred approach and rarely cater to student's individual learning needs.

Teachers in other educational settings might have more flexibility and willingness to be more learner-centred, such as those in homeschooling scenarios. Homeschooling is a private educational form that is parent-led and home-based (Ray, 2017a, 2017b), where parents are the primary teachers using or not using a predetermined curriculum. In homeschooling settings, teachers, or, commonly, parents, are flexible in selecting curricula and current instructional designs that align with their children's needs (McKeon, 2007; Thomas, 2016a). This means LCT might be well executed in homeschooling. Nevertheless, some questions might arise regarding how homeschooling parents, who probably do not have a teaching background (Gray, 2018), can successfully supervise their children's education.

Several studies have responded to this question regarding homeschooling parents' ability to assist children's learning. Ray (2013, 2017a, 2017b) reports that homeschooled children had similar or better academic scores and social development than their peers in public schools. This review implies that homeschooling parents' practices help to improve children's academic achievement.

In Australia, where homeschooling is an educational option, the state of Victoria has the largest number of homeschooling participants (Slater et al., 2020). According to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA), the number of homeschooling families is increasing. In 2020, 7,296 children in Victoria were registered as homeschooled, which is 0.7 per cent of total student enrolments in Victorian schools (VRQA, 2022). Research shows that a frequent reason for homeschooling children is that mainstream schools' education standards cannot always accommodate children's learning needs (Slater et al., 2020).

Although homeschooling has been widely accepted globally, most scholarly studies about it have been conducted in the US (Dahlquist et al., 2006; Jolly et al., 2013; Thomas, 2016a, 2016b, 2019). Current studies mainly focus on participants' reasons for schooling without examining homeschoolers' practices. However, such methods are pivotal in understanding how parents can accommodate children's learning needs in homeschooling settings. This study examines homeschooling instructional practices in Victoria, Australia. Specifically, this research highlights the Muslim homeschooling community practices.

Two main Muslim homeschooling groups operate in Australia. The first network is MHENA (Muslim Home Education Network), a non-profit organisation providing support, services and resources for Muslim homeschooling communities (MHENA, 2022). Another Muslim community for homeschooling is Muslim Sisters Homeschool Support (MSHS). This group offers resources, activities and events related to Islam (MSHS, 2022). Unfortunately, those groups are not based in Victoria but in New South Wales, Australia. English (2016), who studied Muslim women's experience in Australian homeschooling, highlighted Victoria's lack of explicit support. English's study, however, was only concerned with the decision behind homeschooling choices. This research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of Muslim homeschooling parents' instructional practices to apply LCT, examining how homeschooling parents' practices that use LCT can accommodate students' learning needs. The research question for this project is: *What are Muslim homeschooling parents' instructional practices for applying Learner-Centred Teaching in Australia?*

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are few published studies concerning Muslim homeschoolers' pedagogical practices. Most popular scholarly work on homeschooling explore their structure, parents' motivations, routines and instructional practices, and religion-based homeschooling practices. However, research on specific groups, such as Muslim homeschoolers, is less explored. Therefore, it will be addressed in this study.

The homeschooling structure

The structure of homeschooling is divided according to the type of curriculum used. Before analysing this aspect, it is worth discussing how the homeschooling structure has emerged. Van Gallen (1991) conducted longitudinal research with 23 homeschooling parents and divided them into ideologues and pedagogues. Inspired by Raymond and Moore, ideologues value religious and moral motives for homeschooling (Taylor-Hough, 2010). In contrast, pedagogues, led by John Holt, emphasise the academic basis and encourage children's curiosity to pursue their learning process (Van Galen, 1991).

Other researchers have divided the homeschooling structure into structured and unstructured learning (Martin-Chang et al., 2011; Neuman & Guterman, 2017b). The advocates of structured homeschooling adopt a pre-planned curriculum (Gray & Riley, 2013; Neuman & Guterman, 2017a), whereas others prefer to implement unstructured learning (or unschooling) (Neuman & Guterman, 2017b). As a homeschooling branch, the term 'unschooling' was popularised by John Holt (Gray & Riley, 2013). Neuman and Guterman (2017b) emphasise that unschooling follows children's interests to determine study content. Adhering to these two structures, the homeschooling curriculum can be arranged according to a pre-set or no pre-planned curriculum by following children's interests.

However, Neuman and Guterman (2017b) challenge the traditional dichotomy of the homeschooling structure (structured and unstructured learning). Instead, they affirm that content and process should be considered the basis for dividing homeschooling structures. Their findings reveal that there are four types of homeschooling: 'a) structured process and structured content, b) unstructured process and structured content, c) structured process and unstructured content, and d) unstructured process and unstructured content' (Neuman & Guterman, 2017b, p. 368). In this sense, the content acts as a homeschooling curriculum, while the process reflects the homeschooling pedagogy. This classification method is relevant for this current research to identify the nature of participants' homeschooling practices.

Homeschooling parents' motivations

Many studies on homeschooling examine parents' voices due to their pivotal role in this educational form. As homeschooling is parent-led and home-based (Ray, 2017a, 2017b), parents' perspectives matter in research. Their perspectives include their motivations to homeschool their children. The importance of their reasons for homeschooling decisions has been discussed by a plethora of studies in diverse contexts (e.g., Baidi, 2019; Dahlquist et al., 2006; Jolly et al., 2013; Slater et al., 2020; Thomas, 2019). Most studies are in the US context (Dahlquist et al., 2006; Jolly et al., 2013; Thomas, 2019).

The studies found several factors contribute to homeschooling parents' decisions. Religion is a common reason for homeschooling (Jolly et al., 2013, Thomas, 2019). Dahlquist et al. (2006) report that the largest percentage of respondents in their study chose religion as their primary

reason for homeschooling. In the Indonesian context, Baidi (2019) states that homeschooling is a strategy for parents to protect children from unexpected morality and beliefs, such as immoral behaviours.

Other factors unrelated to religion also have strong influences on homeschooling decisions. One factor is dissatisfaction with formal schooling (Dahlquist et al., 2006). The poor quality of the learning environment and public schools' negative influences might cause this dissatisfaction (Thomas, 2019). In addition, traditional schooling cannot always accommodate the needs of gifted children; therefore, parents decide to home-educate them (Jolly et al., 2013). Similarly, Slater et al. (2020) found that a mismatch between parents' expectations and the standard of the schooling system led them to choose homeschooling. Although parents' homeschooling motivations are significant in research, many studies have explored this area. However, other areas, especially homeschooling practices, including the enactment of a homeschooling curriculum, have rarely been investigated. For example, Kunzman and Gaither (2013) reviewed 351 texts concerning homeschooling and found many studies on parental motivation but few regarding homeschoolers' practices.

Although understanding homeschoolers' reasons for homeschooling is essential, this research project will not explore this aspect. Guterman and Neuman (2021) argue that parents' reasons for homeschooling children may correspond with homeschooling practices; for example, families with religious reasons might prefer structured learning. Moreover, Thomas (2016a) suggests that various homeschooling motivations can determine homeschoolers' instructional choices. Therefore, this study will only briefly discuss parents' reasons behind their practices.

Homeschooling routines and instructional practices

Many efforts have been made to gain an understanding of homeschoolers' daily routines (i.e., Carpenter & Gann, 2016; Gann & Carpenter, 2017; Guterman & Neuman, 2021; Thomas, 2016a, 2016b). Understanding the types of homeschoolers' regular activities with their children can help to identify the instructional practices when implementing the homeschooling curriculum. In the US context, several studies have identified common homeschooling approaches. Collaborative learning in homeschooling is frequently reported (Carpenter & Gann, 2016; Gann & Carpenter, 2017; Thomas, 2016b). Parents usually cooperate with other homeschooling families to conduct homeschooling practices (Carpenter & Gann, 2016) or collaborate with other educational entities (Thomas, 2016b). Another typical approach is individualised instruction (Gann & Carpenter, 2017; Thomas, 2016b). The curriculum and instructional strategies are customised according to individual children's needs (Gann & Carpenter, 2017). In addition, self-directed study is included as a regular practice of homeschooled children. Homeschooling families commonly adopt this approach with high-school students to allow them to manage their own learning (Carpenter & Gann, 2016; Gann & Carpenter, 2017; Thomas, 2016b). These instructional practices are not the only choices available for homeschoolers. However, other approaches can emerge from homeschooling routines, for example, religion-based teaching (Thomas, 2016b) and direct instruction (Carpenter & Gann, 2016).

Unfortunately, the studies have only identified general homeschoolers' instructional practices and not the homeschooling practices of specific groups; practices might differ among groups, for example, between Muslim homeschooling and other religion-based homeschooling groups. Moreover, homeschoolers' instructional practices may vary according to the chosen

curriculum. Guterman and Neuman (2021) highlight the differences in homeschooling structure related to the selected curriculum and approaches. Their study focuses on the correlation between homeschooling structure, including routines and curriculum, and potential emotional and behavioural problems. This study has a different objective from that of Guterman and Neuman. It examines Muslim parents' homeschooling practices by considering the curriculum they choose to accommodate students' learning needs and its correlation with LCT.

Religion-based homeschooling practices

Several works have been conducted to examine religion-motivated homeschooling practices around the world. In the US, Van Galen (1991) has categorised evangelical Christian homeschoolers as ideologues where strong religious values are the primary subject for homeschooled children to learn. These values include conservative religious doctrine, social and political perspectives (Van Galen, 1991). Gaither (2009) also found that Christian home education perspectives dominate the US. They employed flexible schedule for their homeschooling activities, such as, sports and arts that are usually time-consuming (Gaither, 2009).

Moreover, they employed private, home-based tutoring sessions to support children's learning (Gaither, 2009). Sherfinski (2014) examined the possibilities promoted by Classical and Christian homeschooling for a mother-teacher. One of the possibilities is the pedagogical tool, dialogue. The dialogue allows a mother-teacher to teach her children biblical principles by provoking curiosity and questioning (Sherfinski, 2014). The homeschooling practices conducted by Christian communities are various. By emphasising fundamentalist religious values, they have different ways of teaching them to children.

Muslim groups also choose homeschooling for their children in the US and Australia. There is a growing trend for adopting the homeschooling option for Muslim communities in Washington, the US (Seif-Amirhosseini, 2016). Their motivations are primarily because of beliefs, family values and a moral-based education (Seif-Amirhosseini, 2016). The most current study by Siddique (2021) concerns Muslim mothers' motivations and perspectives for home education. The primary motivation is to retain their Muslim identity, including racial and cultural identity, academic concern, and religious character development. The studies imply that the Muslim identity is the fundamental aspect of employing homeschooling practices. Saghir (2011) and English (2016) share similar interests in examining the factors behind Muslim homeschoolers' decisions. Saghir's (2011) work was based in the US. The English (2016) study was conducted in Australia and is similar to my study subject. Although one of the frequent reasons is that mainstream schools lack religious teaching, other factors, such as concern regarding academic standards, support the homeschooling decision (Saghir, 2011; English, 2016). Saghir (2011) argued that personalised approaches and homeschooling methods are required to meet children's individual needs.

Theoretical framework: Learner-centred teaching

The proposed theoretical framework is LCT (Weimer, 2013). In this model, teaching focuses on students, and instructional strategies aim to encourage their learning efforts. This learner-centred approach is preferable to teacher-centred learning because it emphasises what the students are doing and promotes engagement in learning. Yap et al. (2016) add that LCT differs from conventional teaching. While the former allows students to control their learning through a self-directed learning mechanism, the latter emphasises teachers' control (Yap et al., 2016). Relevant to the focus of LCT, homeschooling practices also commonly place the child at the

centre of learning activity (Neuman & Guterman, 2017a). In line with the chosen paradigm, Weimer's model is grounded philosophically in constructivism (or interpretivism) (Oyelana et al., 2018). This model emphasises the role of students' critical thinking and active participation in constructing knowledge from experiences (Oyelana et al., 2018). Therefore, this theoretical framework is appropriate for this project for examining homeschooling practices from parents' perspectives.

In more detail, Weimer (2013) proposes five fundamental principles of LCT. First, the role of the teacher in LCT is as a facilitator who 'promotes learning by facilitating the acquisition of knowledge' (Weimer, 2013, p. 10). The teacher enables students to experience messy but meaningful learning. The second tenet is the balance of power by giving students control of their learning to become self-directed and autonomous learners. The function of content is the third principle of LCT. Teachers utilise the content for exam preparation, equipping students with a knowledge base and (both basic and sophisticated) learning skills. The following principle is learning responsibility, where students are more responsible for their learning process to develop the joy and love of learning (Weimer, 2013). Finally, the purpose and processes of evaluation should focus on skill production and knowledge practice through self-assessment and peer assessment rather than the grading process. Figure 1 illustrates Weimer's five principles of LCT.
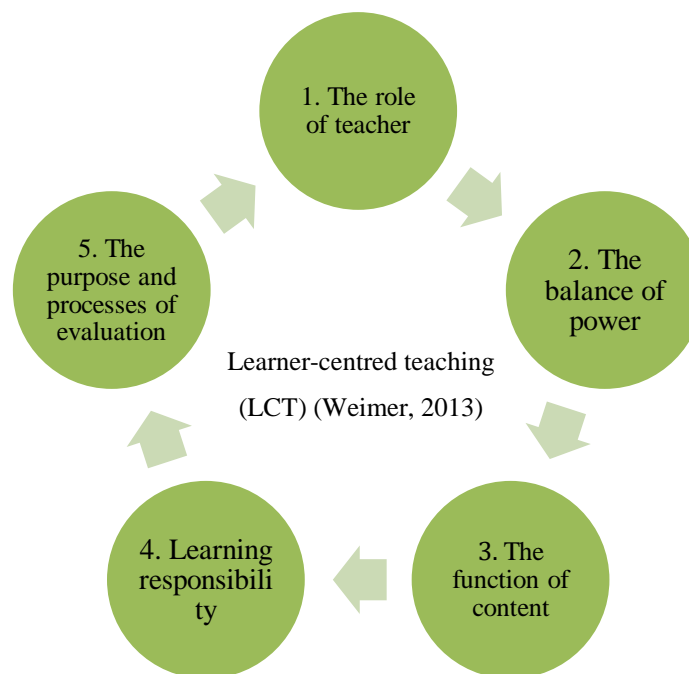

Figure 1 Theoretical framework: Learner-centred teaching

The above principles of LCT are relevant to my research because they highlight how teachers can apply LCT in their homeschooling instructional practices. In addition, this model is valuable for addressing the research question concerning Muslim homeschooling parents' instructional practices to apply LCT so that children's learning needs can be accommodated. However, Weimer's concept (2013) is designed for teaching undergraduates in a formal education setting and does not relate directly to homeschooling. However, the theory is still applicable because its practical guidance (the five principles) can be used in homeschooling.

In terms of scholarly studies, LCT has been widely examined in research, mainly involving higher education settings (see Du Plessis, 2020; Karolich & Ford, 2013; Kovačević & Akbarov, 2016; Oyelana et al., 2018; Yap et al., 2016). It is regarded as a shift from traditional teaching (teacher-centred) to more learner-centred (Du Plessis, 2020; Shah, 2020; Yap et al., 2016). LCT term is used interchangeably with other terms, for example- student-centred teaching (Shah, 2020). Unfortunately, the above studies do not determine how this model is integrated into homeschooling settings.

Regarding homeschooling contexts, two studies investigate LCT in these settings. First, Liberto (2016) believes that child-led learning (or LCT) is the appropriate approach for homeschooling children. Liberto (2016) argues that this model adequately mitigates children's learning difficulties. This autoethnographic study also implies that child-led learning can support students' individual learning, particularly in unschooling settings. Francis (2018) examined homeschooling parents' instructional practices to teach mathematics by emphasising LCT. The findings reveal that parents employ a mix of the traditional approach and LCT, but the former is more dominant. The study also reports that participants can choose a relevant curriculum and instructional practices for homeschooling children). In this sense, LCT is relevant to facilitate students' individual learning needs in a homeschooling context. Francis' study may be similar to this current study by aiming to understand homeschooling parents' instructional strategies, which reflect LCT. However, it is primarily based on the mathematical teaching context. My study has a different context and foci because Muslim homeschoolers' practices are explored by emphasising their chosen curriculum and pedagogy to apply LCT.

METHODOLOGY

This interpretivism qualitative study employed a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of Muslim homeschooling parents' teaching practices. The interpretivist paradigm is ideal for this study to understand participants' subjective interpretations (Chen et al., 2011) regarding their regular homeschooling practices. This paradigm also relates to the proposed theoretical framework of this project since Weimer's (2013) LCT is also grounded by constructivism, which is interchangeably used with interpretivism. Moreover, this study depends on participants' interpretations of their chosen practices to examine homeschoolers' practices; therefore, a qualitative study was considered appropriate. Regarding its relevance to interpretivism, this article employed a case study that allows detailed representations of participants' voices as part of their constructed interpretations (Hatch, 2002).

Data collection

The data collection included two main steps. It started with a participant recruitment strategy and was followed by semi-structured interviews. The selection of participants followed a generic purposive sampling strategy. In this strategy, participants were selected based on predetermined criteria informed by the research question (Bryman, 2016). I chose two participants who met the criteria. The first criterion was that both participants are from Indonesian-Muslim families who have been implementing homeschooling in Australia for more than one year. The second was that their homeschooled children were of similar ages (i.e., primary school). The third was that the interviewees are mothers because they are usually the adult responsible for homeschooling in the family (Neuman & Guterman, 2017a, 2017b). The recruitment process was conducted by contacting colleagues who conduct homeschooling in their families. I preferred using my personal network instead of contacting professional

colleagues as I am not involved in a particular homeschooling community. Only colleagues who met the criteria and agreed to participate in this project were selected.

A semi-structured interview was more appropriate to collect data for this small-scale case study. Bryman (2016) states that interviewing is one of the most common data collection techniques in qualitative research, particularly with a qualitative case study design (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, Hatch (2002) argued that semi-structured or formal interviews are appropriate 'when interviewing is the only data collection tool of a study' (p. 94) with few informants. Therefore, in line with this small-scale project, the semi-structured interview was the only tool to collect data from the two participants. I chose only two participants because my study is a small-scale case study with minimal time and a source of information for contacting more participants from a homeschooling community that would suit the criteria. Moreover, as I employed semi-structured interviews as the only method to collect data, restricting the study to only two participants helped to answer the research question in more detail.

After obtaining ethical approval from MUHREC (Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee) on 10 May 2021, I interviewed the first participant on 28 May and the second on 30 May 2021. I conducted the interviews via Zoom meetings and recorded them. It was not possible to conduct face-to-face interviews due to a 7-day lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in Victoria. Each interview was completed in around an hour using open-ended questions, enabling interviewees to explain their perspectives in detail (Hatch, 2002). I transcribed the recordings manually. To avoid bias due to personal relationships, I asked participants to review the interview transcript before analysing them.

Data analysis

I used thematic analysis to examine the transcription, identifying patterns or themes emerging from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Several benefits of this method are relevant to my research project. The first advantage of this analysis is its flexibility across theoretical and epistemological frameworks (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This means that thematic analysis is suitable for this study with the interpretivist paradigm. Furthermore, the method helped to generate unpredicted insights from the data collection process (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Similarly, the semi-structured interviews (the data collection method in this study) produced some unexpected views from the participants. Moreover, as my research question explores Muslim homeschoolers' perspectives regarding their pedagogical practices to apply LCT, the interview data were extensive. For this reason, the thematic analysis allowed a summarising process to select some key themes from a large body of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

To conduct the thematic analysis, I followed six phases, as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006): familiarising myself with the data; creating initial codes; finding, reviewing and categorising themes; and reporting. I created several potential clusters of codes before identifying themes (Habibi, Suryadarma, & Wilujeng, 2021) and writing a report.Bryman (2016) provides clues to search for themes in the thematic analysis (i.e., repetitive topics, differences and similarities, and word connectors). Subsequently, I followed the theoretical framework (Weimer's LCT) to categorise the themes. This approach is called theoretical thematic analysis and provides a rich data analysis related to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Finally, reporting the data was conducted by making an argument supported by the findings to address my research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

RESULTS

The participants share similarities in their families' profiles. They are mothers from an Indonesian-Muslim family. The first participant, Tika (pseudonym), is an Indonesian with two daughters and a son. The second participant, Olivia (pseudonym), was born in Melbourne, Australia, and married an Indonesian. She has three daughters. These mothers live in and have homeschooled their children for more than one year in Victoria, Australia.

The participants' homeschooled children are of similar primary school age. The mothers have registered their primary-age daughters officially in Victorian homeschooling through VRQA. Tika's daughters, who are officially homeschooled, are in grades 3–4 and 1–2, while her son is of kindergarten age (not officially homeschooled). Similarly, Olivia's oldest daughter is nine (grade 3–4), and her second daughter is six, similar to grades 1–2. However, her youngest daughter is three years old and is not officially homeschooled.

The participants enact contrasting curricula in their homeschooling practices. The first participant adopts predetermined curricula, whereas the second employs a non-predetermined curriculum in her practices. According to the interview results, they might have distinctive curricula but generally integrate four pedagogical designs in their homeschooling practices. They apply personalised, collaborative, experiential and game-based learning. I selected these categories because they reflect what practices work well in the home context. Also, the teacher's and students' roles suggested by LCT can be identified in these approaches.

Personalised learning

One proposed instructional practice is personalised learning. Olivia referred to this approach clearly, whereas Tika explained it implicitly. Olivia argued that she personalised children's learning to emphasise soft skills by allowing her children to choose their preferred books and activities. For example, while her oldest daughter adores reading and writing, her second daughter enjoys storytelling and imaginative play. One aspect identified in Olivia's personalised method is 'just not trying to interfere too much . . . and trusting children'. This view represents the power balance (the second tenet of LCT) to encourage children's autonomy.

However, Tika implied this personalised approach. She said, '[Mila] [pseudonym] prefers experiments, . . . while Alya [pseudonym] likes doing worksheets'. She tried to respond to each child's interest by applying the relevant approach. Based on the participants' practices, personalised learning is applied by adopting different approaches for each child's interests. In Olivia's case, less interference can ensure the implementation of this model, whereas Tika highlighted the relevance of the approach for each child.

Collaborative learning

Both participants highlighted the importance of collaborative learning with either siblings or other homeschooling groups for their homeschooled children. For example, Olivia emphasised the need for inclusiveness within her daughters, 'fostering in [my] older girls a sense of "you guys are the big sisters . . . think of ways that you can include your younger sister"'. Similarly, in Tika's homeschooling, her children learn together at the same time and place. For example, Tika explained that her children's morning routine starts at 10 am for Islamic Studies. However, she works with each child differently in terms of delivering lessons. While these mothers cater to each child's needs, they are eager to develop their children's social skills through family interaction.

Furthermore, collaboration occurs outside the home setting. Participating in homeschooling groups is a valuable way to embed social skills for children. While Olivia's children participate weekly in social catchups with other homeschooled children, Tika acknowledged that she could adopt other homeschoolers' learning activities by joining the homeschooling community. This means both participants allow children's social interaction with their siblings or other homeschooled children. It is because social interaction happens when a child interacts with other children or people from similar backgrounds.

Experiential learning

Another proposed homeschooling approach is experiential learning. Both participants acknowledged the benefits of this approach for their children's learning development. Tika argued that learning through experiments could strengthen children's understanding. She provided an example when she taught Science (i.e., weight), stating, 'We usually make a cake, . . . [then], they practise directly by scaling how much flour . . . [or] how much sugar is [needed] . . . which is relevant to the lesson at that time'. She linked the experiments with subjects in her practices to help her children understand the lessons. However, Olivia preferred learning by doing for her children's natural learning process. For instance, she stated that her nine-year-old and six-year-old learned cooking, but she allowed them to choose the ingredients freely. The findings show that while Olivia teaches Science, she deliberately introduces females' roles in a family. Their learning activities seem to address only female roles because the homeschooled children in this study are girls, and the parents explaining these activities are their mothers.

It is important to note that experiential learning in participants' contexts is applied differently. While Tika employed the model per subjects, Olivia used it without underlining a specific subject. In this method, parents play a facilitating role in allowing their children to learn through experiments.

Game-based learning

The last suggested approach for homeschooling is game-based learning. Games and play are regarded as a learning process. For instance, Olivia frequently highlighted free play as her primary approach to conducting real-life learning. She believes that 'play actually means . . . negotiation, interpersonal skills . . . knowing how to develop, compromise and engage in a game'. From her perspective, play is not merely a meaningless activity but integrates pivotal skills for children.

Similarly, Tika incorporates games into her children's learning activities. She exemplified a moment when she taught Maths by using games to explain Addition. Although Tika was concerned about the alignment of games and the lesson, she appreciated games as useful learning resources.

As illustrated above, both mothers appraise the essence of the game to support children's learning development. For game-based learning, Olivia places the learning responsibility onto her children; they can enjoy learning. Conversely, Tika selects the appropriate games for her children. Finally, it is important to note that they both incorporate these four approaches to support their children's learning needs differently.

DISCUSSION

The discussion of these four strategies is focused on the role of teacher and students, which can be identified by referring to the first, second and fourth principles of LCT (see Figure 1). The third (function of content) and fifth (purpose and processes of evaluation) principles are the areas that move beyond the specifics of instructional practices. While the former relates to the homeschooling curriculum, the latter explains the assessment employed in the homeschooling context.

To begin with, the first principle relates to the role of homeschooling parents (teachers). Weimer (2013) suggests that a teacher acts as a facilitator by promoting children's knowledge construction. Consistent with this principle, Olivia implied this idea by saying, 'I just support our children and offer help and input if they want me to'. She added that her role is 'to enrich their environment and try to stimulate their interests'. Consistent with the finding of the study conducted by Carpenter and Gann (2016), homeschoolers regard themselves as more of a director or facilitator for their children's learning rather than the direct instructor. Weimer (2013) proposes that in holding this role, teachers should ensure their students acquire messy but meaningful learning. Similarly, Olivia tried to send this message to her children by explaining, '[When] all our children [are trying] something and do not do it perfectly; it is part of how [they] learn'. This means that making mistakes is acceptable in learning, as children can experience meaningful learning.

In the other scenario, Tika's role is a parent-teacher for her homeschooled children. She stated, 'Our role and responsibilities are as parents and teachers', as she believed that educating children is parents' responsibility. Corresponding with this view, Lois (2006) also found that homeschooling mothers tried to adjust their parenting role to the teaching role. However, Tika's role as a parent-teacher reflects the role of a facilitator less, as her practices are mostly parent-driven. This mother decides the type of curricula, learning resources and activities.

Regarding the role of homeschooling children, Weimer (2013) proposes the second tenet of LCT relating to the balance of power and the fourth principle concerning learning responsibility. In this model, children are expected to be autonomous, self-directed learners (Weimer, 2013). Children's role is demonstrated through participants' instructional practices. The first pedagogical strategy is personalised learning. This model is a common approach for homeschoolers use when customising their instructional strategies based on children's learning needs (Gann & Carpenter, 2017; Thomas, 2016b). Concerning this model, a critical aspect of Olivia's perception is that she tried to listen and not interfere with her children's learning process. This belief is also demonstrated through her other instructional practices, namely experiential, collaborative and game-based learning. She encouraged her children's interests and let them enjoy their chosen activities. She also emphasised that children's autonomy is highly valued. This belief relates to the second tenet of LCT, in which learners are given the power to control their learning (Weimer, 2013). Thus, the learning responsibility (the fourth principle of LCT) is placed on learners to foster the joy of learning (Weimer, 2013). This aspect was stated explicitly by Olivia, 'I am trying to help them keep the curiosity they naturally have . . . and keep their love of learning'. Maintaining her children's joy of learning is her main goal in her homeschooling practices.

On the other hand, Tika's teaching strategies focus less on the balance of power for children to have learning responsibility. According to her, most learning activities are directed by parents (i.e., choosing the learning materials, activities and delivering the lessons). She might also employ game-based, experiential, personalised and collaborative learning. However, her approaches are more teacher-driven than learner-centred. In this case, Tika's homeschooling

practices might fail to maintain the balance of power and give children control over learning processes (Weimer, 2013). Nevertheless, she argued that her children still enjoy learning through homeschooling practices; when she employed experiential learning, children were engaged and had meaningful learning. The cause might relate to her children's characters: they are more dependent on their parents, which is typical for primary-age children.

CONCLUSION

This study has explored Muslim parents' instructional practices in applying LCT in their homeschooling settings in Victoria, Australia. This project identified four learning models, namely personalised, collaborative, experiential and game-based learning.

The participants have different perspectives on how Weimer's LCT principles accommodate students' learning needs in their practices. Regarding the parent's role, the first participant considers herself a parent-teacher for her homeschooled children, whereas the second participant reflects a facilitating role suggested by Weimer's model. However, the balance of power (the second tenet of LCT) and learning responsibility (the fourth principle of LCT) are shown only by the second participant. It was noted that both participants could accommodate their children's learning needs, although their practices did not always reflect LCT principles. Further research could inform parents of this LCT model to help them self-reflect and evaluate their practices.

This study offers practical implications. Homeschoolers can adopt the types of homeschooling relevant to their children's needs in home contexts. Also, it can be applied to different homeschooling groups. However, this project has several limitations to be addressed by future studies. First, to understand homeschooling parents' curriculum, instructional strategies and evaluation, future research can highlight the homeschooling structure to explore homeschoolers' practices. Second, this study did not address the policy that guides homeschooling practices. Therefore, upcoming studies could examine this field to determine whether the implemented policy may support or hinder homeschooling practices. Third, this research involves only two mothers, so it might also be necessary to include fathers and more participants in future studies. Despite the above limitations, this project remains valuable in terms of practical contributions to the homeschooling discourse.

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