



Family Dynamics and Social Cohesion in the Intermarriage of Indonesian Muslims in Australia: Revalidating Ibnu Khaldun's Theory of *Asabiyyah*

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Abstract: This paper examines the practice of intermarriage, between Indonesian Muslims and non-Indonesian converted Muslims living in Australia. Very little is known about this intermarriage phenomenon and its internal dynamics and patterns of social interaction. Building on Ibn Khaldun's concept of *asabiyyah* (group solidarity) that intermarriage can be understood as an intimate link between social groups leading to social cohesion, the paper argues that intermarriage decreases the salience of cultural distinctions and couples and in-group members lose the negative attitudes they may have had toward the out-groups. The research is an empirical study which was conducted through in-depth interviews with 12 married couples, focus group discussions, and observations and yields two key conclusions. First, varying levels of challenges specifically favourable, mildly demanding, moderately trying, and highly challenging establish family dynamics in which the dual-integrated approach to family resilience is enacted. Social circles strongly influence the religious commitment and faith of mixed marriage families, presenting the most problematic distinctions to address. Second, the social cohesion they formed is diverse and strengthens across generations, which impacts on the social and cultural identities of the future offspring who will end up with mixed or multi-ethnic origins. Thus, this article argues that the intermarried partners, although were from different social, cultural, and ethnic, backgrounds, demonstrably shared some common values and aspirations which acted as building-blocks for unity and contributed to in-group and out-group social cohesion.

Keywords: Intermarriage, Indonesian Muslims in Australia, dual-integrated approach, family dynamics, *Asabiyyah* theory, social cohesiveness

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Abstrak: Artikel ini mengkaji praktik perkawinan campur, antara umat Muslim Indonesia dengan umat Muslim non-Indonesia yang pindah agama dan tinggal di Australia. Sangat sedikit yang diketahui tentang fenomena perkawinan campur ini dan dinamika internal serta pola interaksi sosialnya. Berdasarkan konsep *asabiyyah* (solidaritas kelompok) Ibnu Khaldun bahwa perkawinan campur dapat dipahami sebagai hubungan erat antara kelompok sosial yang mengarah pada kohesi sosial, makalah ini berpendapat bahwa perkawinan campur mengurangi pentingnya perbedaan budaya dan pasangan serta anggota kelompok dalam kehilangan sikap negatif yang mungkin mereka miliki terhadap kelompok luar. Penelitian ini merupakan studi empiris yang dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan 12 pasangan menikah, diskusi kelompok fokus, dan observasi dan menghasilkan dua kesimpulan utama. Pertama, berbagai tingkat tantangan khususnya yang menguntungkan, agak menuntut, cukup melelahkan, dan sangat menantang membentuk dinamika keluarga di mana pendekatan yang terintegrasi ganda terhadap ketahanan keluarga diberlakukan. Lingkaran sosial sangat memengaruhi komitmen dan keyakinan agama keluarga perkawinan campuran, yang menghadirkan perbedaan yang paling bermasalah untuk diatasi. Kedua, kohesi sosial yang mereka bentuk beragam dan menguat lintas generasi, yang berdampak pada identitas sosial dan budaya keturunan di masa depan yang akan berakhir dengan asal-usul campuran atau multi-etnis. Dengan demikian, artikel ini berpendapat bahwa pasangan yang menikah beda agama, meskipun berasal dari latar belakang sosial, budaya, dan etnis yang berbeda, terbukti memiliki beberapa nilai dan aspirasi yang sama yang bertindak sebagai blok bangunan untuk persatuan dan berkontribusi pada kohesi sosial dalam kelompok dan luar kelompok.

Kata kunci: Pernikahan beda agama, Muslim Indonesia di Australia, pendekatan *dual-integrated*, dinamika keluarga, teori *asabiyyah*, kohesivitas sosial

Introduction

Inter-marriage refers to the union of two individuals from distinct social, ethnic, cultural, racial, or religious origins. It is also referred to as interfaith marriage, interreligious marriage, interracial marriage, and mixed marriage.¹ In addition to inclination, inter-marriage is influenced by opportunities to encounter and interact with individuals from different backgrounds.² In the context of

¹ Andrew L. Foong and E. J. Teoh, "Multiethnic Intergenerational Perspectives on Interethnic Marriages in Peninsular Malaysia: The Challenge of Ethno-Religionist Identity," *International Social Science Journal* 72, no. 244 (2022), p. 403–22. Nor Salam, et.al., "Interfaith Marriage from the Perspective of Rationality: Theocentrism in Islamic Law and Anthropocentrism in Human Rights Law," *De Jure* 16, No. 1 (2024).

² Dan Rodríguez-García, "Inter-marriage and Integration Revisited," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 662, no. 1 (2015), p. 8–36. Dan Rodríguez-García et. al., "Contesting the Nexus between Inter-marriage and Integration: Findings from a

globalization, technical advancement, and the rise of social media, the manner in which individuals cultivate interpersonal relationships is experiencing significant change, resulting in an increase in intermarriage, especially within multicultural cultures.³

This paper seeks to investigate if there exist interaction across group boundaries, that is, between in-groups and out-groups and if members of different groups accept each other as social equals. Although personal interaction between intermarriage couples sometimes produces conflicts by making cultural and social differences more apparent, interaction gives the couples an opportunity to realize their own neutrality, openness, and the ability to share. In doing so, if the relationship is intimate and strong, it may ultimately weaken their prejudices, biases, and stereotypes. Given the fact that intermarriage usually connects the social networks of the two spouses, this applies to a variety of members of the outgroup members and brings not only the couple together but those from the outgroup too.

The research employs data from in-depth interviews with 12 mixed marriage families residing in Australia, focus group discussions, and participant observations, which are analyzed qualitatively to elucidate notable themes. The paper uses Ibn Khaldun's theory of *asabiyyah* - social cohesion to advance the understanding of the phenomenon of intermarriage of Indonesian Muslims in Australia and the inner workings of familial dynamics and social cohesion of this minority migrant group. Ibn Khaldun's theory of *asabiyyah* – social cohesion is a crucial framework to understand how and why groups, particularly those groups who find themselves as a minority population, negotiate patterns of living through the complex socio-cultural, economic, and political processes in multicultural society like Australia.⁴ This theory is pertinent for examining intermarriage issues, especially as a means of social cohesion within a multicultural framework. This article presents a unique contribution, as the concept of *asabiyyah* in the current literature tends to emphasize macro social issues and political dimensions,⁵ rather than delving into micro spheres like family and marital

Multidimensional Study in Spain," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 662 (2015), p. 223–45.

³ Miri Song, "Multiracial People and Their Partners in Britain: Extending the Link between Intermarriage and Integration?", *Ethnicities* 16, no. 4 (2016), p. 631–48. Nofiardi Nofiardi, Adat Rantau as a Solution for Multi-Ethnic Marriage in Pasaman, West Sumatera," *al-Risalah* 20, No. 2 (2020). Siti Dian Natasya Solin, et.al., "Batak Customary Marriage: A Study of the Prohibition of Same-Clan Marriage and Its Relevance in the Contemporary Era," *El-Usrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 7, no. 1 (2024), p. 62-81.

⁴ Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, vol. 3 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967). Mehreen Jamal, 'Ibn Khaldun's Asabiyyah: Past and Present', *Pakistan Perspectives* 17, no. 2 (2012), p. 76-87

⁵ Mohammad Ridho, "From Chalipate to Modern State: A Reflection of Ibn Khaldun's Thought," *Ulumuna* 23 no. 1 (2019), 48-70. Muhamad Fajar Pramono, et.al., "Crisis Studies of

concerns. Within the framework of *asabiyyah*, marriage serves as a conduit for reinforcing familial and communal cohesion, while also fostering and preserving religious principles within the family unit.

The term *asabiyyah* linguistically is an abstract noun that derives from the Arabic root *asab*, meaning “to bind” or “to unite”. As a term, it was already in use in Arabia before the advent of Islam but it was popularized by Ibn Khaldun in his masterpiece, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History* which is a universal history of the Arabs and Berbers of North Africa. Beyond a universal history, *Muqaddimah* is a theory of the rise and fall of communities, states, dynasties, societies, and human civilisations from which emerges Ibn Khaldun’s concept of *asabiyyah* as a descriptor of “group solidarity”, “human cooperativity”, and “social cohesion”.⁶

Researchers from diverse disciplines examine the phenomenon of intermarriage for multiple reasons;⁷ however, sociologists focus on intermarriage to investigate social cohesion and comprehend the social evolution of societies characterized by robust immigration processes and substantial immigrant populations.⁸ The examination of intermarriage is sociologically significant, as the frequency of intermarriages serves as a metric for the degree of closeness or separation among sociocultural and racial groups, as well as the acceptance or rejection of diverse communities and the fluidity of cultural boundaries. Sociologists examine intermarriage to explore sociocultural and religious links, as well as the dynamics of mixed marital households.

Intermarriage serves as an effective behavioural indicator of the degree to which various societal groupings acknowledge one another as equals. It is regarded as a sort of socialization between groups, as it connects not only two couples but also the social networks to which they are linked.⁹ Intermarriage may diminish ethnic identities and prejudice over time, as offspring from mixed unions tend to exhibit a hybrid identity, resulting in a lower likelihood of identifying with

The Discourse of Identity Politics in Indonesia from The Perspective of Asabiyah Ibn Khaldun,” *Potret Pemikiran* 27), no. 2 (2023), p. 148-160. Randa Elbih, ‘Investigating Inequality in the US School System through Ibn Khaldun’s Political Wisdom and the Concept of *Asabiyah*’, *Educational Studies* 56, no. 2 (2019), p. 107–24.

⁶ Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*.

⁷ Ahmad Rajafi, et.al., “The ‘Double-Faced’ Legal Expression: Dynamics and Legal Loopholes in Interfaith Marriages in Indonesia,” *Journal of Islamic Law* 5, No. 1 (2024), p. 19-43. Rosdiana, et.al., “Legitimacy on Inter-Faith Marriages: An Analysis of the Role of Religious Councils on the Legal Policy in Indonesia,” *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 19, No. 1 (2019).

⁸ Törngren Sayaka Osanami, et.al., ‘Toward Building a Conceptual Framework on Intermarriage’, *Ethnicities* 16, no. 4 (2016), p. 497–520.

⁹ Matthijs Kalmijn, “Consequences of Racial Intermarriage for Children’s Social Integration,” *Sociological Perspectives* 53, no. 2 (2010), p. 271–86. R. O’Leary and F. Finnäs, ‘Education, Social Integration and Minority-Majority Group Intermarriage’, *Sociology* 36, no. 2 (2002), p. 235–54.

a particular group.¹⁰ Significantly, elevated rates of intermarriage obscure the distinctions that delineate one group from another, complicating the definition of ethnic group boundaries within society.¹¹

The growth in intermarriage can be attributed to various factors, with a predominant cause being enhanced racial, cultural, and religious tolerance.¹² This is indeed the case in Australia, the subject of this research. This study analyses the phenomenon of intermarriage between Indonesian Muslims and non-Indonesian converts to Islam in Australia. Although some research has been undertaken regarding intermarriage in Australia, there has been no specific study on the intermarriage of Indonesian Muslims in Australia. It is typically believed to mitigate the likelihood of conflict among those groups and to enhance social cohesion within society.¹³ Limited knowledge exists regarding the extent, internal dynamics, and social ramifications of marrying among Indonesian Muslims. Does marrying among Indonesian Muslims facilitate enhanced social, cultural, economic, and political integration for persons marginalized from the society mainstream?

The paper commences with a succinct examination of how the Indonesian Muslim diaspora navigates their identity as minority groups. It subsequently delineates four levels of differences encountered in their marriages and two strategies employed to address these differences, thereby fostering family resilience. The discourse progresses to explore the transformation of social integrity among diasporic families within the wider Australian society. The paper concludes with significant observations regarding family dynamics and social cohesion.

Indonesian Muslim Diaspora in Australia: Negotiating Identity as Minority

Indonesia possesses the largest Muslim population globally and is among Australia's closest allies in Southeast Asia. Indonesian Muslims constitute an expanding diaspora community in Australia. The most recent Australian census, conducted in 2021, indicated that Indonesians constituted the eighteenth largest migrant community in Australia, with 1.3 percent of the overseas-born population. At the time of the census, there were 87,075 Indonesian-born individuals residing in Australia, of which 16,841 (19.3%) identified as Muslims.

¹⁰ Yu Xie and Kimberly Goyette, 'The Racial Identification of Biracial Children with One Asian Parent: Evidence from the 1990 Census', *Social Forces* 76, no. 2 (1997), p. 547–70.

¹¹ Nira Yuval-Davis, 'The Citizenship Debate: Women, Ethnic Processes and the State', *Feminist Review* 39, no. 1 (1991), p. 58–68.

¹² A. S. Lubis and Z. Muhawir, 'The Dynamics of Interreligious Marriage in Indonesian Religious and Legal Perspectives', *ARRUS Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 3, no. 1 (2023), p. 43–51.

¹³ K. Aljunied and A. Khan, 'Reshaping Their Mental Lifeworld: Malay-Muslim Immigrants in Australia in the Age of Islamophobia', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 42, no. 1 (2022), p. 41–55.

A total of 49,015 individuals (58.8%) were married, with 38,082 (74.5%) having a partner born abroad, while merely 11,914 (23.3%) had a spouse born in Australia, and only 4,443 (5.3%) were divorced.¹⁴

The Indonesian diaspora in Australia contributes to the country's multicultural fabric. They are confronted with the challenges and adaptations of Indonesian immigrants who have established themselves in Australia, with an emphasis on their social networks, cultural preservation, and integration into Australian society. For instance, the informant of this research maintains robust cultural connections through a variety of social organizations, religious institutions, and cultural events, while simultaneously adjusting to the Australian lifestyle and values. Numerous members of this diaspora are professionals, students, and skilled workers who have established support structures to assist recent arrivals in their adjustment to life in Australia. In Sydney and Canberra, the Indonesian diaspora has effectively established a vibrant community presence, despite facing initial adjustment challenges. This is achieved by balancing their cultural identity with integration into mainstream Australian society. Their experiences underscore the significance of fostering new cross-cultural relationships and contributing to the social and economic development of their adopted country while also maintaining ancestral connections.

Indonesian Muslim diasporas in Australia, similar to any other places, confront variations in cultural identity and customs of their host countries, necessitating adaptations to local culture in various forms, particularly in preserving their identity amid the challenges encountered as a minority diaspora.¹⁵ The Indonesian Muslim diaspora, as a minority population, consistently upholds two forms of identification: cultural/ethnic identity and religious identity. Nevertheless, they also succeed in preserving social cohesion through participation in volunteer activities inside social groups.¹⁶ Halim et al., note that *asabiyyah* plays a pivotal role during when groups or nations face difficulties. Thus, "These force them to stand together to protect themselves and their fellows from any danger outside their group. The spirit of group feeling or 'Asabiyyah

¹⁴ 'Population: Census, 2021 | Australian Bureau of Statistics', 12 February 2022, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/population-census/latest-release>.

¹⁵ E. Srimulyani, 'Indonesian Muslim Diaspora in Contemporary South Korea: Living as Religious Minority Group in Non-Muslim Country', *Samarah* 5, no. 2 (2021), p. 668–88. Arifin S., et.al., 'Minority Muslims and Freedom of Religion: Learning from Australian Muslims' Experiences', *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 9, no. 2 (2019), p. 295–326. Nurlaelah Abbas, et.al., "Theological Impact of Marriage for Religious Minority Families in Bali and Makassar," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 9, no.1 (2025), p. 130-147

¹⁶ Ahmad Abrori, et.al., "Voluntary Diaspora and Missionary Purposes: Mapping Indonesian Muslim Diaspora in Western Countries," *Journal of Asian Social Science Research* 5, no. 1 (2023), p. 63–78.

emerged because they had to fight for the basic need”¹⁷ and explains it is “to bind the individuals into a group (*asabtun, usbatun, or isabatun*)”.¹⁸

In addition to addressing their own needs, they also support the social requirements of other diaspora populations by preserving social connections, collective memory, social identity, and spiritual needs. The Indonesian Muslim Community of Victoria (IMCV), as a prominent Indonesian diaspora group, serves a crucial function as a social unifier to preserve identity. The *pengajian* (congregational Islamic learning) activities conducted by various study groups under IMCV have facilitated the transformation and dissemination of religious themes, while serving as a medium for social contact to demonstrate mutual concern among members. Ahmed notes that “With ‘*asabiyyah*, society fulfils its primary purpose to function with integrity and transmits its values and ideas to the next generation”.¹⁹ Jamal offers his own insight into *asabiyyah* saying “*Asabiyyah* is the force, which binds groups together, who share same culture, language and customs. It goes to varied levels from family, tribe, kingdom or nation as a whole. It reflects the developments in the society”.²⁰ Despite Australia being designated as a secular nation, the religious practices of its populace are thoroughly safeguarded. The state intervenes in addressing issues related to religion.²¹

A fundamental issue faced by the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in intermarriage families is a communication barrier. Indriani and Mulyana reveal that the communication patterns of Indonesian diaspora women residing in mixed households in Australia do not function well from the outset. They employ diverse sorts of linguistic selections utilized daily for communication.²² However, this language difference in the perspective of *asabiyyah* theory can provide an opportunity to understand each other and then gradually form a new identity or way of communication between family members.

Issues stemming from the communication process result from varying cultural assumptions.²³ This disparity may result in misinterpretation of the

¹⁷ Asyiqin Ab Halim, ‘Ibn Khaldun’s Theory of Asabiyyah and the Concept of Muslim Ummah’, *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 9, no. 1 (2014), p. 1–12.

¹⁸ Fuad Baali, *Society, State, and Urbanism: Ibn Khaldun’s Sociological Thought* (Albany: State University of New York, 1988), p. 43.

¹⁹ Akbar Ahmed, ‘Ibn Khaldun’s Understanding of Civilizations and the Dilemmas of Islam and the West Today’, *Middle East Journal* 56, no. 1 (2002), p. 30.

²⁰ Jamal, ‘Ibn Khaldun’s Asabiyyah: Past and Present’, p. 79.

²¹ Arifin and Wahyudi, ‘Minority Muslims and Freedom of Religion: Learning from Australian Muslims’ Experiences’.

²² S. S. Indriani and D. Mulyana, ‘Communication Patterns of Indonesian Diaspora Women in Their Mixed Culture Families’, *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 22, no. 4 (2021), p. 431–48.

²³ Sirait A. D., et.al., ‘Family Communication in Mixed Marriage Couples Between Indonesia-Australia’, *International Journal of Media and Communication Research* 1, no. 2 (2020), p. 24–33.

message exchanged between parties, necessitating identity negotiation and conflict resolution in all communication procedures undertaken. The negotiating process culminates in a scenario where one culture prevails, resulting in a third culture that amalgamates the two or facilitates their coexistence through the principles of tolerance. In this case, *asabiyyah* theory sees the possibility of solidarity and avoiding conflict.

In a study of Muslims, Brown investigated the perceived meanings and advantages of Indonesian in family socialization and its impact on Indonesian-Australian youth, revealing that the use of Indonesian in family socialization reflects religious and ethnic identity.²⁴ Parents contend that the language not only represents their Indonesian ethnic identity but also serves to instil familial values and is advantageous for scholastic pursuits and future professional prospects. Parents encounter the challenge of prioritizing ethnic or religious identity in the socialization of the Indonesian language.

The adaption behavior of transnational families (Indonesian Muslim diaspora) focuses on educating children while imparting Islamic knowledge within a secular context (Australia). Zulfikar and Emawati disclosed multiple strategies employed by transnational families.²⁵ The democratic method is the predominant technique, characterized by extensive conversation and negotiation. Furthermore, parents consistently emphasize Islamic principles and knowledge while ensuring a well-rounded education through attendance at both public schools and madrasahs.

Ibn Khaldun was concerned with discovering and explaining the basic laws and principles upon which society operates. He considered it necessary to have *asabiyyah* in the construction of a strong social group. Thus, he explains the rise and fall of groups, communities, societies, and civilisations with the use of his concept of *asabiyyah*. For him *asabiyyah* is “a social bond”, “a relational glue”, “solidarity”, “group belongingness”, and “social cohesion” that can be used to gauge the strength, stability, and progress of social solidarity. It enables individuals to identify with a group, pledge their loyalty to it, and relinquish their own personal interests for the sake of the group rendering the individuals subordinate to the group.²⁶

This study further examines how Indonesian Muslim diaspora intermarriages in Australia sustain family cohesion and navigate their identity

²⁴ A. B. Muslim and J. R. Brown, ‘Navigating between Ethnic and Religious Identity: Heritage Language Maintenance among Young Australians of Indonesian Origin’, *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 6, no. 1 (2016), p. 145–54.

²⁵ T. Zulfikar and Emawati, ‘Islamic Education and Religiosity: Voices of the Indonesian Muslim Communities in Australia’, *Ulumuna* 24, no. 1 (2020), p. 24–56.

²⁶ Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*; Khairulyadi Khairulyadi et al., ‘Asabiyyah and Religious Solidarity (A Socio-Historical Analysis of Asabiyyah’s Ibn Khaldun in Relation to the Concept of Muslim Unity)’, *Community : Pengawas Dinamika Sosial* 7, no. 1 (2021), p. 1–14.

within Australian society. This essay commences with an examination of the beliefs and consciousness that bind intermarriage households together. It subsequently addresses the beneficial behaviors derived from familial interactions and their integration into many cultural contexts.

Accepting and Respecting Differences in Intermarriage Families

This research identified four levels of differences experienced by intermarried couples. Nonetheless, not all of these disparities bear identical implications for their relationship, and some may even be advantageous. The ramifications of these disparities differ among individuals and are not singular. The detection of differences is contingent upon the degree of implications, ranging from favorable to highly problematic. The interviewees' experiences indicate that variations in age and marital experience provide more positive effects than negative ones. Age and marital experience are immutable realities, while variations in hunger, language, parenting, extended family structures, social networks, and religious rituals can be modified based on situational needs and obligations. These factors yield more rigorous demands, necessitate greater adjustment efforts, and result in increased conflict.

First, beneficial distinctions. This positive differences in marital relationships are primarily influenced by age and marital experience. Age disparities, particularly those over 10 years, tend to foster concord, while marital history, whether single or having prior marriages, significantly influences their relationship. For example, Rita and Gery,²⁷ who have a 15-year age difference, have been married for 26 years, the longest union among five couples with an age disparity above 10 years. The husbands' prior marriages did not impact their bond, and their former spouse even maintained a positive relationship with them. Aini, an Indonesian Muslim woman, facilitated communication between her husband's daughter and her biological mother, arguing that the separation of the biological mother role from the girl's growth and development process was necessary.

Second, mildly demanding variances. This type were influenced by culinary preferences and linguistic practices, including daily routines. Couples like Iwin and Drew, also Rita and Gery took a year to understand each other's culinary preferences. Iwin and Drew quickly adapted their tastes, often preparing their own cuisine. Rita and Iwin, as wives, sometimes had to adapt their culinary offerings to suit their husbands' (Gery and Drew) preferences. They viewed Caucasian cuisine as bland and insipid, while their husbands found Indonesian cuisine flavourful but monotonous.

Iwin, a former bank employee in Bali, had a cosmopolitan social life, focusing on international cuisines. The families of Rita and Gery, both employed, understood each other and were not burdened with fulfilling each other's daily

²⁷ All names mentioned in this article are pseudonyms.

culinary needs. However, the wife was primarily responsible for most home tasks, including cooking, dishwashing, and cleaning. Iwin's responsibilities as a housewife diminished after marrying her current spouse. In mixed marriages, Australian-Indonesian couples tend to adapt more quickly, while Indonesian husbands are more demanding. Meanwhile, the families of Sofi and Richard took almost five years to adapt to daily routines and understand each other's languages, leading to misunderstandings. It's common knowledge in Indonesia that one should indulge his taste in food to make sure a husband is happy. Although my spouse does not especially love it, I have worked to perfect the cooking of complex and delicious foods, including rendang, praised as the best Indonesian cuisine.²⁸

Sofi and Iwin, Indonesian wives, find that their husbands are not particular about food and can serve themselves. They work together to meet their needs, despite differing preferences. Richard appreciates economic independence and supports Sofi's employment, which relieves her of cooking duties. Indonesian wives, like Sofi and Iwin, believe it's necessary to learn their husband's native language for employment and daily interactions in an English-speaking country. Richard and Drew, except for Gery, have limited proficiency in Indonesian. Sofi prefers her husband not to become proficient in Indonesian to avoid gossiping about him during family calls.

In the context of *asabiyyah*, such disparities do not inherently undermine the cohesion of the broader group, as they pertain more to personal preferences that may be deliberated and reconciled within the family unit. Divergences in dietary practices or daily routines can be reconciled through compromise or adaptation to common traditions. Likewise, disparities in age or marital experience can be surmounted via mutual understanding and candid discussions regarding expectations and prior experiences. Ibn Khaldun would likely assert that differences deemed "superficial" or associated with individual adaptations—such as language, dietary practices, and marital experiences—can be managed and adjusted with considerable flexibility, as they do not pose a direct threat to the overarching bond of *asabiyyah*²⁹ in contrast to religion and culture.

Third, moderately challenging. child-rearing and extended families are moderately challenging distinctions due to their unique challenges. Child-rearing challenges often affect wives who struggle to accept their husbands' methods,

²⁸ Interview with Sofi, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, Canberra, 27 Sept, 2023.

²⁹ A. Wajid, 'Ibn Khaldun's Concept of Asabiyyah and Its Current Manifestation', *Quarterly Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 70, no. 4 (2022). E.P. Handayani, et.al., "Education and Social Dynamics from Ibn Khaldun's Perspective: A Critical and Relevant Study of the Modern World," *Kasyafa: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 1, no. 2 (2024), p. 142–53; M. Riswan, 'Ibn Khaldun's Contribution and Its Criticism: A Sociological Review', *Sri Lanka Journal of Social Sciences* 45, no. 1 (2022), p. 45–56.

while extended family differences often pose difficulties for husbands. The challenge of reconciling disparities in these two dimensions is applicable to some couples, while others do not.

The parenting dimension in Aini and Martin households is emotionally taxing, as there is a significant divergence in opinion over their son's schooling, with AI concerned about his socialization, while the husband's Australian-based family has assimilated Australian practices, who values independence. Extended families represent a distinct divergence, with Rahmi and Brady having children despite being married for almost a decade. Rahmi, from Indonesia, is accustomed to gathering with her family in large numbers, while Brady prefers solitude and socialization. The debate regarding extended relatives continues, with Rahmi adhering to the Indonesian tradition of togetherness and informality, and Brady favoring a more structured approach. Neti and Jim's relationships are anchored by their extended families, with Neti's mother-in-law being elderly and hearing impaired. Despite her responsibilities, Neti is determined to care for her in-laws, believing that a household with parents will be more fortunate and content.

Fourth, most difficult disparities. The researchers found that social contact and religious practices were the main factors influencing the decision to terminate their marriage. The families of Ismi and Mike frequently engaged in religious disputes, particularly around observance of Islamic customs. Ismi encouraged Mike to engage in the Muslim group communal Islamic learning to enhance his understanding, but Mike viewed these forums as not fun. The ongoing disagreements led to their separation, and Mike chose to revert to her faith. Ismi, a devoted wife and mother, insists that Mike must conform to Islam to continue as her husband. Sinta and Rowan, a mixed marriage, had a daughter but struggled to change her previous manner of dressing and socializing before her conversion to Islam. Despite custody being awarded to her mother, Rowan continues to enhance her daughter's religious understanding to choose the most appropriate path in accordance with Islamic principles.

For such mixed couples, there is a challenge in building a more inclusive *asabiyyah* that accommodates both cultures and religions. If they cannot find common ground on basic values such as religion and way of life, then relationships based on broader social solidarity (for example, in building a household with shared understanding) may be jeopardized. If they succeed, however, they are able to create a more global form of *asabiyyah*, one that transcends traditional boundaries and incorporates values from two different worlds.³⁰

The social context significantly contributes to the reinforcement of *asabiyyah*. In this context, individuals often pursue security and support from

³⁰ Wildani Hefni, et.al., "Religious Mobility and Identity in the Lives of Urban Muslim Community in Australia: An Anatomy of Religious Practice," *Akademika: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 27, no. 2 (2022), p. 145–56.

their communities. An Indonesian Muslim couple and an Australian convert may experience pressure from their respective communities to uphold their identity and social customs. Indonesian society may possess specific expectations regarding their lifestyle and religion, whereas Australian society may hold distinct perspectives, particularly with individual liberty and religious beliefs.

The most challenging distinction illustrates how *asabiyyah*, which is more robust and entrenched within the community of origin (e.g., the Indonesian community or the Islamic community in Australia), fosters a sense of attachment that is challenging to alter or sever, particularly under the compulsion to uphold these values. If spouses perceive that integration into Australian society or cultural and religious cohesion within the household is unattainable, the profound *asabiyyah* towards their different social groupings precipitate significant disagreements that ultimately result in divorce. Other differences, including language, hunger, habits, and marital experiences, are more easily negotiated as they are not immediately tied to profound social and religious identities.

Dual-Integrated Strategy for Family Resilience

The decision to marry among Indonesian Muslim diaspora couples commences with a process of acquaintance. Most interviewees acknowledged participating in an arranged marriage facilitated by friends, relatives, distant acquaintances, and neighbors. They acknowledged that they had never envisioned marrying someone from a distant location. Many of them encountered rejection, particularly from their families, while seeking permission to marry. Consequently, they believe that this marriage, founded on significant disparities, is a result of their destined connection as *jodoh* (meant-to-be soul mate).

The idea of *jodoh* (soul-mate) is applied in two distinct contexts: during the decision to marry and post-marriage. In its primary interpretation, *jodoh* underscores a notion that informants perceive as predominantly divine intervention rather than human endeavor in the pursuit of a life partner. A couple is considered *jodoh* if they ultimately marry each other. In the second definition, *jodoh* is defined by the increasing compatibility of the relationship as the marriage evolves. The definition of *jodoh* entails ongoing attempts to preserve the harmony and sustainability of their partnership, specifically through a faith-based approach and an effort-based approach. This aligns with their religious and cultural convictions that prayer and effort must coexist to achieve optimal outcomes.

Faith-based approach is seen in their dependence on God through the performance of the *istikharah* prayer prior to making a marital decision and their sustained faith throughout the marriage. This *istikharah* prayer in Islam is specifically performed to seek divine direction for making the correct choice, with the indication of a favorable response thought to manifest when circumstances become easy and smooth. For them, prayer serves as a means for believers to seek assistance from the Almighty, particularly with matters deemed unclear and

incomprehensible. A companion is perceived as fate and destiny, which are divine mysteries. Consequently, dependence on God through prayer is the one means by which this uncertainty can be rendered appropriate for human existence. Nevertheless, prayer alone is insufficient. When paired with a partner by the Supreme Deity, it is to be regarded as the optimal selection. Motivated by this conviction, they feel obligated to exert effort to reconcile their differences and ensure the relationship's success.

Effort-based approach complement the above approach by supplementing it with pragmatic measures, such as addressing the discrepancies at their respective levels. These disparities unavoidably result in conflict; nevertheless, reconciliation attempts must be undertaken via mutual understanding and acceptance to ameliorate the situation. Both approaches were used by the couples despite three distinct methods for their initial meeting, namely arranged marriage, virtual introduction, and love at first sight as shown in the narratives of three informants, Indonesian wives (Aini, Zakia, and Neti).

Aini, an Indonesian woman, met her fiancé (Martin) in Australia through an arranged marriage facilitated by a friend. They married two months after their initial encounter, and Aini's family became enamoured with the young man. Zakia and Daniel, a 34-year-old couple, married at a relatively advanced age. Zakia was discerning and did not quickly develop romantic feelings, particularly for committed relationships. Neti and Jim, a divorcee and lecturer, met at a café in Indonesia. Initially, Neti did not believe they would be mates, but Jim, a divorcee with children from a prior marriage, expressed interest in engaging with Neti's family. Neti's mother's primary concern was religion, and her extended family scrutinized Jim to ensure there was no hidden agenda in their impending marriage.

Neti herself persisted in prayer and performed *istikharah*, and an indication of their being soul mates would be if their journey toward marriage was effortless and there was consistently an opportunity to connect and cultivate chemistry. Jim, formerly a Catholic, adopted Agnosticism, signifying his belief in the presence of God, Heaven, and Hell, while remaining unattached to any specific religion. This, according to Neti, facilitated Jim's acceptance of the truth of Islam.

The aforementioned three couples discovered their partners through diligent efforts, including engaging in conversation with friends who facilitated introductions, exploring online platforms, and expressing a willingness to connect with new individuals. This indicates that they are not merely waiting without exerting any effort. Nonetheless, this preliminary procedure necessitates divine guidance; hence, all three individuals engage in *istikharah* prayers.

This spiritual method is seen effective and persuasive mostly due of the potential oversights in their observations resulting from their limited familiarity with a stranger. "Seeking heavenly direction convinces us that "he/she is the one."

God has preordained our partner since we first entered the womb. The *istikharah* prayer helps one to ask whether the next decision follows God's will.”³¹ (Interview, IW). This uncertainty drives the pursuit of theological justification for their decision. "Unknown is our future, even that of our spouses. But should divine assistance be present, God will help one negotiate obstacles. Seeking direction from God is also vital to help one make wise decisions.”³²

The notion of *jodoh* provides a theological rationale for the informants' union. Nonetheless, the supremacy of divine intervention does not diminish their attempts to ascribe secular significance to their decision. For instance, they seek the consent and approval of both parents while also completing a thorough examination of their potential mate. The same applies to their method of preserving familial unity. Effort must precede prayer, as certainty and actions are more apparent at this stage. They make any effort to devise numerous strategies and techniques for the partnership, adapting and adjusting daily.

They do not inherently reject differences; rather, some are acknowledged and embraced through the mechanisms of recognition, mutual accommodation, compromise, acceptance, and respect. They notably rejuvenate various facets of familial relationships through adaptation and negotiation, such as redefining spheres and gender roles, diminishing expectations, and enhancing communication. In addition to internal activities, engaging in social events and communities provides a platform for expression and serves as a resource for enhancing familial bonds. Conversely, they endeavour to enhance their social cohesion with varied populations based on commonalities in religion, hobbies, and jobs.³³

Enhancing Social Cohesion in a Multicultural Society

A challenge with mixed marriages is how family members from distinct cultural backgrounds preserve their ties to their nation of origin while adapting to the local community. The theory of *asabiyyah* elucidates how individuals endeavor to preserve solidarity with their home group, such as the Indonesian Muslim community, while simultaneously fostering social connections within Australian culture. *Asabiyyah* encompasses not only the preservation of in-group cohesion but also functions as a mechanism to promote a more adaptable process of integration and adjustment.

³¹ Interview with Neti, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, Canberra, 19 Sept 2023.

³² Interview with Rita, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, New South Wales, 22 Sept 2023.

³³ Sally Kalek, 'Challenges and Issues in Mixed Marriage Between the Indonesian and Non-Indonesian Diaspora', *SMART: Journal of Sharia, Traditon, and Modernity* 4, no. 2 (2024), p. 90–106.

Over time, *asabiyyah* can evolve to become more inclusive and dynamic, encompassing a wider range of groups. In the context of mixed marriages, Indonesian couples and Australian converts have proven to form new forms of solidarity involving both communities, creating space for integration without losing their respective identities. This is an example of how *asabiyyah* works to bring individuals from both in-groups and out-groups together.

This study highlights previous findings that the increased global mobility and the rise of communication technologies have facilitated more opportunities for cross-cultural relationships. The couples' children play a significant role in bridging cultural divides and contributing to Australia's multicultural fabric.³⁴ This research emphasizes that these intercultural families actively engage with and enrich Australian society, despite facing various challenges related to cultural adaptation and social acceptance.³⁵

The social group selected by spouses significantly influences their adherence to chosen religious principles, particularly for couples who have converted to Islam. The selected communities are inherently diverse, encompassing those centered around interests, professions, and religious affiliations. Each of these communities possess distinct objectives, for instance, the hobby community organizes regular camping excursions, the business community arranges family meetings, and the religious society facilitates Qur'anic recitations. Nevertheless, certain communities endeavour to amalgamate diverse initiatives established by Indonesian Muslims, such as the *Iqra'* community located in the suburb of Willey Park in Sydney. This community possesses a secretariat that also functions as a mosque, serving as a gathering place for Indonesian Muslims as well as individuals from other nations.

The couples analyzed exhibit a notable similarity such as increased active participation in *pengajian* (communal Islamic recitation) communities positively influences their religious consistency and commitment. For instance, as elucidated by Drew: My mental state feels more stable after engaging with a community. The recitation is highly beneficial for regulating emotions in the face of many challenges. During the initial period of my marriage, I was unable to operate a vehicle, thus my spouse frequently chauffeured me. However, I now operate the vehicle independently. I discovered commendable companions there.

³⁴ Kathryn Robinson, 'Creating Intercultural Families', in *Marriage Migration, Intercultural Families and Global Intimacies*, ed. Kathryn Robinson (Singapore: Springer Nature, 2024), p. 83–113.

³⁵ Muhammad Husni Abdulah Pakarti et al., 'Cultural Adjustment Strategies in Interreligious Marriage: A Case Study of Cultural Interaction and Conflict in The Family Environment', *Al Hakam: The Indonesian Journal of Islamic Family Law and Gender Issues* 3, no. 2 (2023), p. 96–107.

My husband favours attending recitations in different localities, such as the Punchbowl Mosque, due to the lectures being conducted in English.³⁶

Rahma's experience parallels with that of Drew's aforementioned. Rahma was formerly engaged in the mixed-marriage community, but she perceived the group as having a detrimental effect on her. Rahma endeavoured to engage in several recitation communities, communal Islamic recitation where she discovered a more favourable environment for her social and familial life. She said: I was previously engaged in a mixed-marriage diaspora group of friends, but I did not feel a sense of belonging due to the prevalence of gossip regarding each other's spouses. Upon joining the *Iqra'* and al Hijrah communities, I encountered numerous pleasant aspects, and my interests were cultivated as the group organized enjoyable activities, including competitions prior to August 17, Indonesia's Independence Day. Upon returning home from the recitation, I discovered a solution. My husband is not particularly involved, however he occasionally attends the *Iqra'* mosque. My husband permits my engagement on the condition that I accompany our children.³⁷

Engaging in social events with this society provides mixed marriage mothers a respite from familial responsibilities and professional obligations. The social religious community serves to enhance collective worship and facilitate the discovery of a group that embodies positive energy. As indicated by Iwin (Drew's spouse): I believe I am unable to provide substantial guidance to my wife regarding Islam, as she has practiced this faith for a longer duration. Nevertheless, my wife participates in a recitation community that can sustain and enhance her spirituality, while also fostering connections with fellow Indonesians and preserving her cultural memories. I have never opposed her involvement in these communities.³⁸

Social and religious communities in Australia can significantly benefit Indonesian diaspora families by fostering a sense of belonging, providing assistance, and ensuring cultural continuity. These communities offer emotional and practical support, helping families overcome hardships in a foreign nation. Engaging in these communities enhances identity, cultural heritage, and community. They also coordinate events, provide advice on various aspects of life, and foster a sense of community, enhancing the well-being and resilience of Indonesian diaspora families.³⁹

³⁶ Interview with Drew, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, Sydney, 20 Sept 2023.

³⁷ Interview with Rahma, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, Sydney, 21 Sept 2023.

³⁸ Interview with Iwin, an Australian converted Muslim, Sydney, 20 September 2023.

³⁹ Agus Ahmad Safei, et.al., "Dealing with Islamophobia: Expanding Religious Engagement to Civic Engagement among the Indonesian Muslim Community in Australia," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 78, no. 4 (2022), p. 8.

Preserving and Formulating Identities Across Generations

The experiences of Indonesian Muslim diasporas in mixed marriages demonstrate the formation of cultural hybridity, which is not singular but rather a confluence of diverse life components. This study corroborated the assertions made by Childs in 2018. The concept of cultural hybridization illustrates a process of self and other identification arising from negotiated interactions among families, communities, educational institutions, and broader structural entities such as government and international media.⁴⁰ Their experiences also demonstrate their multifaceted approach, integrating religious, cultural, and social elements to preserve and construct their identities while addressing the challenges and opportunities of life in a new country.⁴¹

First generation of diaspora in this research preserve their Indonesian citizenship through religious observances, cultural participation, and community engagement. Many retain Indonesian passports and choose not to pursue Australian citizenship to visit their country of origin. Engaging in religious practices, such as mosque attendance and communal prayers, reinforces a strong link to their Muslim identity. Cultural events and celebrations help maintain a connection to their heritage, including customs, culinary practices, and language. Indonesian Muslim community organizations provide a support system, fostering a sense of community and cohesion among the diaspora. Community engagement also facilitates education and awareness, enabling individuals to pursue knowledge about their cultural and religious past. Utilizing media and technology to stay informed about Indonesian news and virtual interactions with relatives helps preserve a connection to their hometown. They are also active in monitoring the evolution of life in Indonesia, participating in general elections and supporting their preferred presidential candidates. I closely monitored political developments in Indonesia while in Australia, rather than during my time in Indonesia. Being from Aceh, where Jakarta is distant, I am aware of the complex historical dynamics between Acehnese people and the Indonesian state. Currently, I possess a heightened concern for Indonesia and will always identify as an Indonesia.⁴² To this day, I weep whenever I hear the Indonesia Raya song, despite having previously resided in Indonesia. What I yearn for most is the cuisine and the simple lifestyle of my hometown. I successfully convinced my husband to return

⁴⁰ Erica Chito Childs, 'Critical Mixed Race in Global Perspective: An Introduction', *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 39, no. 4 (2018), p. 379–81.

⁴¹ Wasisto Raharjo Jati, "Being Away from Home in Australia: The Indonesian Diaspora in Canberra," *Humaniora* 33, no. 2 (2021), p. 93–102.

⁴² Interview with Rahma, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, Sydney, 21 Sept 2023.

annually. Additionally, I purchased land there for gardening, as I am aware of my husband's passion for it.⁴³

Second generations are formulating identity as Australian-Indonesian Muslims. This generation was born to Australian citizenship, combines their Indonesian ancestry, Islamic beliefs, and Australian cultural milieu to form their identity as Australian Indonesian Muslims. They often acquire proficiency in Indonesian through intimate communication with their mothers, resulting in a unique synthesis of both identities. They engage in outdoor living and beach culture, participating in beach-related activities and participating in Australian Muslim organizations and community events.

Highlighting their Islamic faith is crucial for identity formation, as they participate in local Muslim communities, attend mosques, and participate in religious activities. They also engage in civic life, including local government and voluntary work. They actively engage in educational and professional domains in Australia, fostering personal development and integration into the wider Australian society. They participate in interfaith discourse with diverse religious origins, promoting understanding and commonality. Media representation, both mainstream and within specific communities, influences identity formation by encapsulating the complex identity of Indonesian Muslims in Australia.

The third generation of Indonesian Muslim diaspora often identifies as Australian Muslims of Indonesian descent, blending elements of their ancestral homeland with Australian culture. This fusion enhances their Australian identity while recognizing their Indonesian heritage. They have a hybrid national pride, participating in multicultural activities that highlight diversity and contributions to the wider Australian identity.

Islam is a fundamental aspect of their identity, with consistent religious activities, interaction with the local Muslim community, and compliance with Islamic principles fostering a strong identity as Australian Muslims of Indonesian heritage. Family relationships and upbringing and mentoring from parents and extended family members significantly influence their self-identification. The third generation may establish diverse social networks, fostering a comprehensive awareness of identity and promoting an inclusive viewpoint. Media, literature, and cultural events also influence their perception of their identity, fostering a sense of inclusion within the broader Australian community.

Intermarriage is one of the most conclusive markers of the removal of social and cultural barriers that leads to social and cultural integration, as demonstrated by the finding that was presented earlier. This is the case due to the fact that integration, or *asabiyyah* in Ibn Khaldun's words, is accomplished by close social interaction between individuals of two different nationalities.

⁴³ Interview with Rita, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, New South Wales, 22 Sept 2023.

Furthermore, this paper argues, on the basis of our findings, that the intermarried partners, despite coming from different social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, shared some common values and aspirations. These shared values and aspirations served as components for social cohesion and contributed to social integration within the larger context of multiculturalism in Australia. The purpose of this study is to illustrate the impact that intermarriage has on the social and cultural identities of the next generation, which will ultimately have mixed or multi-ethnic origins after that generation.

Inter-marriage in the context of Indonesian Muslim couples residing in Australia as an important sociological phenomenon can be explained and understood in a number of ways. One of those is to apply Ibn Khaldun's concept of *'asabiyyah*, an Arabic term denoting "group feeling", "solidarity", or "social cohesion". *'Asabiyyah* is a concept of "social unity", "group solidarity" or "collective sentiment" with an emphasis on "concordance" or "collective consciousness", and a shared sense of purpose and social cohesion, initially used by Ibn Khaldun in the context of tribalism and clannism.⁴⁴

Although the concept of *'asabiyyah* was already in use in pre-Islamic Arabia, it was Ibn Khaldun who popularized it through his *Muqaddimah* in which he explains *'asabiyyah* as the essential bond of human society. Ibn Khaldun argued that *'asabiyyah* is cyclical and through it the rise and fall of communities, states, dynasties, societies, and human civilisations can be understood. In such a process *'asabiyyah* is strongest at the establishing point of a civilization and gradually declines as the civilization advances, and it perishes and is replaced by a new civilization.

For Ibn Khaldun, the principal unit of analysis in his theory of human collectivity is *umran* (civilisation). In his worldview, *umran*, which would be in our understanding of the "social" was central. He divides civilization into two – nomadic/rural and sedentary/urban – and explains how there is a movement from one to the other, that is, a transition from *umran badawi* (rural) to *umran hadari* (urban). *Umran*, in Ibn Khaldun's view is not something fixed or an artefact but rather a dynamic process. Humans by nature, asserts Ibn Khaldun, are social beings who favour collective existence over individual living and therefore opt for living together, cooperate with one another, and be assistance to each other. He says, "... human beings cannot live and exist except through social organization and co-operation for the purpose of obtaining their food and other necessities of life."⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Syed Alatas, "A Khaldunian Exemplar for a Historical Sociology for the South," *Current Sociology* 54, no. 3 (2006), p. 397–411.

⁴⁵ Ibn Khaldūn. *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*. Translated by Franz Rosenthal. Vol. 3. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967, p. 151.

However, this is not always the case as individuals give into worldly temptations and motivated by self-interest, sometimes act against group interest and collective benefit thereby contributing to the weakening and destabilisation of the society. He notes that nomadic tribes lived together in a cooperative and unselfish manner manifesting strong social solidarity or '*asabiyyah*'. Nomads as *umran badawi* people essentially lead a very simple and natural life far removed from life of luxury, opulence, and lavishness. They are hard workers, display great bravery, and are connected together by their close ancestral or tribal bonds.

Although they can be fierce but overall possess good character and are subservient only to their tribal heads with outstanding character '*asabiyyah*' acts as a bridge to unite them together. We found in our research that '*asabiyyah*' is present and most strong in inter-marriage Indonesian Muslim couples living in Australia when both the husband and wife share a common Islamic worldview and share a common purpose of life. When the couple pursue a life together governed by Islamic principles and values and when they share a common purpose of life, that is, to live an Islamic way of life and have a good life here and a better one in the Hereafter, they are happy together and enjoy each other's company. However, when one party or both parties separately wishes to emphasise cultural values (e.g. Indonesian culture in contrast to Islamic values) and material pursuit of happiness and there is a dis-alignment in common interests, shared goals, and separate trajectories, then there is division, disharmony, and trouble.

In the inter-marriage arrangement regarding Indonesian Muslim couples residing in Australia, Islam is generally proven to be a positive force, the quintessence of '*asabiyyah*', in the family. When couples have connection between faith and their family life, Islam generally fosters more happiness, greater stability, and a deeper sense of meaning. Sharing a common faith the spouses found that they connect with each other better and '*asabiyyah*' or solidarity is strong. Attending mosque together, praying together, and having a family-oriented ethos, for example, provide couples a common platform and strengthen their marriage and family life. Prayer and relying on the divine helps couples deal with stress and worries, enabling them to focus on shared beliefs and hopes for the future, and allows them to manage challenges and problems in their relationship and in their lives constructively and keeping them together and not apart.

Conclusion

Marriage with a partner of a differing ethnicity, nationality, or religion is substantiated by the concept of *jodoh* (soul-mates), which involves spiritual rituals and personal validation. Inter-marriage couples face four levels of differences: positive, mildly, moderately, and highly challenging. The Indonesian Muslim diaspora in Australia maintains family resilience despite significant social

disparities through a dual-integrated approach, consisting of faith and effort. They believe that God has united them despite numerous challenges, and the religious conversion of a spouse is a significant aspect in dissolving the marriage connection. They engage in negotiation, compromise, and reconciliation over their conflicts to sustain the family. Mixed marriages can engender identity dualism when individuals feel affiliated with both Indonesian and Australian communities with distinct norms and values. *Asabiyyah* theory explains how group solidarity mechanisms operate in navigating profound contrasts, particularly in mixed marriages between Indonesian Muslims and Australian converts, which often pertain to religion and social context. This study shows that the intermarried partners, despite coming from diverse social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, had some common ideals and goals who used these in their patterns of social interaction to build solidarity. Furthermore, the study revealed that the crossing of racial and ethnic traits through intermarriage promotes relational strength and social cohesion within in-groups and between in-groups and out-groups. Within the greater context of multiculturalism in Australia, these shared beliefs and goals served as components for social cohesiveness and contributed to social integration. In order to highlight the impact that intermarriage has on the social and cultural identities of the following generation, which will ultimately have mixed or multi-ethnic origins after that generation, the objective of this study is to provide an illustration of the impact that intermarriage has.

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Interviews

Interview with Drew, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, Sydney, 20 Sept 2023.

Interview with Iwin, an Australian converted Muslim, Sydney, 20 September 2023.

Interview with Neti, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, Canberra, 19 Sept 2023.

Interview with Rahma, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, Sydney, 21 Sept 2023.

Interview with Rita, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, New South Wales, 22 Sept 2023.

Interview with Sofi, an Indonesian woman involved in intermarriage, Canberra, 27 Sept 2023.