

## Article

# Integrating Intercultural Philosophy into the High School Curriculum: Toward a Deliberative Pedagogy of *Tadabbur* in Diasporic Muslim Education

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**Abstract:** This article explores the pedagogical aspects of intercultural philosophy and identifies instructional strategies for Islamic school curricula in diaspora. It combines Western teaching methods peculiar to deliberative pedagogy with the Islamic notion of *Tadabbur*, Arabic for ‘to deliberate’ and ‘carefully consider’ the outcomes. It aims to provide insights into implementing intercultural philosophy as pedagogy and highlights examples of its application in Muslim educational contexts. How can intercultural philosophy be implemented in class, especially in the high school curriculum in diaspora? It emphasizes the potential benefits and compatibility of intercultural philosophy from a Muslim educational perspective. It offers practical insights and examples for educators who seek to integrate intercultural philosophy into their curricula. Bridging the gap between East and West provides a unique perspective on incorporating diverse philosophical traditions using the same teaching strategies. More specifically, this article introduces *Tadabbur* through instructional strategies such as Think–Pair–Share and the 5E instructional model, which use deliberative pedagogy. Intercultural philosophy, therefore, contributes to the cultural and religious diversification of curriculum theorizing and implementation.

**Keywords:** intercultural philosophy; deliberative pedagogy; Muslim education; *Tadabbur*; philosophy in schools



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## 1. Introduction

This article envisions intercultural philosophy as a pedagogy focused on developing thinking and reasoning skills. It explores how to implement this philosophy in the secondary education classroom by merging the Western tradition of deliberative pedagogy with the Islamic notion of *Tadabbur*. In seeking to provide a practical application of intercultural philosophy in the high school curriculum in diaspora, this study asks the following questions: Is there a practical application to intercultural philosophy? Can East meet West in curriculum theorizing? How can *Tadabbur* be effectively integrated into the secondary school curriculum? To answer these questions, this study defines intercultural philosophy as the efforts to combine Western and Islamic philosophical traditions, such as deliberate pedagogy and *Tadabbur*, respectively. This article also partly addresses the lack of visibility of philosophy in Western-oriented curricula, as high school students are trained in a secular system that is vocational, functionalist, and pragmatic. Consequently, this project builds upon previous studies that reconcile philosophy with educational contexts (Lone and Burroughs 2016) and integrates intercultural philosophy into Muslim education by exploring the aspects of deliberative pedagogy that resonate with Islamic thought and education. Furthermore, this study attempts to restore the significance of, and to consider the encouragement of, plurality in teaching philosophy to high school students as an intercultural paradigm. It proposes an understanding of intercultural philosophy as a fusion of the

Western approach of deliberative pedagogy and Islamic thought represented by *Tadabbur* in a way beneficial to Muslim youth and conducive to intercultural responsive teaching.

Integrating Islamic teachings could be a powerful catalyst for fostering critical thinking skills. Such teachings can be integrated into the students' general education in Muslim and non-Muslim countries. Infusing *Tadabbur* into the secondary school curriculum can contribute to cultivating critical thinking skills, ultimately assisting and enabling Muslim high school students to become more informed and thoughtful global citizens. This article contributes to the broader dialogue on the universal value of incorporating religious teachings into educational frameworks. It aims to provide insights into how Islamic teachings, specifically *Tadabbur*, can be leveraged to enrich the diasporic educational experience. The focus on critical thinking development reflects a broader commitment to preparing students not just as learners of information but as analytical thinkers and global citizens.

## 2. Why Teach Philosophy in High School in the First Place?

Studying philosophy fosters the sense of curiosity that drives our day-to-day thinking and encourages a questioning attitude toward ourselves, society, and the world. However, schools often see it as a Pandora's box that unleashes the world's malignant ills. Schools tend to focus more on technical questions that can be satisfactorily answered through the acquisition and analysis of information. A methodized search for information can answer these questions, while philosophy helps us answer questions about our family, human, and social obligations. For instance, Peter Adamson (2018) draws attention to how the contemporary French high school system acknowledges the study of philosophy, which fosters and necessitates open-mindedness, nurtures a willingness to evaluate theses, and proposes an antithetical position rather than dogmatically adhering to a single standpoint. Such a tendency to accommodate multiple perspectives among teenagers seems to be a rare commodity. Therefore, it might be prudent to draw inspiration from logical and reasoning practices by offering future generations the opportunity to study philosophy: "Around the world, teenagers are taking philosophy classes. For instance, French students take a philosophy exam at the end of their secondary education, and in 2008, federal law in Brazil made the discipline compulsory for high school students" (Adamson 2018, p. 43). Teaching philosophy to high school students helps them develop decision-making skills, fosters the ability to articulate and defend ideas, and encourages the problematization of what people take for granted.

The philosophy that needs to be taught is implementation-oriented, with a practical application. Teaching philosophy is essential not to cultures that seek to expand but to those who seek to defend, if not better understand, their cultural assemblages. In so doing, they are better able to withstand an intellectual assault by the encroaching international systems of education: "Schools may try to find some balance between preparing children to live in that heterogeneous culture and encouraging them to be critical of it, but they cannot isolate them from it" (Haydon 2007, p. 9). But if philosophy of education equally recognizes the influence of culture on students then it needs to "fruitfully interact with its intellectual neighbours" (Haydon 2007, p. 9). That said, the challenge of teaching philosophy tends to be technocratic in nature. In its attempt to nurture independent thinkers, schooling internalizes the division of knowledge into technical and everyday knowledge: "Any question that is not a technical question is an everyday question and vice versa. This way of analytically dividing questions mirrors the fact that the modern world is, sociological speaking, divided into two mutually antagonistic cultures, the expert and the 'lay'" (Turnbull 1999, p. 11). The result is a technocratic society in which, for instance, ethical obligations such as decisions about family life, questions of the soul, and the individual pursuit of happiness tend to be considered and treated like everyday questions that tend to be placed outside the walls of academic and secular education: "What time is it?" is an everyday question; experts ask, "What is time?" A philosopher, however, asks how I should spend this time and what makes it worthwhile. Therefore, "No amount of fact-gathering can answer this type of question" (Turnbull 1999, p. 13). Similarly, "Are you a religious

person?” is a common question. A scientist would ask, “How verifiable is the source of religious claims?” while a philosopher asks, “How can religion help us navigate suffering and tragic loss or make the right decision in life?” These two examples suggest that simply collecting facts cannot adequately address these philosophical questions.

Over the last few decades, philosophy has often been regarded as an isolated academic subject taught in higher education, leading to a widespread sense of crisis in philosophy regarding its identity and applicability. In this view, philosophy has allegedly divorced itself from vocational discourses of study: “Philosophy is in an apparent crisis of relevance, confidence and trust. Philosophy is seen in the public as dead, no longer serving ideological functions, no longer a solid backing for political theory, it can be by-passed as a grand narrative of contemporary society” (Bruseker 2003, p. 27). Furthermore, philosophy is seen as isolated from daily life, let alone from students’ school life and education. Not only does this article contribute to teaching Muslim students to integrate philosophy into their daily lives in diaspora, but it also helps them build a stable sense of self/identity that at once places their religion/culture on par with Western societies and demonstrates to them how that identity can coexist with and be in fruitful dialogue with the identity and traditions of non-Muslim cultures.

### 3. Intercultural Philosophy and Why It Matters in Education

This section begins by addressing the matter of definition: rather than engaging in a precise definition, it briefly clarifies what intercultural philosophy is not. First, teaching philosophical concepts and competencies that engage students in ethical and existential issues is often conflated with the ability to “philosophize” or reflect, which is partially aligned with critical literacy. Second, intercultural philosophy can be linked to comparative philosophy “together [with] philosophical traditions that have developed in relative isolation from one another and that are defined quite broadly along cultural and regional lines” (Wong 2020). That said, whereas the former entails an encounter between two distinct cultures, the latter may specifically pertain to two different discourses within Western philosophical tradition. Intercultural philosophy is a study of philosophy that examines different cultural perspectives on perennial questions, such as the meaning of life and the nature of knowledge and reality. It seeks to build bridges between wisdom traditions and advocates for dialogical understanding, especially regarding “comprehensive mutuality, reciprocity, and equality” (United Church of Canada 2011). It often involves studying and comparing different philosophical traditions, such as Western, Islamic, African, Asian, Indian, or Indigenous philosophies, to gain insights into human thought and to experience diversity. Intercultural philosophy aims to foster cross-cultural philosophical encounters and diversify epistemic inquiry.

The challenges faced by diasporic youth call for changes in perspectives and approaches to how culture is viewed and appreciated and remind us of the need for a shared vision grounded in wisdom traditions. The aim is to “provide a framework for reconciling the very many different approaches and different types of knowledge . . . This approach challenges us to move beyond thinking in dichotomies . . . It encourages us to reconcile seemingly contradictory information in order to view intercultural encounters from a larger perspective” (Sadri and Flammia 2011, p. 75). Intercultural philosophy, therefore, uses an interpretive approach to identify similarities and establish synthesis among cross-cultural ethics and philosophies. It reconciles synthesis-based intercultural ethics with pedagogy by discussing how teachers infuse these practices into interculturally responsive teaching and learning when teaching social studies and the theory of knowledge/philosophy. It adopts an intercultural approach to teaching philosophical inquiry.

Intercultural philosophy is a field of study that challenges established worldviews, identifies common philosophical principles, redefines pre-existing divisions, and incorporates epistemic methodologies from non-Western traditions.

The concept of interculturality informed by such an intercultural philosophy seeks to harness the relevant aspects of different cultures, philosophies, and

religions in constructing frameworks for integration. Although the conscious aspiration of these fusions is still lacking in the world's philosophies, the effort to change the status quo should be sustained (Chimakonam and Ofana 2022, p. 610).

Its primary objective is to foster dialogue and understanding between cultures that may initially appear to be in conflict. Mall writes that “intercultural philosophy stands for a process of emancipation from all types of centrisms, whether European or non-European”, and that it seeks to exhibit “a philosophical attitude, a philosophical conviction that no one philosophy is the philosophy for the whole of humankind” (Mall 2000a, p. xii). Intercultural philosophy, therefore, aims to transcend the categorization of philosophy as essentially a Western endeavor and strives to embrace a philosophical mindset that recognizes the limitations of any single philosophy in encompassing the entirety of human knowledge and experience. In essence, it asserts that there is always a plurality of philosophical perspectives, methods, and approaches not bound by specific cultural contexts. This article uses intercultural philosophy to identify affinities and commonalities in how two seemingly different cultures approach a philosophical exercise. It aims to bridge the gaps between culture and philosophical traditions by promoting an inclusive and diverse approach to philosophical inquiry. A space where dialogue and mutual enrichment occur enables a deeper understanding and appreciation of the diverse ways human beings engage with perennial questions.

Intercultural philosophy attempts to challenge the European monopoly over philosophy and its implicit denial of non-Western epistemic realities, ways of learning, or dissemination of knowledge, which relegates all forms of philosophies infused in other cultures to secondary positions:

By incorporating non-Western traditions into teaching and research, intercultural philosophy attempts to balance the present-day philosophical canon dominated by texts written by ‘white men’. Thus, an intercultural perspective is characterised by a sincere effort to recognise the equality of theoretical contributions from different regions and traditions of the world and integrate them into an open discourse on various theoretical issues (Schepen and Graness 2019, p. 1).

Therefore, interculturality is not just an invitation towards a sense of gratitude and acknowledgement on the part of philosophy but is also an act of recognition, integration, and validation. Relying on only one information source is insufficient to make informed and thorough decisions about curriculum objectives. Tyler (2017) has pointed out that in order to make wise and comprehensive decisions, one must consider multiple sources of information: “No single source of information is adequate to provide a basis for wise and comprehensive decisions about the objectives of a school” (p. 61). In effect, intercultural philosophy is a pathfinder among the conversation between and convergence of different ways of being: “It is the task of intercultural philosophy to mediate between . . . two ends, i.e., the specific philosophies as they are found in different cultures and the universal philosophy which is not culturally bound itself” (Mall 2000a, para. 1). The possibility of a universal philosophy suggests that some philosophical questions and methods are not restricted to specific cultures and may traverse across cultures.

Kimmerle (1994) remarks that philosophy is a beast of burden in terms of its relevance to everyday and cultural contexts: “In today’s world, philosophy will be intercultural, or it will be nothing else than an academic activity without social relevance” (quoted in Schepen and Graness 2019, p. 4). Universalizing philosophy beyond the European domain and acknowledging non-Western epistemologies can be fair and productive yet vexing and polemic: “It is the task of intercultural philosophy to mediate between. . .two ends, i.e., the specific philosophies as they are found in different cultures and the universal philosophy which is not culturally bound itself.” (Mall 2000b). Peter Adamson (2019) recognizes a crisis in disciplinarity in terms of the difficulty of dividing philosophy chronologically “along cultural boundaries” (p. 43). He points out that European philosophy is at the forefront, with non-European traditions placed in secondary positions. Adamson argues that cultural boundaries subvert the chronological order imposed by European thought:

“The stories of Islamic philosophy overlap, thanks to centuries of Muslim civilization in the Iberian peninsula. And this sort of overlapping reappears across history and around the globe” (Adamson 2019, p. 43). This shift happened not only because of the demand for global contextualization of what used to be seen as exclusively European discourses such as philosophy, ethics, culture, and arts but also because, again to the European mind, “the demand for universal validity and acceptance has become paradoxical, and the need for a binding pluralism becomes incumbent on us” (Mall 2000a, p. 2). Related to the issue of relevance, H. Kimmerle argues in *Die Dimensionen des Interkulturellen* (1994) that intercultural philosophy provides a conceptual framework through which culture is redefined and renegotiated and allows philosophy itself to claim more relevance to present-day society:

The philosophical contribution to a renegotiation of the relationship between cultures is decisive for the status of philosophy today. This contribution concerns one of the main issues of our time—upon whose solution the possibility of a humane and dignified life greatly depends. It is for this reason that philosophy must either become intercultural, or else become nothing more than an academic preoccupation void of societal relevance (quoted in Yousefi 2007, p. 119).

No doubt, re-evaluating the interaction between cultures plays a significant role in the current status of philosophy. Subsequently, it is imperative for philosophy to either welcome an intercultural approach or risk being reduced to a mere scholarly discourse, largely devoid of social relevance, in a world that is becoming increasingly conscious of and respectful towards individuals or communities who have historically been sidelined or marginalized. The comparative approach is central to intercultural philosophy, especially among the early proponents of cross-cultural philosophical interactions: “the general examination of the ways in which human beings of all races and cultures reflect upon their actions and act upon their reflections” (Masson-Oursel 1951, p. 6). Similarly, for Franz Martin Wimmer, intercultural philosophy gives voice to marginalized philosophies: “the endeavour to give expression to the many and often marginalized voices of philosophy in their respective cultural contexts and thereby to generate a shared, fruitful discussion granting equal rights to all,” and its aim was “to facilitate and develop a new and timely culture of a plurality of philosophical dialogues between thinkers from around the world” (quoted in Sweet 2014, p. 4). Intercultural philosophy, therefore, endeavors to contest the prevailing European dominance in the field of philosophy, which inadvertently dismisses and marginalizes non-Western epistemic realities, modes of acquiring knowledge, and methods of knowledge dissemination. Hence, interculturality signifies more than a mere call for appreciation and acknowledgment within the realm of philosophy. Instead, it embodies a process of acknowledging, incorporating, and validating these diverse philosophical perspectives. It identifies and discusses philosophical practices that contribute to enacting intercultural education and responds to the non-visibility of philosophy in the Western-driven curriculum.

#### 4. Islamic Thought and the Tripartite Model of Philosophical Engagement

In Islamic thought, critical thinking and reason are woven intricately into the fabric of the religion’s teachings. The Quran repeatedly extols the virtue of intellect, urging believers to contemplate the signs of creation and engage in thoughtful reflection. Three main cognitive processes or intellectual exercises seem to precondition knowledge location and discovery: *Ta’aqul*, *Tafakkur*, and *Tadabbur*. These principles are paramount to understanding the importance of critical thinking within the Islamic framework. Islam constantly encourages believers to employ reason and contemplation in their spiritual journey and their lives in general. Throughout the Quran, numerous verses emphasize the divine invitation to think, reflect, and ponder over the mysteries of existence. The Quranic revelation acknowledges the inherent dignity of human intellect and its pivotal role in understanding the profound wisdom of Allah’s guidance. Critical thinking is encouraged and celebrated, as exemplified in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:269),<sup>1</sup> a verse that extols bestowed



wisdom and emphasizes its association with a discerning understanding. Although this article focuses only on *Tadabbur* and its resonance with deliberative pedagogy, this section provides short descriptions of the three philosophical practices of the tripartite model.

#### 4.1. *Ta'aqqul: To Understand and Rationalize*

*Ta'aqqul* comes from the root *aqala*, which is associated with intellect, reason, and understanding.<sup>2</sup> It is a fundamental concept in Islam that demonstrates the significance of using intellect and reason to comprehend the profound wisdom inherent in Islamic teachings. The Quran consistently encourages believers to engage their intellect in understanding divine messages, as divinely endowed wisdom empowers believers to navigate the complexities of life with a discerning mind and enables them to make informed decisions and comprehend the moral and spiritual dimensions of their faith. *Ta'aqqul* complements belief and transforms it into a dynamic force that involves heartfelt devotion and engages the intellect in deciphering the intricate layers of Islamic principles. Faith, therefore, comes from the reasoning of *Ta'aqqul* with belief. The Quranic emphasis on understanding and wisdom aligns with the overarching Islamic belief in the harmony between faith and reason, fostering a holistic approach to spiritual enlightenment. *Ta'aqqul* thus serves as a beacon guiding believers to a deeper understanding of the divine wisdom embedded in the Islamic framework, promoting a thoughtful and enlightened engagement with one's faith.

#### 4.2. *Tafakkur: To Think and Reflect*

*Tafakkur*, a comprehensive concept in Islam, encompasses deep contemplation and thoughtful consideration across various facets of life. The word comes from the root *fakara*, which broadly means 'to think, reflect, or contemplate.' Although the word is not explicitly mentioned in the Quran, its essence permeates through the scriptures, inviting believers to reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth. In Surah Al-Imran (3:191),<sup>3</sup> believers are urged to remember Allah in various states—standing, sitting, and lying on their sides—while reflecting on the profound nature of the cosmos. This Quranic call to contemplation goes beyond religious matters, encouraging believers to engage in critical thinking and self-reflection in all aspects of life. *Tafakkur* is a holistic approach to understanding the purpose of existence and appreciating the interconnectedness of creation. By contemplating the signs of Allah's creation, believers embark on a journey of intellectual and spiritual growth, seeking wisdom and understanding in the intricate tapestry of the world around them (Shakir 2021). Whereas *Ta'aqqul* refers to a process of rationalization that involves providing logical explanations for actions, decisions, and beliefs, *Tafakkur* is a transformative practice that fosters a deep connection with the Creator through a profound understanding of His creation.

#### 4.3. *Tadabbur: To Deliberate and Scrutinize*

*Tadabbur*, in Arabic, is derived from the root word *dabara*, which refers to looking at the end of something and what is behind it. It means examining something, considering its consequences, and figuring out and predicting the outcomes of one's actions. Engaging in the *Tadabbur* of a matter involves deep thought and deliberation on the issue, exploring its outcomes beyond what is immediately apparent and inspecting what may not be visible on the surface (Al-Shanqiti 2021). The concept, deeply entrenched in Islamic teachings, urges believers to engage in deliberative thinking. Quranic verses, such as in Surah Muhammad (47:24)<sup>4</sup> and Surah Al-Mu'minun (23:68),<sup>5</sup> show the importance of pondering the signs of creation.

*Tadabbur* initiates a careful consideration of the text, seeking to understand not only its literal meanings but also the profound wisdom embedded in the words of Allah. It encourages believers to ponder the implications of the verses on their lives and fosters a deep connection with divine guidance. This analysis-oriented practice is not confined to a specific set of verses but is a continuous process that guides individuals toward a more profound understanding of their faith. *Tadabbur*, thus, serves as a pathway to

spiritual enlightenment, aligning believers with the intended purpose of divine revelations and facilitating a transformative journey toward a more conscious and mindful existence informed by the spirit of inquiry.

The Quran consistently calling believers to engage in intellectual endeavors reinforces the necessity of its constant presence in Muslims' lives, starting with school. Muslim educators in contemporary contexts must demonstrate proactive approaches in their methods, blending tradition with modern pedagogical practices. Islamic schools' curricula should undergo continuous substantial reforms to align the curriculum with global standards while preserving the religious values that form the identity of Muslim youth. The commitment to a balanced and forward-looking education system sets the stage for exploring innovative teaching methodologies, such as incorporating *Tadabbur*. Cultivating skills such as critical thinking at an early age lays a robust philosophical foundation for a lifetime of enriched learning and adaptive thinking.

### 5. Critical Thinking, Deliberative Pedagogy, and Islamic Education

Islamic schools have been actively engaged in comprehensive efforts to advance their education system and curricula. Prioritizing critical thinking as an essential skill is not unique to Muslim teachings; it aligns with a global trend in modern education. However, the challenge lies in teaching the abstract concept of "thinking." Studies such as those of [Abd Rahim et al. \(2019\)](#) indicate that many curricula often fall short of sufficiently challenging students to develop the necessary reasoning abilities for navigating the complexities of modern life. For this reason, it is essential to equip Muslim students with intercultural skills that successfully demonstrate that Islamic thought and philosophy are not separated from their daily lives.

When addressing this contemporary educational challenge, Muslim educators must recognize the Islamic sources that reflect intercultural ways of being and from which curriculum designs can be drawn. Over centuries, Muslim scholars have underscored the significance of reflection and contemplation as integral to intellectual and spiritual growth. Notably, during the Islamic Golden Age, scholars such as Ibn Rushd (Averroes) merged Aristotelian philosophy with Islamic thought, highlighting the importance of deliberation in approaching the world and one's worldviews ([Abdul-Jabbar 2023](#)). These historical intersections have laid the foundation for the intellectual tradition that Muslim educators and philosophers continue to embrace. Lastly, drawing insights from research in Malaysia, a positive correlation emerges between the infusion of Islamic values and the development of critical thinking skills ([Asyafah 2014](#)). This intercultural approach provides valuable perspectives on the effectiveness of aligning education with philosophical and religious values to enhance critical thinking skills.

In implementing *Tadabbur* into the secondary education curriculum of Islamic schools, this study uses deliberative pedagogy as a guiding framework. Deliberative pedagogy is an educational approach centered on fostering critical thinking and inclusive dialogue ([Shaffer et al. 2017](#)). Rooted in the belief that meaningful learning emerges through thoughtful engagement and exchange of ideas, deliberative pedagogy is an approach to education that "requires an intellectual and ethical commitment, a refusal to divorce philosophy from education, a pluralistic stance, and a collective vision of a community" ([Abdul-Jabbar 2023](#), p. 138). This approach encourages students to explore, question, and collaboratively engage in analysis. In 1969, Schwab advocated for a curriculum that is grounded in deliberation: "It is the discipline concerned with choice and action, in contrast with the theoretic, which is concerned with knowledge. Its methods lead to defensible decisions" and not "to warranted conclusions" (p. 2). Deliberation, therefore, is the act of making sound and reasonable decisions: "[It] must try to identify . . . [and] generate alternative solutions . . . to trace the branching pathways of consequences which may flow from each alternative and affect desiderata. It must then weigh alternatives and their costs and consequences" ([Schwab 1969](#), p. 20). In effect, deliberative pedagogy was a fundamental component in theorizing Western curricula. The context of this study involves structuring classroom activities that

prompt students to engage in purposeful inquiry, deliberation, and prudence, aligning with the principles of *Tadabbur*. Such an approach goes beyond traditional teaching methods by prioritizing the development of students' abilities to think critically, communicate effectively, and navigate complex issues, essential skills for fostering global citizenship. Deliberative pedagogy aims to cultivate skills early on, providing students with a robust foundation for a lifetime of enriched learning and adaptive thinking.

Introducing and instilling Islamic methods such as *Tadabbur* at a young age holds immense potential for enriching students' academic and personal lives. As students transition to young adulthood, this pivotal stage becomes ideal for cultivating critical thinking skills rooted in Islamic traditions. *Tadabbur*, with its emphasis on deliberative thinking and integration with daily life, aligns with the necessity of learning critical thinking skills, encouraging students to explore philosophical implications and the deeper meanings of the knowledge they acquire. Integrating *Tadabbur* into the curriculum during the high school years lays the groundwork for a holistic educational experience that fosters academic excellence and instills Islamic values.

Exposure to deliberative pedagogy via *Tadabbur* can equip students with unique skills and nuances that extend beyond traditional educational approaches. The emphasis on the process of weighing options and prudently considering information before making a decision or forming judgments empowers students to approach challenges with a thoughtful mindset, promoting a deeper understanding of the subjects they encounter. Moreover, integrating Islamic methods at a young age establishes a foundation for ethical decision making and fosters qualities such as empathy, tolerance, and a sense of responsibility. As the students progress in their academic journey, the early introduction of deliberative pedagogy continues to reverberate among them, enhancing their ability to critically analyze information, engage in meaningful dialogue, and navigate the complexities of the modern world. Introducing *Tadabbur* to Islamic high schools, especially within the realms of humanities, English, and social sciences, unveils a transformative potential for students. For instance, in literature classes, *Tadabbur* can deepen students' appreciation for literary nuances and encourage them to contemplate the underlying messages within texts. *Tadabbur* can also shape a more profound understanding of historical events, fostering a philosophical and nuanced view of the societal implications of the past. It can enhance students' ability to analyze and interpret complex social phenomena, aligning with reflective thinking principles.

## 6. Implementing *Tadabbur* in the Classroom

Several Western teaching activities incorporate aspects of *Tadabbur* or teach the same skills and mindfulness. However, Muslim students should be informed by the teacher that they were undertaking *Tadabbur* before such activities were carried out. Ideally, the assignment of these activities would include a preliminary explanation by the teacher of how these activities incorporate what *Tadabbur* is and how such activities or teaching strategies implement *Tadabbur* and, potentially, create a space for the teacher to discuss intercultural philosophical issues. A powerful pedagogical tool, Think–Pair–Share, intricately integrates with the essence of *Tadabbur* to guide students through individual critical effort, collaborative discussion, and collective sharing. Think–Pair–Share is a teaching strategy that aligns with the principles of *Tadabbur*. This strategy involves students individually reflecting on a concept, discussing their thoughts with a partner, and then sharing their ideas with the class. Through this process, students engage in reflective contemplation, which fosters a deeper understanding of the subjects they encounter. The collaborative element encourages students to explore diverse perspectives and, in so doing, enriches their contemplative experience. Applying deliberative pedagogy to this approach produces a similar instructional strategy: discover–deliberate–decide. The teacher could begin with an engaging question about a controversial topic in a typical example of this strategy. For instance, before assigning a reading about nature, the teacher asks the students to reflect individually on the intricate designs found in various plants and animals to discover a



unifying pattern. After close reading and finding textual evidence to support their discoveries, students pair up to deliberate and discuss their thoughts and share the evidence they have found. Like Think–Pair–Share, the discover–deliberate–decide process allows students to explore diverse viewpoints and deepen their understanding. It also ensures that the thinking process is based on discovering a pattern or identifying a contradiction and ambiguity. Working from the evidence they have discovered, students then deliberate by figuring out several alternatives and solutions. Then, the pair will have to make informed choices and reach decisions based on the information with which they are provided. Finally, each pair shares their decision with the entire class. Through this process, students not only engage in individual discoveries but also benefit from collective deliberation in a jury-like manner, enhancing their critical thinking skills and enriching their *Tadabbur* of the subject and their ability to make decisions in academia and life. Appropriating Think–Pair–Share to apply *Tadabbur* through discover–deliberate–decide formulates an intercultural praxis that harmonizes Western approaches with Islamic-oriented pedagogy.

Another popular Western approach to teaching is the 5E instructional model, which emphasizes critical literacy (Bybee and Landes 1990). This model is rooted in cognitive psychology and constructivist learning theory and is designed to be considered a cycle rather than a linear path. The 5E approach allows students to transform their initial concepts by reflecting, interacting, and interpreting objects and phenomena and provides a structured framework for integrating *Tadabbur* into lesson plans. In the “Engage” phase, thought-provoking questions initiate controversy, prompting students to inquire about the significance of the upcoming lesson. The “Explore” and “Explain” phases guide students through a comprehensive understanding of the issue under discussion, encouraging them to unpack it and deconstruct its social, historical, and political sensitivities, shifting into sense and sensibility. “Elaborate” prompts students to apply their deliberations, ensuring a practical manifestation of their decision-making skills and insights. Finally, “Evaluate” assesses the depth of the students’ decisions, provides valuable feedback, and encourages continuous judicial thinking. By integrating *Tadabbur* into each phase of the 5E model, educators can create a holistic and deliberative learning environment beyond traditional teaching methods, nurturing critical thinking skills and encouraging a contemplative approach to education.

## 7. Assessment through Deliberative Pedagogy Learning Outcomes Rubric

Assessing the impact of incorporating *Tadabbur* into the curriculum is a crucial aspect. The Deliberative Pedagogy Learning Outcomes Rubric is an ideal method of measuring the effectiveness of this approach. This rubric, created by Drury et al. (2016), focuses on seven aspects,<sup>6</sup> of which three in particular—synthesis, reflection, and reason giving—can be used to measure the outcomes of *Tadabbur*. These elements align seamlessly with the core principles of *Tadabbur*, which emphasizes the implementation of logic and reasoning in one’s understanding of knowledge, with the aim of making a decision after weighing options. In this sense, *Tadabbur* involves the ability to combine different aspects of knowledge into a coherent whole. This reinforces the interconnectedness of various subjects and reflects the intercultural nature of *Tadabbur*, where students are encouraged to consider the holistic and culturally diverse implications of their learning. *Tadabbur*, therefore, can be measured through the students’ capacity to recognize information as “situational and contingent” (Shaffer et al. 2017, p. 197). The rubric provides insights into the depth of their reflective contemplation by evaluating their ability to engage in thoughtful introspection and consider diverse viewpoints. This skill is integral to the *Tadabbur* process. The third aspect, reason giving, evaluates the students’ ability to articulate the rationale behind others’ arguments and their own. This skill is likewise fundamental to the *Tadabbur* process, as individuals are encouraged to arrive at conclusions and communicate the reasoning underlying their decisions. By using this rubric and possibly making a few modifications to serve the desired outcomes of the lesson or assignment, educators can assess *Tadabbur* as a critical literacy skill. The rubric serves as a comprehensive tool beyond conventional assessments, which

can provide a nuanced, modifiable evaluation of the students' cognitive development within the framework of deliberative pedagogy.

Assessing the impact of incorporating *Tadabbur* into the humanities, English, and social sciences curriculum in Islamic schools in receiving countries is essential for evaluating students' critical thinking development. The Deliberative Pedagogy Learning Outcomes Rubric, customized for these subjects, focuses on synthesis, decision-making, and reasoning aspects. In literature classes, for instance, students may be evaluated on their ability to synthesize diverse perspectives from a text. In contrast, history classes may assess deliberation based on their critiques of historical contexts.

## 8. Conclusions

Intercultural studies seek to understand how cultures interact, the resulting interpersonal dynamics, and how such interactions are conceptualized and ultimately materialize in everyday contexts. They explore how culturally different individuals and groups engage with each other, coexist, and accommodate their disparities mainly within the contexts of language and religious and socio-political values. Additionally, they examine the tensions arising from cross-cultural disputes and confusion and suggest specific attitudes, behaviors, and intercultural competencies aiming at conflict resolution and decision-making strategies (Elias and Mansouri 2020). In effect, introducing *Tadabbur* to Muslim students in diaspora through deliberative pedagogy provides a practical approach to intercultural philosophy that will enhance students' critical thinking, cultural understanding, and ethical deliberation skills. Deliberative pedagogy explores how a philosophical notion such as *Tadabbur* conveys intercultural competencies aligned with a secular curriculum. Although incorporating *Tadabbur* into the curriculum offers many potential benefits, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations. The analysis of students' cognitive development can be challenging to track and assess due to the non-linear nature of their growth. Factors such as individual differences, varied learning paces, and external influences may contribute to diverse student outcomes. However, these challenges also present opportunities for future research to explore the nuanced impact of *Tadabbur* and other Islamic teaching skills on students' cognitive development over time.

The age at which children are introduced to *Tadabbur* may influence the extent of its impact. As growth trajectories vary, a longitudinal study tracking students from early exposure throughout their educational journey could provide a more comprehensive understanding of *Tadabbur*'s long-term effects. Additionally, the study's implications extend beyond the confines of the Islamic school educational system. It offers a model for educators worldwide to consider when integrating cultural and religious values into the curriculum to foster secondary school students' critical thinking skills. Another practical consideration is the training required for teachers to effectively implement deliberative pedagogy and integrate *Tadabbur* into their teaching practices. Addressing this limitation involves investing in comprehensive teacher training programs that not only acquaint educators with the principles of *Tadabbur* but also empower them to navigate the complexities of implementing this pedagogical approach in diverse classroom settings. The commitment to ongoing professional development ensures that teachers are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to create an environment conducive to infusing *Tadabbur* into the curriculum.

Using *Tadabbur* in the curriculum not only fosters analytical and decision-making skills but also cultivates open-mindedness, connects knowledge to values, encourages curiosity and lifelong learning, promotes intercultural understanding, and instills a sense of responsibility. The infusion of philosophical principles such as *Tadabbur* into the educational system of Islamic schools holds immense potential for nurturing a generation of intellectually adept and spiritually conscious individuals. Furthermore, such an approach to education aligns with the rich intellectual tradition of Islamic thought and contributes to reintroducing philosophy into the high school curriculum.

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## Appendix A

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ENTRY LEVEL: SELF-AFFIRMING	LEVEL ONE: BENCHMARK ABSORBING	LEVEL TWO: MILESTONE PROCESSING	LEVEL THREE: CAPSTONE DELIBERATING
Collaboration	Prioritizes one's self-interest and opinions.	Begins to engage in political discourse, comparing one's own self-interested position to others' self-interested positions.	Recognizes that in a democracy, perspectives may differ; demonstrates tolerance.	Understands civic responsibility and demonstrates a commitment to work with others to come to shared decisions.
Reason Giving	Affirms one's own opinions or positions without offering evidence.	Recognizes the importance and the use of evidence to support positions.	Evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of different types of evidence.	Uses complex reasoning to balance different types of evidence in own and others' arguments.
Synthesis of Ideas and Information	Uses ideas and positions that affirm one's own position.	Primarily uses summary and paraphrase to consider other positions.	Critically analyzes positions in light of individual, community, and global realities.	Analyzes and crystallizes a variety of positions to draw out conclusions for the community good.
Understanding of Trade-Offs and Tensions	Seeks solutions that do not recognize the tradeoffs or tensions in a position.	Recognizes that there are trade-offs and tensions in public decisions but may minimize those associated with one's own position.	Identifies various things that are valued for a given issue; weighs trade-offs and tensions for different groups in the community.	Prioritizes values in tensions by articulating the trade-offs and benefits of choices, and identifying preferred choices for the community.
Reflection	Maintains position without engaging other perspectives.	Pauses in decision-making; uses active listening skills to better understand other positions.	Reconsiders or modifies a position in light of new information or perspectives.	Recognizes information as situational and contingent; applies new insights to create innovative options for addressing a problem.
Awareness of Relationships	Focuses on self without engaging others in the community.	Tends to prioritize self in relation to the community.	Acknowledges and recognizes diverse opinions in the community.	Considers the complexity of community relationships.
Empathy	Others' lived experiences and perspectives are not or rarely considered.	Acknowledges that others have different lived experiences and perspectives.	Willing to listen to and shows interest in others' lived experiences and perspectives.	Understands different perspectives and demonstrates willingness to work through differences or disagreements.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> “يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ” English translation by Sahih International: “He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good. And none will remember except those of understanding.”
- <sup>2</sup> *Ta’aqul* refers to “conception, act of reasoning” (Spiro 1895, p. 406).
- <sup>3</sup> “الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ” English translation by Sahih International: “[They are] those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth [and pray], “Our Lord! You have not created [all of] this without purpose. Glory be to You! Protect us from the torment of the Fire.”
- <sup>4</sup> “أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا” English translation by Sahih International: “Then do they not reflect upon the Qur’ān, or are there locks upon [their] hearts?”
- <sup>5</sup> “أَفَلَمْ يَذْكُرُوا الْقَوْلَ أَمْ جَاءَهُمْ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِ آبَاءَهُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ” English translation by Sahih International: “Then have they not reflected over the Qur’an, or has there come to them that which had not come to their forefathers?”
- <sup>6</sup> See Appendix A for the full rubric.

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