

## **Investigating the Implementation and Efficacy of Online Special Religious Education Class Intervention: Case Study of Islamic Scripture Classes**

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Despite evidence showing a positive relationship between religiosity and adolescent health and wellbeing, there is a decline in Special Religious Education (SRE) classes for adolescents in many government high schools. Education Acts of various states in Australia, such as *Education Act 1990* (NSW) s 32, support SRE, but unlike some other Western countries, Australian State Governments do not fund an SRE program. Consequently, programs are run mainly by volunteers from various community faith providers who do not always have the means to take their services to all schools. A resulting problem is many students in government schools have no access to an SRE teacher or to the instruction that parents may desire. As a contribution to this issue, this study aims to investigate the feasibility, implementation, and effectiveness of an online SRE class intervention for adolescent student learning, religiosity and wellbeing. The study hypothesis is that an online class using appropriate technology can deliver similar benefits to an onsite class but with an added convenience for recruiting volunteer teachers providing the capacity for participation of more schools receiving SRE services. A mixed method multi-case study research will be used with one minority group – Muslim SRE in Sydney NSW, Australia. It is anticipated that if the intervention is found to be feasible and effective, then more students, from a range of faith backgrounds, can access SRE and possibly the ensuing benefits of religious participation. This study aims to inform policy makers and practitioners arguing for contemporary ways to improve and widen access to SRE and its delivery in high schools.

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