

## Tolerance and Intolerance of Muslims in Australia in Abdel-Fattah's *Does My Head Look Big in This?*

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### ABSTRACT

Australia is a multicultural country which claims themselves accept and respect the right of all people in Australia. However, its multiculturalism is questioned when the Australian people still treat Muslims with negative stereotypes and discrimination. This research examines the image of the Australian people towards Australian Muslims as represented in Randa Abdel-Fattah's novel *Does My Head Look Big in This?* This study is a library research employing the theory of representation (Hall, 1997). The results show that the Australian people are both tolerant and intolerant to Muslims. People who are tolerant manifest their behaviors by having respectful attitudes, positive images of Muslims, and curiosity of Muslims and Islam. On the other hand, people who are intolerant express their behaviors in the forms of disrespectful attitudes, negative stereotypes, and discrimination towards Muslims.

**Keywords:** *Australia; multiculturalism; muslims; representation; tolerance.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Australian Muslims are part of Australia's diverse modern society. They are diverse groups of people, coming from more than 70 different countries such as the Middle East, Russia, Europe, the Indian subcontinent, Africa, Southeast Asia, and even China (Saeed, 2003, p. 1). The most recent Australian census data reveal that Muslims comprise a total of 280.000 or approximately 1.5 percent of the total population, of whom approximately 53 percent were male and 47 percent were female (Saeed, 2003, p. 1).

However, in spite of the number of Muslim population in Australia, as well as the state's supports to cultural diversity, the Australian Muslims are still looked down on and have bad stereotypes. They are often depicted as negative by national media. Furthermore, certain world events such as the bombing tragedy on September 11, 2001 in the United States, and 2002 in Bali have

contributed to a negative discourse about Islam and Muslims. These somehow associated Muslim with extremism, intolerance, and violence. In addition to this, these perceptions of Australian people towards Muslim is depicted in the novel *Does My Head Look in This?* by Randa Abdel-Fattah (Abdel-Fattah, 2005).

The story of *Does My Head Look Big in This?* takes place in Melbourne, Australia, where a 16-year-old Muslim girl named Amal decides to wear hijab full-time. Amal is a student in a private school called McCleans Grammar School. Her decision leads to the different reaction from her parents, her teachers, her friends, and people on the street. The reaction varies from those who support and those who against her decision in wearing hijab. Even worse, some Australians judge and do violent action to Amal just because of her hijab. A great many stereotypes and misconceptions about Islam and Muslim also is confronted. Despite the fact that Amal encounters some prejudice and discri-

mination, Amal still stands by her decision to embrace her faith, although it makes her a little different from everyone.

To investigate Australians' attitudes towards Muslims, we chose *Does My Head Look Big in This?* as the subject matter because of its strong portrayal of the lives of Muslims in Australia. In addition, the themes raised in the novel are also relevant to the present issues of multiculturalism. Australian Multiculturalism, which has emerged as a national identity is being questioned when some Australian people do not practice it in their daily life. In this novel, the events, the characters, and the dialogues also represent the condition of Muslim immigrants in contemporary Australia culture that still experience racism and discrimination from the White Australians. As the size of Muslim communities in Australia grows along with the implementation of the Multiculturalism policy, the question of Australians' attitudes towards Muslims becomes important. *Does My Head Look Big in This?* includes the different ethnics, cultures, and religions backgrounds, as well as the racism and acceptance towards Muslims in Australian society that would best represent the conditions and contexts of the present Australian culture and society. In this research, we address the following question: what are the intolerant and intolerant acts to Muslims in Australia in the novel?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been some studies done on the novel *Does My Head Look Big in This?* Majid (2016) studied the representation of *hijab* in the novel. In this paper, Majid argues that the *hijab* practices can be used as a tool for women's empowerment, particularly for achieving self-improvement and self-actualization. He concludes that the decision of wearing *hijab* done by the main character not only makes the main character becomes more adherent to her religion, but also improves her individuality as a whole (pp. 126-127).

Another study by Haines (2015) focused on the use of parody in the narratives which affect the stereotypes in the novel. In this article, Haines argued that the use of a parody strategy – an

exaggerated, funny, and redeployment of anti-Muslim stereotypes – in the novel can be the ignorance of what are actually being stereotyped. Haines (2015) concludes that the novel adopts a strategy of parody in order to expose the ignorance wherein they originate. In this way, the protagonist, Amal, is not only “challenged” by anti-Muslim stereotypes, but she “challenges back” (p. 30).

Unlike Haines (2015), Zin and Mee (2014) investigated the multiple identities among the young Muslims characters: Amal, Samantha, and Leila. They examined the different types of identity experienced by the three characters in the novel. The results of the research reveal that Amal shows the best example on how to mix with both the minority group and also the majority group. She embraces the positive side of assimilation which helps her to create a fluid identity in society. Samantha is the cousin of Amal, who faces identity confusion as she is raised up by Muslim parents who adopt the lifestyle of the White Australian. Leila is a survivor of ‘ideology clashes’ between two generations. In short, all these three Muslim teenage characters represent different type of identity as a hybrid in a multicultural society.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Representation

This research is conducted under the cultural studies approach. This approach is combined with the theory of representation in analyzing the image of Australia represented in the novel.

Representation is the production of meaning through language. We use signs, organized into languages of different kinds, to communicate meaningfully with others. Language can use signs to symbolize, stand for or reference objects, people, and events in the so-called ‘real’ world. (Hall, 1997, p. 28).

The concept of representation usually uses language to say something meaningful about, to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people. A product of popular culture like a novel is delivered in written words. Therefore, Hall's (1997) theory of representation is applied in this research

to analyze the image of Australian. Hall (1997) states that language operates as a representational system, comprised of signs and symbols that represents concepts, ideas, and feelings and deliver it in a process of communication. These signs and symbols are not limited to written or oral words, but they are also present in the forms of sounds, images, musical notes, even objects. Hall emphasizes that “language work through representation” and that they are “systems of representation” (Hall, 1997, p. 4). The practice of representation itself is defined as the embodiment of “concepts, ideas, and emotions in a symbolic form which can be transmitted and meaningfully interpreted” (Hall, 1997, p. 10).

In the theory of representation, Hall (1997) proposed three approaches suggested. The first approach is the reflective approach. It explains that meaning is thought to lie in the object, person, idea, or event in the real world, and language function like a mirror, to reflect the true meaning as it already exist in the real world. Reflective approach says that language works simply reflecting or imitating the truth that is already there and fixed in the world, is sometimes called mimetic. The second approach is the intentional approach. It is the opposite of the first approach because it held on the speaker, the author, who imposes his or her unique meaning on the world through language. Words mean what author intends they should mean. The third approach is constructionist approach. This approach believes that neither things nor individual users of language can fix meaning in language. Constructivists do not deny the material world, but it cannot convey meaning. It is the language system to represent our concepts. Thus, this approach believes that meaning production does not depend on material sign, but its symbolic function. It is because a particular sound or word stands for, symbolizes or represents a concept that it can function, in language, as a sign and convey meaning.

One thing that is important from Theory of Representation is the use of connotation and denotation. Connotation and denotation are actually terms which were introduced by a semiotician, Roland Barthes. Hall (1997) agrees that representation is not merely about finding a description of something in another thing

(denotation), but also it takes a ‘broader cultural level’, which Barthes then refers to as connotation. In other words, representation requires deep understanding on social and cultural backgrounds that essentially help us understand meanings and values of particular thing or phenomena.

In this study, multicultural-themed novel plays an important role as it carries meanings, thoughts, and expression which are associated with the image of Australian society. All elements of the novel such as setting, characters, dialogues, narration portray the Australian society. Regarding the connotation and denotation, the novel’s elements can then be categorized as denotation, while the social and cultural backgrounds of Australia can be referred to as connotation. Therefore, as has been already mentioned earlier, of the three theories of Representation, the researcher will use the third approach of representation to support this research so that it will result in a comprehensive understanding of the image of Australians as seen in the novel.

### **Tolerance Vs. Intolerance**

The concept of tolerance has a variety of different meanings. Robinson, Witenberg and Sanson (2001) have shown how tolerance as an individual virtue can be learned. The authors describe four levels of tolerance: 1) Individual endurance – to put up with the differences; 2) To be fair and objective – ignoring the relevance of difference; 3) Conscious rejection of prejudice; 4) Full acceptance – celebration of difference (p. 74). These differentiations illustrate the many different attitudes covered under the heading of ‘tolerance’. Therefore, tolerance is an attitude of accepting and giving freedom to others who are different us.

Understood as an attitude, according to Walzer (1997), toleration describes a number of possibilities: acceptance of difference for the sake of peace; positive, relaxed, benignly indifferent to difference; moral stoicism, a principled recognition that the “others” have rights even if they exercise these rights in unattractive ways; openness to the others; curiosity, perhaps even respect, a willingness to listen and learn (p. 11). He continued explaining that tolerant people will make room for men and women whose beliefs they do not adopt, whose

practices they decline to imitate, they coexist with an otherness that however much they approve of its presence in the world is still something different from what they know, something alien and strange.

When tolerance respects the differences, intolerance is the negation to the differences. Intolerance is an attitude of someone who does not respect others' belief, and feel like theirs is right. According to Thurow (2013), there are different ways that show someone is being tolerant or intolerant behavior. Someone is considered as tolerant is someone who has the characteristics: aiding those one disagrees with; treating with respect those one disagrees with; regarding those one disagrees with, and perhaps their view that one disagrees with, as worthwhile in some significant way. Meanwhile, someone who is considered as intolerant is someone who has the following characteristics: being violent; mistreating someone verbally, emotionally, or in other ways; attempting to enforce restrictions in various kinds (pp. 153 – 154).

## METHODS

### Method of Collecting Data

The data source for this study was a novel entitled *Does My Head Look Big in This?*, written by Randa Abdel-Fattah (2005). To collect the data, the first step was doing close reading of the novel. It was done over and over in order to be able to catch and understand the core story of the novel. Besides, it also aimed support in collecting the data and analyzing the statement of the problems later on. Secondly, it came to the step of collecting data. At this point, the data was collected through noting the narration and dialogues in the novel, which reflected the image of the white Australians. Thirdly, it then came to the step of classifying data based on the theory.

In order to get more information, the study also included secondary data such as books and journal articles. Thus, the data used was not only the literary text itself as the primary data, but also the secondary data which were relevant to the

research problems so that would give clear picture of the literary work.

### Method of Analyzing Data

Data analysis process began with the study of the whole content of the data available. After that, the data which sorted were used as the main materials to be analyzed. Then, it came to the analysis process. In this step, the answers to the formulated problems statement were found. The analysis was examined by combining the narration and dialogues used and involved incorporation of the secondary data. The theory of tolerance was employed in investigating the text regarding the image of the white Australians towards Muslims.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Australians as Tolerant People

This part presents the results of the analysis of Australia as a tolerant society towards Muslims. The following discussion sees how Australia society's characteristics fulfill the criteria of tolerance towards Muslims.

#### *Respectful Attitudes*

Having respect towards others can be used as the tool for beginning to conduct tolerance. This characteristic is the result of Australians which are not perceived by stereotypes and generalization in the media. Being open and respectful to the differences is important and fundamental requirement for a society to be fully tolerant to others from different religion or ethnic background. Having respect in a multicultural society is needed to establish harmonious relation. In *Does My Head Look Big in This?* this portrayal is discussed with some examples that epitomize treating others with respect action.

The depiction of treating others with respect is implied throughout the story, mostly seen through the white Australians' interaction with a Muslim named Amal. For example, when Amal is

looking for a room to pray, one of her teacher, Mr Pearse gives a room for her to pray.

“I see what you mean. You can use the storage room adjoining my office. You’ll have your privacy as it’s nicely tucked away, and it can be accessed through my office so just walk right in when you need to.” (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 47)

It is implied that even though it is a private school with the majority of Jewish-Christian, school and the teachers should give the students a room to practice their students’ faith. Amal actually used to do her two afternoon prayers at her house, but after she decided to wear hijab at school, she prays at school. From the action done by Mr Pearse, Amal is very grateful to know that her teacher respects her and he would give her a room to pray. It is clear that Mr. Pearse is a religious and open-minded person who respects and supports his student to practice her faith. Amal, as a Muslim who has to pray five times in a day also free to practice pray in her school.

### ***Positive Images***

Positive images are the manifestation of contact and direct experience with Muslims. Having contact with someone has an important role in shaping attitudes.

Having contact with Muslims, especially intimate contact is kind of interaction that would allow the different groups to learn about each other. Moreover, intergroup contact facilitated learning about the outgroup and this new knowledge in turn reduce negative attitudes towards Muslims. In this situation, there is what is called by Duckitt (2006) as a recategorization or the elimination of intergroup distinctions like turns “us” into “them”. As a consequence, someone who was out group is then considered as in-group. In this novel, Adam, who is the white Australia has eliminated the distinctions with Amal by having an intense conversation.

“Where’s your mum?”

“She left us when I was seven. She lives in Holland and I get a postcard on my birthday.” (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 125)

The situation is when Amal and her ‘white’ Christian Australian friend have conversation over the phone. Amal asks Adam’s mother, which is a personal matter. However, Adam tells Amal many things about his family, including her mother who leaves him and his father for another guy in Holland. This relationship happens because Adam and Amal have known each other and often has interaction. Most of all, Adam knows that Amal is a good friend for him, “So get it straight, OK? I like you because you’re a good friend.” (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 154).

Direct experience with Muslims is also a pivotal in shaping Australian’s attitudes towards Muslims. It is understood that having direct experience with Muslims is more likely to stop people from having a perceived stereotype (Bordens & Horowitz, 2008, p. 282). Some Australians have close relationship with Muslims means that they have an understanding on Muslims rather than generalized perceptions portrayed in the media.

Other Australian characters in the novel also show that they have interpersonal experience with Muslim people such as Amal’s best friends, Simone and Eillen.

“I have a sleepover at my house on Saturday night with Eillen and Simone. Leila’s here too; she’s not allowed to sleep over but my mum managed to convince her mom to at least let her stay for dinner. Yasmeen has some family thing going on so she can’t make it and is fuming big time. We’re in my bedroom pigging out on pizza. Luckily, criss-crossing my two sets of friends has never proven to be a disaster since everybody gets along.” (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 149)

The situation above refers to Amal’s friends from different ethnic and religions that are used to having sleepover with Amal. Eileen is her Japanese Australian friend at her school, McCleans. Simone is another friend at school who is white Australian. Both of Simone and Eillen have good relationship with Amal. They hang out outside school too. Simone and Eillen also know Leila, Amal’s best friend who has similar cultural and religion background as Amal.

### *Openness*

One characteristic of tolerant is openness. Openness according to MacMillan Online Dictionary is “a tendency to accept new ideas, methods, or changes” (Openness, n.d.). It also covers the meaning that someone is willing to listen to other people’s opinion. Openness also means open minds for new experiences and ideas. In the novel *Does My Head Look Big in This?* some characters are open to Muslims by having curiosity sense towards Muslims.

In the novel some characters show their curiosity towards Muslim. They are Adam, Josh, Simone. Adam Keane remains silent when the first time he knows Amal wears hijab, “And then there’s Adam. He hasn’t spoken a word to me since the start of the term. He just smiles awkwardly if our eyes meet and quickly turns his head away” (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 62). Then, he tries to open a conversation with Amal about her decision on hijab like in the following line he becomes more open about that.

“So it’s your choice then?” he asks.

“Oh yeah!” I answer. “One hundred per cent.”

“Wow... so how come it looks different on you?”

“What do you mean?”

“Like you see some women covering their faces and other women wearing really bright material with that red paint on their hand. Are they Islamic too?”

“You mean Muslim.”

“Huh?”

“What she means,” Josh says, “is that the religion is Islam and the followers are Muslim. Like you can’t say to somebody you’re Judaism or Chatholicism. Get it?”

“Right.” Adam nods his head. “So are they Muslim, like you?” (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 71)

The situation above is the interaction between Adam and Amal. Adam asks Amal about Amal’s decision to wear hijab at school. The dialogue also shows Adam’s less understanding about what Islam and Muslim. At first, Adam does not know that the

followers of Islam are called Muslim. Then, one of his friends, Josh tells him the difference so that Adam learns and understands something new about Islam because of his question and curiosity. It suggests that Adam with his curiosity linked to a wide range of behaviors, including tolerance towards Muslims.

Openness attitude also committed by the school principal. She disagreed with Amal to wear hijab because she was afraid of the school’s reputation, like shown in the following line,

“Well, Amal. I’m not sure what to do here. I hope you appreciate that this isn’t Hi-Hida – your old Coburg school. This is a reputable educational establishment. We have more than one hundred years of proud history. A history of tradition, Amal. Of conformity with the rules and policies of this institution. We have a strict uniform policy. And you have walked in, on your first day back from holidays, and been so presumptuous as to alter it without authorization (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 39).

The school principal even realizes that Australia is a multicultural nation,

“We live in a multicultural society and we should accept and tolerate people no matter what their creed, race, or colour. But you must understand that I have an educational institution to run and there are certain guidelines. I’m sure your parent will appreciate that.” (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 40)

However, after she discussed about Amal’s decision to wear hijab with Amal and Amal’s parents, she eventually allowed Amal to wear hijab in the school.

“Amal, I hope you appreciate that this is something ...rather novel. I respect your decision and your right to practice your faith...” (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 60)

These openness attitudes suggest that non-Muslim Australians are mostly tolerant by being open and curious towards Islam and Muslims. Curiosity about Islam and Muslims among Australians gives opportunities to Australians in gaining best understanding about Islam and Muslims. Drawing upon Australians’ curiosity

would also some effective ways of improving Australians' attitudes to respect and accept Muslims.

## Australians as Intolerant People

### *Disrespectful Attitudes*

Since the 9/11 attacks, Islam and Muslims have attracted considerable media attention. The media coverage of Islam and Muslims in the media such as *The Age* and *Herald Sun* between September 11, 2001, and December 31, 2004 found a prevalence of negative images of Islam and Muslims in the newspaper (Akbarzadeh & Smith, 2005). As a consequence, these negative images influence the Australians' perceptions towards Muslims.

To describe this phenomenon, some of Australian characters in the novel *Does My Head Look Big in This?* show this kind of intolerant attitudes towards their Muslim Australian fellows. They harass and laugh at Australian Muslims, "As I'm walking I notice a group of boys, probably in junior high school, standing together laughing" (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 35). As Amal wears hijab for the first time at McCleans Grammar School, her Australian friends laugh seeing Amal with her hijab. Amal's friends still have perceptions that by wearing clothes associated with Islam might be considered as fundamentalist Muslim. Therefore, Amal's friends' attitudes can be interpreted as a representation of a form of disrespect, as well as a form of intolerant and Muslim's exclusion.

A further contribution to intolerance is Australians' disrespect attitude by insulting Muslims, especially those Australians who rely on the media as a source of information about Islam and Muslims, which full of misconceptions. This attitude later makes some Australians are ignorant of Muslims. Therefore, they treat Muslims disrespectfully, even discredit them. The term disrespect refers to the words or phrases refer to as 'names' (Dunkling, 1990, p. 8) which are offensive (Allan & Burrige, 2006, p. 31). Whether those words have negative or positive meanings, as the intention is to make someone feels disrepute, they are considered as disrespect (Allan & Burrige, 2006, p. 79). Like the following example used to insult someone, "There's this article in *Marie Claire* about Muslim girls getting circumcised in Nigeria."

"So are you, you know, whole down there?" (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, pp. 167-168) is a statement said by Tia, Amal's classmate, in front of people in the class. This statement is clearly insulting for Amal as a Muslim. Tia's statement about circumcision - an obligation in Islam to cut of the foreskin of males - might be taboo for non-Muslims. That is why, Tia addresses term "circumcise" and "whole down there" - which refers to body organ - is considered very insulting because she uses a tabooed bodily organ to ask Amal about Islamic culture. Moreover, Amal's response to Tia's question is "bitch". It further emphasizes that she is deeply offended by Tia's offensive question. Therefore, Tia, as a 'white' Australian expresses her disrespect to Amal as a Muslim by trying to insult her in front of people in the class.

### *Negative Stereotypes*

Many Australian are in Anti-Muslim sentiment. Much of this cannot be separated from the negative stereotypes of Muslims that perceived by some Australians. Allport (1958) defines stereotype as "an exaggerated belief associated with a category. Its function is to justify (rationalize) our conduct in relation to that category" (p. 187).

From reading *Does My Head Look Big in This?* negative stereotypes and verbal violence are encountered by Muslims. Through the characters of the novel, we can see how Australian people are perceived by the stereotypes as described as follow,

This morning I'm in the hallway when I overhear some girls talking about me next to the lockers. One of them says the word "oppressed" and the other one is saying something about me looking like a drag. (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 62)

The previous statement is stated by Amal to show that some Australian have common thought towards Muslim who wear hijab as oppressed woman, then it is manifested by doing a verbal attack. In relation to that, wearing hijab in Australia society is still uncommon because some Australian will think differently towards them. They say the word "oppressed" because they already have generalization those Muslim women who wear hijab is in oppressed.

Through Amal, readers learn that the decision to wear hijab “full time” was her own and not that of her parents or religious community. This is important, for the central stereotype with which the novel contends is the Australian belief that women wearing hijab in Islam are “oppressed”. “Oppressed” is the word that Amal hears not only from classmates who whispers it behind her back when she begins her new term. It also informs that the judgment of school principal and friends who assume that Amal has been made to wear it by her parents. This also leads to the situation when some of her classmates have no courage to ask Amal about it, “As for the rest of my class, it’s been two whole days since the start of term and there’s still an uncomfortable politeness between me and everybody else” (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 62). Therefore, the lack of information has encouraged the development of negative stereotypes towards Muslims.

Some media will usually use the public emotional reactions to justify the wrong portrayal of Muslims and Islam. In *Does My Head Look Big in This?*, Amal experiences verbal harassments and intimidation since she decides to wear hijab full-time. Australian people become judgmental towards her when there is some news about Islam or Muslims, like the following statement:

Tuesday morning. I’m at my desk in home room, fuming over an article about terror suspects and “people of Middle Eastern appearance” when Tia walks up to my desk again. “Did you catch that doco on those Muslim fundamentalists last night? You’re Arab aren’t you? It must feel awful knowing you come from such a violent culture.” (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, pp. 151-152)

From that situation, it can be seen that the depiction of Muslims on the media is negative. Muslim is depicted as a terror. Anti-Muslims sentiments are also often mistakenly addressed to those who are identified as Arabs. Without knowing whether they are Muslims or not, some people especially after 9/11 tragedy spread hatred against ethnic group. Further, they will generalize that people who are from Middle East are terrorists and violent. From this line, the negative portrayal of Muslim in the media have made Tia, a white

Australian sees Amal as a person who comes from a violent culture. The generalization which turns to be negative stereotype about Muslim and Islam has affected Tia in seeing Amal as a threat.

### ***Discrimination***

The negative stereotypes of Muslims later lead to discrimination. Discrimination is always one of the main issues addressed in the literary work. It commonly happens where the literary work talks about people who come from two or more different groups. Mostly, the story tells about the conflict which is caused by ethnic or racial differences which lead to stereotyping and discriminating. Terminologically, discrimination means an act that is done to see or show a difference between people or things. Nevertheless, an online Oxford dictionary provides more specific definition of discrimination by highlighting it as the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially, on the grounds of race, age, or sex. Therefore, discrimination can be defined as the act of differentiating others based on prejudice of race, age, or sex.

In this research, discrimination against Australian Muslims is viewed from the religion and race issues. It means that most of Australian Muslims have to face some discrimination based on their religion (Islam) and their race which mostly Arab.

Discrimination also can be committed by an individual. In *Does My Head Look Big in This?* an Australian refuses Amal to be hired at one of the shops in Melbourne,

“I’m here about the job. I’m sixteen. I’ve worked at Hungry Jack’s so I’ve got loads of experiences.”

“Sorry, love, we can’t accept people like you.”

“What do you mean?”

“The thing on your head, love, that’s what I mean. It’s not hygienic and it just don’t look good up at the front of the shop. Sorrylove. Try somewhere else.” (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 309)

In this case, once Amal tries to apply a job, she is already rejected by the owner without doing



any test or interview beforehand. Furthermore, the reason he rejects Amal is clearly an act of discrimination. Amal is rejected to work there is a result of the indirect perception about Muslim and Islamic symbol which are known as such negative.

## CONCLUSION

This study examines the image of Australians as represented in the novel *Does My Head Look Big in This?* by Randa Abdel-Fattah. The result of the analysis shows that there are two images of Australians that is represented in the novel: people who are tolerant and intolerant towards Muslims.

Some Australian characters in the novel vividly represent tolerance, especially those who have contacts with Muslims. In this study, it is found that tolerant attitude is fostered by knowledge, openness, and communication with Muslims. Consequently, they respect and become open to Muslims. Tolerant people are characters who have intergroup contact like Josh, Simone, and Adam Keane, School Principal, and Mr Pearse.

Another image of Australian is intolerance. Intolerant attitude is caused by the lack of knowledge and communication, which resulted in mistreatments towards Muslims. Characters who have no intimate contact or interaction, mostly from common people who are less informed about Islam and Muslims, tend to be more intolerant. Moreover, it is supported by the negative coverage of Islam and Muslims in the media which are full of stereotypes and misconceptions. The “white” Australians, who already have negative stereotypes of the media, will commit avoidance, verbal harassments, and discrimination. In this study, characters who are intolerant are Tia Tamos and common people on the street.

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