

Review of The Quranic Verses Used in Islamic Religious Textbook of Secondary Education Curriculum in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

A textbook entitled 'Islam and Moral Education' is taught to the classes Nine-Ten of public-school students in Bangladesh. This textbook is only instrument to introduce the concept of Islam to the learners of secondary level. However, the reason motivated the writer this article, though all topics of this book have touched most of the aspects of our practical life, and most of the verses of provided in the book without doubt are relevant to the topics but some of the cited Qur'anic verses seem inconsistent with the topics. Therefore, this study aims to identify the number of irrelevant, less relevant, more relevant verses mentioned in this book and make a set of principles to justify the categories and degrees of relevance. This study is qualitative in nature. The data has been collected in two ways firstly by the Focused Group Discussion and secondly by analyzing the content of the selected textbook mentioned above by extracting the Qur'anic verses that are mentioned therein. Lastly, the relevance of the extracted verses has been rated/ justified by a number of experienced teachers. Textual analytical method has been used for the extracted verses. The possible findings and conclusions of this study may include whether the textbook's contents are aligned with the Qur'anic verses richly. The researcher hopes that the findings of this research will be helpful in reviewing the curriculum content based on Qur'anic perspective. Moreover, this article can provide a valuable and effective materials for textbook authors, curriculum developers, and designers of syllabus to boost precise religious and moral teaching in the secondary education of Bangladesh. Recommendations will be made for improving the religio-moral textbooks. In addition, Qur'anic curriculum might be re-constructed as the outcome of the study..

KEYWORDS: Quran, Textbook, Moral education, Bangladesh

1 INTRODUCTION

The religious education may be considered the foundation of the education, if the education is the backbone of a nation, in a way that it works as a shield of a nation. Therefore, religious and moral education go together hands-in-hand just to ensure that the nation is morally sound and will sustain in any crisis in local and global. The National Curriculum and Textbook Board of

Bangladesh, therefore, is very devoted and conscious regarding keeping the moral status and religiosity of the citizens as high as possible. This board prepares several textbooks for the students of school. One of the textbooks that is provided to the students of high school is 'Islam and Moral Education'.

However, according to the education system of Bangladesh, the students get school certificate after they study classes Nine-Ten. Investigating these last year students' character, moral understanding, religiosity and cognitive aspects of their knowledge domain is very important because these school-students are crucial for the nation building. This very study intends to deal with the students of classes Nine-Ten and one of their textbooks 'Islam and Moral Education'.⁵¹

Although, one of the classes Nine-Ten textbook entitled 'Islam and Moral Education' (IME) is comprised of many important topics. Nevertheless, some associated Qur'anic verses seem irrelevant with the topics. Therefore, the necessity of pursuing a study has been felt to investigate and to inquire the Qur'anic verses in this selected textbook. More specifically, the purpose and objective of this study is to analyze the Qur'anic curriculum within the textbook of classes Nine-Ten 'Islam and Moral Education'⁵² of public school in Bangladesh.

Like other textbooks, this textbook has a preamble which declares its aims and objectives in the following way:

Keeping the aims and objectives of National Education Policy 2010 ahead, the curriculum at the secondary level has been revised. Here the national aims, objectives and contemporary needs have been reflected. Efforts have been made to raise, starting from the level of moral and humanistic values down to awareness on history and tradition, the spirit of the Liberation War, passion for art-culture and literature, patriotism, feelings for nature and equal dignity to all irrespective of religions, caste, creed and sex.

This book entitled 'Islam and Moral Education' has been written with this objective in view. Recently, the rational evaluation and tryout program has been completed to make correction and revision of the textbook. Any constructive suggestion for the improvement of the textbook will be welcomed and incorporated in future editions.⁵³

⁵¹Che Noraini Hashim & Hasan Langgulung, (2008), Islamic Religious Curriculum in Muslim Countries: The Experiences of Indonesia and Malaysia, Institute of Education (INSTED), International Islamic University, Malaysia. *Bulletin of Education & Research June 2008, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 1-19.* 15. p. 1.

⁵²Hassan, M. K. (1989). Values Education Framework based on Islamic Concepts and Precepts. *Journal Pendidikan Islam*. Petaling Jaya: Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia, Vol.2. No.3. Che Noraini Hashim & Hasan Langgulung, (2008), *ibidem.* (15.p. 1),

⁵³Ashraf & Hussain, S. S (1979). *Crisis in Muslim Education*, Jeddah King Abdul Aziz University. Che Noraini Hashim & Hasan Langgulung, (2008), *ibidem.* (15.p. 1.)

While this preamble draws the attention to the challenges of the 21st century, scholars agreed that the contents of any textbook must be accurate and related with the curriculum and guideline of National Curriculum Textbook Board (NCTB). But how far this textbook has been prepared in the line with the curriculum and Quranic relevant verses deserves academic discussion.

The researcher, thus, intends to search more relevant Qur'anic verses and include the verses under the topics where no verses are included in order to ensure that Islamic principles are taught to the students of public school education and to explore the status of this book whether it is prepared according to the curriculum of NCTB.

A number of literatures have been reviewed from various sources which are indirectly related with the study. Hardly found the previous study as directly relevance with the Qur'anic curriculum review in public school of secondary level of Bangladesh. This Research is qualitative in nature which related to the contextual content and it is analytical, descriptive and thematic. The data sources are limited only in the contents of the religious textbook of classes Nine-Ten 'Islam and Moral Education'. However, the outcome of the research may help in improving the content of existing textbook based on new review.

Background of The Study

Like other countries, education sector of Bangladesh is divided into primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The duration of the secondary level education is seven years and comprised of three sub-levels called i) Junior secondary, ii) Secondary and iii) Higher secondary, whereby the classes of eleventh and twelfth are collectively called Higher Secondary while the classes of nine and ten are collectively called Secondary and the classes from six to eight is named Junior Secondary. The students of class nine study the same books in the class ten. Then, at the end of the class ten they take part a centralized exam with unique questions and passed Secondary School Certificate (SSC). Most of the students who pass SSC are around fifteen to sixteen-year-old.

The 'Muslim' students of class nine and ten compulsorily read a textbook to learn 'Islam' called 'Islam and Moral Education'. This is only the textbook which reflects the Qur'anic knowledge in secondary school level. The book contained five chapters with several lessons in each chapter. This book includes one hundred and fifty-six Qur'anic verses which are mentioned in one hundred and twenty-six topics under ninety lessons and those are related to the entire human life activities.

It is worthy to mention here that every year a sizable number of students enroll in class nine and ten in order to take SSC examination. According to current statistics,⁵⁴ the number of the students are about three million. Their understandings of the Quran largely depend on this very curriculum. Due to this considerable effect on a big number of learners, the quality of its content should be revised, analyzed and standardized so that a robust and appropriate understanding of

⁵⁴Al-Attas (1984) Syed Muhammad Naquib. *The Concept of Education in Islam*, Kuala Lumpur. Che Noraini Hashim & Hasan Langgulung, (2008), *ibidem*. (15.p. 2.)

the Quran could be conveyed to them. This study is an effort to explore the areas of concerns that need to be paid attention for further improvement of this curriculum content.

The book 'IME' has contained major issues about Islam. Therefore, this book is very important for the Muslim students. A Total of one hundred and fifty-six verses have been quoted from the Holy Qur'an in the book, but some verses are seeming less relevant which are used with twenty-one topics. It seems six verses have hardly any relevance. Whereas forty-nine more relevant verses with those topics are available in the Holy Qur'an. There have twenty-one topics without any quotations, whereas twenty-six verses can be quoted with those topics. Hence, to analyze and extract the Qur'anic status, essence the nature and elements of selected textbook, textual analysis would be employed in this research.

Problem Statement

Although 'IME' is a textbook bearing life-related important subject matter for majority of Muslim (89.8%) students, it is primarily assumed that the Qur'anic verses are mentioned and explained properly throughout the textbook. But after initial screening, some assumptions guided the researcher to identify the problems in the textbook such as: firstly, it was noticed that the Qur'anic verses mentioned in the content of the textbook seem not to be richly incorporated with the respective topics. Some verses are seeming even irrelevant and some are less relevant. Secondly, in this textbook it was also found that though the relevant Qur'anic verses are available, yet some of the topics have been presented without referring them to Holy Quran. This deficiency of the textbook may cause the students and the nation as a whole not to morally sustain in local and global crises.

Conceptual framework

The concept that guided the researcher to search the relevance of the Qur'anic verses in the textbook, is the practical application of the teachings of the Quran in our daily life. Therefore, the researcher considered a verse of the Quran as 'relevant' once that particular verse matches to that corresponding topic in terms of essence and teaching. Similarly, this process led the researchers to identify irrelevant Quranic verses too.

Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What is the relevance of the verses of the Qur'an quoted in the textbook entitled 'Islam and Moral Education'?
2. What are the verses of the Quran that should be incorporated with the content of the textbook?

Research Objectives

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To explore the relevance of the verses of the Qur'an quoted in the textbook entitled 'Islam and Moral Education'.
2. To explore the verses of the Quran that should be incorporated with the content of the textbook?

Significance and Rationale of the Study

The practical significance and implications will go to the Ministry of Education in Bangladesh because this Ministry has held the power and authority to make almost all significant decisions regarding what knowledge and perspectives student might have exposure to in almost all topics in the textbooks. In order to execute the procedure of the writing textbook, there is National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) in Bangladesh. The common aims of secondary education textbooks are to make the learners skilled and competent citizens of the country through the process of acquiring knowledge according to socio-economic, cultural and environmental settings. At the initiation of current century, the eternal laws of Islam demand due emphasis for application in the life and activities of the students who have experienced tremendous changes in terms of aspirations and humanitarian philosophy of life, the book entitled 'Islam and Moral Education' has been written, which is under presence of my research.

The Significance of the study is allocated into several aspects of achievements, as contextual aspect, content aspect, curricular aspect etc. This study has signified the religious textbook 'IME' of public school of Bangladesh, which is the only context to acquire Islamic and moral education in secondary level. It will be a significant endeavor in finding the scarcity as well as to promoting the textbook. This study will also be beneficial to educate the huge number of fourteen to fifteen years aged students, even it will be anticipated to the educational authorities, instructors and curriculum reformers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A short interview with the editor of textbooks of NCTB has revealed that the textbooks are written based on a curriculum provided by the NCTB. Therefore, before examining the accuracy and perfection of textbook in terms of presenting the Quranic verses in its suitable content, one should understand the Quranic curriculum. The Quranic curriculum is a form of Islamic religious curriculum suitable for both of formal and informal education system. A recent study on the paradigm of Quranic Education conducted by Mohammed Abu-Nimer Ilham Nasser (2017)⁵⁵, highlighted to reflect the cultural framework, opening with an appearance at the background of formal and informal education in Muslim nations, particularly the presence of Qur'anic schools (Qs) and their communal and cultural functions before embarking on any intervention. This kind of investigation is desired as a first step in understanding the dynamics and implications of intervention in any formal or informal education system.

Owusu (2017) found that the program of reforming Islamic schools was articulated through the visions of Muslim reformers with the rationale that: "In order for Muslims to be able to cope with the modern world and achieve progress, there was no other way, but for the Muslim communities to recognize the necessity to reform Islamic schools from traditional Qur'anic schools

⁵⁵Ashraf, S. A. (1985). *New Horizons in Muslim Education*, Cambridge: The Islamic Academy. Che Noraini Hashim & Hasan Langgulung, (2008), *ibidem*. (15.p. 2.)

to Integrated Islamic schools that combined secular curriculum with Islamic religious studies to enable Muslims to fully integrate into national development."⁵⁶

Sulayman (2013) explores that,

Rationale for integrating moral values in school curriculum can be seen from the fact that Islam is a global religion that advocates for divine values that are advantageous to all human beings. Because they are beneficial to all creatures, they should be integrated in the national curriculum to form what can be known as 'the Divine values-based curricula' in order to shape human behavior. The essence of integrated moral values-based curriculum is that it helps individuals to build their positive areas of strength and suppress the negative ones. In the process, they find gradually engaging themselves in spreading the good, abhorring the bad and rejecting it. The question of how to address immoral practices in society is considered from the view point of integrating teaching moral values in school curriculum to build gradually a strong moral foundation that will empower the youth to abhor and resist immoral behavior including corruption now and in the future. It is argued that by strengthening teaching of values to provide a foundation in values as alternatives for students to consider, may impact their decisions while still at school and later in life as adults and leaders for them to resist all types of corruption where found.⁵⁷

This paper discusses on behalf of relating Ethical Integration Process Learning Model in schools to fortify affective domain of pupils for empowering them to discourse immoral performs while still at school and later in upcoming as grownups and public domestics. The spirit of assimilating moral standards in education originates from the reality that most under advanced countries are presently distressed with moral experiments reaching from little corrupt performs such as vandalism and drug abuse to striking conduct such as laziness, dishonest, embezzlement of public funds and corruption which in one way or another obstruct the progress of these nations.

Loan (2012) has conducted a research about current forms of Qur'anic learning amongst women in urban Pakistan. The study showed result over the previous two decades, Qur'an study agendas which promise an in-depth and individual knowledge of the text, have become hugely popular amongst literate females from all experiences in town centers of Pakistan. Engaging a stress on emerging expertise for reading and understanding the Qur'an, such agendas of study have accepted an attitude to textual engagement that proceeds meaningfully from beforehand dominant

⁵⁶Langgulung, H. (2004). Education, Islam and Muslim in the 21stCentury: Image and reality. Paper presented at: International Conference on Muslim Education in the 21st Century PWTC, Kuala Lumpur (4-6 August), Che Noraini Hashim & Hasan Langgulung, (2008), *ibidem*. (15.p. 2.)

⁵⁷Dr.SolehahBt.Hj.Yaacob, Madame Rahimah Bt. (2008). Embong International Islamic University Malaysia. The paper has been awarded as the best paper among the ten selected papers in the International Conference in Islamic Republic of Iran on 20-22 Feb 2008 which organized by OIC, ISESCO and The Ministry Education of Islamic Republic Iran. (18. P.1)

modes of recitation and memorization of the Qur'an in daily observes of ritual dedication. Drawing upon ethnographic investigation directed amongst females' members of Qur'anic study, it examines these sites of learning to highlight the capabilities, logics and modes of argumentation that are stimulated and cultivated amongst females' readers of the Qur'an. This study examines how modern practices of Qur'anic hermeneutics by 'ordinary' females' rely on the moral cultivation of explanatory agency which is generated simultaneously by concepts of the autonomous personal and a normative understanding of Qur'anic injunctions. Through an analysis of women's experiences of reading, it shows that Qur'anic study in these sites occurs at the nexus of competing modalities of textual engagement in which women combine religious and secular capacities, skills and sensibilities for reflection on the Qur'an's meaning.⁵⁸

Che Noraini Hashim & Hasan Langgulung (2008)⁵⁹, tries to show an investigation on curriculum development in aspect of Malaysia and Indonesia. This paper attempts to investigate and discuss the development of Islamic religious curriculum in Muslim countries with emphasis on South-East Asia especially Indonesia and Malaysia. It begins with a brief history on the curricular reform of religious education in Arab countries and their impact on Southeast Asia. Then, it focuses on reform in religious education curriculum and the challenges faced by both countries. Some suggestions are put forward to reach cherished goals of Islamic religious education and the betterment of Islamic curricular reform in Muslim countries.

They mentioned Hassan, M. K.'s⁶⁰ quotation as bellow:

Islam looks at education as a form of worship (Ibadah) where Muslims share a common set of values based on the Qur'an (the fundamental and most reliable source for many fields of knowledge) and Sunnah. Hassan, K. describes Education from the Islamic perspective, as a long-life process of preparing an individual to actualize his role as a vicegerent (Khalifah) of Allah on the earth and thereby contribute fully to the reconstruction and development of his society in order to achieve well-being in this world and hereafter.

In order to come to some agreement regarding the purpose of Islamic education, it may be beneficial to firstly elicit a definition of education and Islamic education. Ashraf⁶¹ defines education as a process involving three rewards: the individual, the society or the community to which he or she belongs to and the whole content of reality, both material and spiritual, which plays a dominant role in determining the nature and destiny of man and civilization. Therefore, education plays a very significant part and is a column for the nationwide advance in many societies.

Al-Attas⁶² mentions that the objective of Islamic education is not to force the pupil's head with facts but to get ready them for a natural life of pureness and seriousness. This entire promise to

58 Islam, T. (2013). The Genesis and Development of the Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān. American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, 30(3), 39-58.

59 Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'Ēn* (Gibraltar: Dar Al-Andalus, 1980), p. 153.

60 Al-QaradawĒ, YĒsuf, *Madkhal li DirĒsat al-SharĒ'ah al-IslĒmiyyah* (Beirut: Muassasat al-RisĒlah, 1993), p. 11.

61 Hofmann, Murad *Islam and Qur'Ēn* (Maryland: Amana Publications, 2007), p. 53.

62 Islam, T. (2013). The Genesis and Development of the Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān. American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, 30(3), 39-58.

personality structure founded on the ideals of Islamic morals is the utmost goal of Islamic education. Here he hassled on character building that desires to be formed together in an educational curriculum which he reflects as the premier objective of Islamic education.

A more comprehensive definition of Islamic education was composed at the First World Conference on Muslim Education in Makkah in 1977, the following words:⁶³

Education should aim at the balanced growth of the total personality of a man through the training of man's spirit, intellect, his rational self, feelings and bodily senses. Education should cater therefore for the growth of man in all its aspects: spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, physical, scientific, linguistic, both individually and collectively and motivate all aspects towards goodness and the attainment of perfection. The ultimate aim of Muslim education lies in the realization of complete submission to Allah on the level of the individual, the community and humanity at large. Therefore, as agreed by Muslim scholars in the Mecca Declaration above, it is clear that in order to develop the Islamic system and society, an educational system and its curriculum must be planned according to Islamic worldview.

The writers strongly believe that the function of Islamic education should endeavor to teach and help students acquire different aspects of knowledge within the parameters of Islam through the use of a well-designed curriculum.

They quote, as Langgulung⁶⁴ stresses that Islamization of curriculum is to place the curriculum and its four components i.e. aims and objectives, content, methods of teaching and method of evaluation within the Islamic worldview.

An Article by Langgulung, H. (2004)⁶⁵ shows that,

The Emergence of Islamic Education Movement is a response to the secularization of education faced by the ummah (Muslim people) all over the world; in the sense that the 'traditional Islamic Sciences' which are rooted in Islamic sources i.e. al-Qur'an (the Holy Book) and as-Sunnah (Tradition of the prophet) have been marginalized. Subsequently, Muslim scholars have made serious endeavors to define the concept of Islamic education and then to develop a genuine Islamic education model based on the basic tenets of aqidat al-tawheed (principle of faith). This reformation of education has envisioned to produce the new Muslim generation, which is capable of fulfilling its role as khalifatullah (vicegerent of God), responsible for the development and maintenance of civilization and its resources. In another

63 Ibn xanbal, Aímad bin Muíammad, *al-NĀqĒdah* (Damascus: DĒr Qutybah, 1408 A.H.), 1-123. al-GhaznĒwĒ, JamĒl al-DĒn Aímad, *KitĒb UsĒl al-DĒn* (Beirut: DĒr al-BshĒi'r al-IslĒmiyyah, 1998), 57. Discussion of these issues may be found in any general book of AqĒdah, Ņillam al-KalĒm, or UsĒl al-DĒn.

64 Al-GhazĒlĒ, AbĒ xĒmid, *JawĒhir al-Qur'Ēn*, ed. RashĒd RiĒa al-QabĒnĒ (Beirut: DĒr IfyĒ al-ŅUIĒm, 1985), p. 23.

65 Ibid., p. 24.

word, Islamic education is obliged to deal with the overall development of the individuals.

The Article also contributes to promote Islamic solidarity among Muslim countries in the field of education. Although almost contemporary Islamic schools claim that their educational systems are integrated, there is a great diversity of curricula, objectives and content.

In the same article the writer shows that “The methods of teaching are poor and are ineffective in terms of students’ achievement, the design and format of textbooks does not facilitate learning and curricular content is too difficult for the age level of the students. There is a lack of effective communication between students and teacher. Finally, the study found that parents do not support their children with respect to the children’s religious education courses.” In the aspect of Bangladesh, the picture of religious textbook of public school and teacher-student relation seems to almost the same.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection

The data is gathered through open coding the content of the textbook. The textbook ‘IME’ of classes Nine-Ten of public school of Bangladesh has been chosen as a sample. There are 159 Qur’anic verses are included. Hence, in the procedure of data collection, the researcher will focus on those Qur’anic verses and the contents of this textbook by using Qur’anic curriculum and educational taxonomy. The data has been collected through the following steps:

Step 1: Verifying the Relevance of the Verses

In the first stage, content of the textbook will be compared by verifying the necessity and relevance of Qur’anic verses. Irrelevant and Less relevant verses will be identified.

Step 2: To search the Holy Quran for relevant verses:

To search the entire Quran for relevant verses to include in the topics where no Qur’anic verses has been included.

Data Analysis and Findings

After the analysis, the researchers found that there are one hundred and twenty-five topics distributed to ninety lessons in ‘Islam and Moral Education’ textbook. The themes of five chapters are the following:

Table 1: Themes of Textbook

Chapters	Themes	Page No.
ONE	AQAID AND MORAL LIFE	1—36
TWO	SOURCE OF SHARIAT	37-86
THREE	IBADAT	87--110
FOUR	AKHLAQ	111—153

FIVE	MODEL LIVES	154—178
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In this book, a total of one hundred fifty-nine verses have been quoted from the Holy Qur’an. The distribution of the verses as follows:

Table 2: Distribution of verses in the textbook

serial	Used verses in the textbook (IME)	verses
1	Total used verses in 126 topics under 90 lessons	159
2	Less relevant verses in 21 topics	21
3	Irrelevant verses in 6 topics	6
4	More relevant verses (in the view of researcher)	49
5	Topics without any verses	20
6	Proposed verses for verse-free content to quote therein	32

Conclusion and Future Research

Many important points have been revealed by this study as recommendations toward the NCTB and for future study. These include some suggestions for adding and placing some necessary Quranic verses which are more relevant and connected to topics of the textbook. Twenty-one verses are seeming less relevant which are used with Twenty-one topics in Twenty-one lessons. It seems six verses have hardly any relevance. Whereas forty-nine more relevant verses with those topics are available in the Holy Qur’an. Twenty-one topics without any quotations have existed in this book, whereas thirty-two verses could be possible to quote with those topics.

This study also suggests some future study such as if the Interpretations used in the text are verified by world famous tafsir and treasures, the learners can gather knowledge. The interpretation needs to be reliable to the learners and the scholars. Besides, according to international educational taxonomy, the textbook can be reformed and reviewed. By the way, an acceptable and standard content-based textbook can be presented. The long-term goal of the research is to develop a curriculum enlightened by the Holy Qur’an. Which will be the milestone to build up the intelligent nation.

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