

Religious Values in the Fourth-Year Middle School Islamic Education Textbook (A Descriptive Analytical Study)

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Abstract:

The study aimed to uncover the religious values included in the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of middle school. The researchers relied on the descriptive analytical method, with the study sample represented by the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of the middle school stage. The study concluded that there are no statistically significant differences in religious values within the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of middle school and that religious values are distributed in a moderate manner.

Keywords: Religious values, Islamic Education, middle school stage, textbooks.

Problem Statement:

The Islamic approach to education focuses on preparing a righteous individual comprehensively and correctly in both worldly and religious aspects, shaping a balanced citizen capable of fulfilling their life mission, which is the stewardship of the earth. Therefore, the human being is the central focus of Islamic education; building a personality imbued with religious values is a fundamental pillar upon which Islamic civilization is built. Adhering to and internalizing these values can only be achieved by following a rigorous approach that considers the psychological, emotional, and sensory-motor aspects of a person.

In Algeria, educational curricula aim to produce a righteous individual through specifically designed textbooks, among which the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of middle school is of particular importance.

This research will thus seek to explore the religious values presented in the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of middle school and address the following questions:

- What are the religious values emphasized in the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of middle school?
- Are there statistically significant differences among the religious values distributed within the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of middle school?

Significance of the Study:

The importance of the current study lies in highlighting the prevailing Islamic religious values in school textbooks in general, and specifically in the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of middle school, and presenting them objectively. It also contributes to preserving the Islamic and Arab national identity and combating the concept of Islamophobia among non-Muslim foreign readers.

Study Objectives:

To highlight the religious values emphasized in the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of middle school.

Reasons for Choosing the Topic:

- To identify the Islamic religious values included in the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of middle school and the extent of focus on these values within its content.

Operational Definitions:

- Islamic Religious Values in the Fourth-Year Middle School Islamic Education Textbook: This refers to a set of procedures (analysis, collection, categorization, interpretation) used by the researcher to

understand the ranking, distribution, and frequency of Islamic religious values contained in the student textbook for Islamic Education in the fourth year of middle school through an analysis tool.

Definition of Religious Values:

Max Weber defines them as a set of psychological affirmations generated from religious belief and practice, providing direction for the practical behavior that the individual commits to (Fahmi, 1999, p. 34).

Wadha Al-Suwaidi defines them as expressions of faith in solid beliefs derived from a religious source, which dictate a person's choices or behavioral approach in various situations they experience. These values are explicit or implicit positive attributes inferred from verbal and non-verbal behavior (Al-Suwaidi, 1989, p. 30).

Importance of Religious Values:

The importance of religious values lies in their necessity for both the individual and society. They are essential for the individual in interactions with others and in the situations faced in daily life, as they serve as a guide for behavior and activity. For society, these values are necessary to organize its goals and ideals, preventing value conflicts that could lead to social disintegration and downfall (Hendi, 2002, p. 78).

Characteristics of Religious Values:

1. Compatibility with the natural and innate characteristics of humans.
2. Their divine formulation accommodates continuous renewal in human and social life.
3. Their connection to human behavior in all its manifestations and dimensions.
4. Their inclusion of all aspects of life.

Sources of Islamic Religious Values:

The primary sources of Islamic values are the Quran and the Prophetic Sunnah, which shape a balanced personality through proper socialization and Islamic education. While these sources carry a universal character, other sources of religious values include consensus (ijma) and analogy (qiyas), which have a local character, adapting to the individual's environment and spatiotemporal context (Al-Ruwaili, 2020, p. 312).

Previous Studies Referenced in the Study:

➤ **Duweiri's Study (1996):**

This study explored the reality of values in social and national education textbooks for the first four grades of primary education in Jordan. It aimed to identify the reality of values through content analysis and the perspectives of teachers teaching these grades. The study sample included 219 teachers (18 male and 45 female) from the "Irbid First" and "Irbid Second" education districts, with textbooks for the first, second, third, and fourth grades as the sample. The validity and reliability of the methodology were verified, and the content was analyzed with sentences as the unit of analysis. Results indicated that the fourth-grade textbook had the highest frequency of values, followed by the third, first, and second grades. The most common values were social values, followed by economic, political, and finally religious values.

- Religious values were the most prevalent in the four books, followed by political, social, and finally economic values.
- There was no agreement between the content analysis results and the teachers' perspectives regarding the extent of values' presence in social and national education books.
- There were no statistically significant differences in the extent of values' presence in social and national education books attributed to the teacher's gender or experience (Al-Qini, 2015, p. 21).

➤ **Study by Muhammad Humaidan Al-Abadi (2004)**

Titled "The Values Included in the Reading Textbooks for the First Four Grades of Basic Education (First Cycle) in the Sultanate of Oman," this study aimed to identify the values embedded in the reading textbooks for the initial grades of basic education. The central research question was: What are the values included in the reading textbooks for the first four grades of basic education in the Sultanate of Oman? The study also aimed to answer questions regarding the values that appeared most frequently and those that were less common, as well as the distribution of value types in the specified textbooks.

To achieve the study's objectives, a content analysis method was used, with sentences and paragraphs as units for analyzing the values included in the textbooks. To ensure comprehensive value coverage, the analysis form was validated by presenting it to educational experts, and the reliability of the analysis was confirmed through repeated analysis, achieving a consistency coefficient of 0.85. The main findings of the study were as follows:

- In the first-grade reading textbook, the most frequently recurring values were play, cleanliness, beauty, friendship, belonging, and work.

- In the second-grade reading textbook, the values of cleanliness, beauty, sports and games, knowledge acquisition, work practice, and patriotism appeared most frequently.
- In the third-grade reading textbook, the most frequent values were patriotism, knowledge acquisition, gratitude for God's blessings, and appreciation for scholars and great individuals.
- In the fourth-grade reading textbook, the values of knowledge acquisition, sports and games, love for learning, and good morals were the most recurring.

The study found that social, religious, and moral values were the most numerous in the reading textbooks for the first four grades, occupying the top positions, while health, recreational, aesthetic, and political values were less frequent, occupying the lower ranks (Al-Abadi, 2004, p. 3).

➤ **Study by Ismail Rabhi (2014):**

Titled "Types of Values Included in Reading Textbooks for the Primary Education Stage in the Algerian Educational System: An Analytical Study of Five Reading Books for Each Grade of Primary Education (First, Second, and Third Cycles)," this study utilized content analysis of reading lessons, focusing on seven values that the researcher aimed to explore: scientific knowledge, religious, social, economic, political, health and environmental, and artistic values. Paragraphs or ideas served as the unit of analysis in the study.

The key findings were as follows:

- Social values were the most prominent across the five years, followed by scientific knowledge, religious values, health and environmental values, economic and artistic values, with political values ranking last (Rabhi, 2014, pp. 57, 67).

➤ **Study by Wadha Al-Suwaidi (1409 AH):**

This study aimed to develop values specific to the Islamic Education subject among preparatory school girls in Qatar. The researcher used the descriptive method and content analysis to extract the values included in Islamic Education textbooks for the preparatory stage in Qatar, with ideas as the unit of analysis. A content analysis form with a reliability score of 94% was used, alongside a quasi-experimental approach to assess the impact of teaching these values on preparatory school girls. A questionnaire was administered to a sample of 25 teachers to explore methods of value development.

The study's main findings included:

- Islamic Education textbooks contained 1,210 religious values, with 930 values appearing explicitly at 64.79% and 280 values implicitly at 73.14%.
- The primary values in Islamic Education textbooks included 18 key values: faith, good morals, worship, compassion, knowledge, generosity, ambition, patience, obedience, justice, honesty, cleanliness, courage, cooperation, humility, etiquette, love for others, and modesty.
- The five most frequently repeated values were faith, good morals, worship, compassion, and knowledge, while the five least emphasized were modesty, love for others, etiquette, humility, and cooperation.
- Values within objectives were not clear to most teachers, nor were they emphasized in some lessons. In many cases, values listed in lesson objectives were not translated into the lesson content.
- Most lessons relied on lecturing, with minimal value-based activities. Religious activities mainly included class or school magazines and morning broadcasts, with few schools utilizing religious associations.
- There was a statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level between the pre-test and post-test performances of first-year preparatory girls, favoring the post-test for values such as Islamic etiquette, greetings, asking permission, visiting, addressing people, travel etiquette, gatherings, dress, and adornment, indicating the program's positive impact on value-based behavior among students (Al-Suwaidi, p. 30).

➤ **Study by Muhammad Saleh Al-Siqali (2012):**

Titled "The Extent to Which the Content of Islamic Education Textbooks for Secondary Stage Includes the Value of Tolerance and a Proposed Plan to Enrich It," this study aimed to identify the fields of tolerance that should be included in the Islamic Education curriculum for the secondary stage, assess the presence of these fields in the curriculum content, and propose a plan to enrich the Islamic Education curriculum for secondary students. The researcher used the descriptive-analytical method and employed the following tools:

- A checklist to define the fields of tolerance, which was reviewed and adjusted by subject-matter experts.

- Content analysis of the Islamic Education curriculum prescribed for secondary students to determine the presence of tolerance fields.

The following statistical methods were used:

- Holsti's formula to calculate the reliability of the checklist across individuals, along with percentages to measure the degree of tolerance presence in each field.
- Frequencies, arithmetic means, and percentages.

The study's key findings included:

- Islamic Education textbooks for the secondary stage lacked coverage of religious, social, scientific, and political aspects related to the value of tolerance, which need enrichment to suit students in Palestine and its unique context.
- Islamic Education curricula in Palestine showed weak relevance to students' reality in terms of tolerance values.
- The curriculum failed to meet students' needs in this aspect, emphasizing the importance of linking curriculum content with tolerance values and students' lives, and establishing the principle of tolerance across all times and places.
- The curricula were deficient in teaching legal principles related to tolerance values.

Applied Procedures:

➤ **Study Method:**

The study adopted the content analysis method, which is defined as a method that relies on inference and deduction of meanings and ideas through a systematic and objective approach.

➤ **Study Sample:**

The sample consisted of the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of middle school, 2019/2020 edition, published by Dar Al-Shehab, containing 84 pages.

➤ **Study Tool:**

An analysis grid was designed in light of the components of religious values. The researchers developed this analysis grid, which is outlined in the following table:

Table No. (01) shows the final form of the analysis grid.

No.	Analysis Category	Analysis Unit	Frequency	Percentage %
01	Honesty and Trustworthiness	Idea		
		Word		
02	Justice and Equality	Idea		
		Word		
03	Patience and Tolerance	Idea		
		Word		
04	Benevolence and Cooperation	Idea		
		Word		
05	Respect for Parents and Elders	Idea		
		Word		
Total				

Psychometric Properties of the Analysis Grid:

1. **Validity:**

Validity was calculated using Cooper's coefficient to determine the agreement between raters, resulting in 0.83, an acceptable value indicating that the grid results are valid.

2. **Reliability:**

Reliability was calculated using Holsti's coefficient, yielding a result of 0.81, which is also an acceptable value, indicating that the grid results are reliable.

Statistical Methods:

- Frequencies.
- Percentages.
- Cooper's coefficient for validity.
- Holsti's coefficient for reliability.
- Chi-square (Khi²).

Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of Results:

❖ **First Question:**

What values are emphasized in the Islamic Education textbook for the fourth year of middle school?

Table No. (02) shows the percentage of religious values.

Category	Honesty and Trustworthiness	Justice and Equality	Patience and Tolerance	Benevolence and Cooperation	Respect for Parents and Elders	Total
Percentage %	17.86%	13.51%	33.33%	26.80%	08.50%	100%

The table indicates that the religious values presented in the fourth-year middle school Islamic Education textbook are as follows, in descending order:

- Values of patience and tolerance at 33.33%.
- Values of benevolence and cooperation at 26.80%.
- Values of honesty and trustworthiness at 17.86%.
- Values of justice and equality at 13.51%.
- Values of respecting parents and elders at 8.50%.

The most notable observation here is the clear emphasis on the values of patience and tolerance, which constitute nearly one-third of the total values presented in the fourth-year middle school Islamic Education textbook.

❖ **Second Question:**

Are there statistically significant differences between the religious values presented in the fourth-year middle school Islamic Education textbook?

Table No. (03) presents the results of the analysis of values included in the fourth-year middle school Islamic Education textbook.

No.	Analysis Category	Analysis Unit				Total
		Word		Idea		
		Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	
01	Honesty and Trustworthiness	43	42	39	37	82
02	Justice and Equality	26	24	36	35	62
03	Patience and Tolerance	70	68	83	82	153
04	Benevolence and Cooperation	61	59	62	61	123
05	Respect for Parents and Elders	22	19	17	16	39
Total		222	216	237	231	459

The table above reveals that the appearance of religious values in the fourth-year middle school Islamic Education textbook totals 459 occurrences distributed across five values:

- Honesty and trustworthiness: 82 occurrences
- Justice and equality: 62 occurrences
- Patience and tolerance: 153 occurrences
- Benevolence and cooperation: 123 occurrences
- Respect for parents and elders: 39 occurrences

These values are further distributed across the two units of analysis (word and idea). After conducting the necessary statistical calculations, it was found that the calculated Chi-square (χ^2) value is 1.23 with a degree of freedom of 4, which is less than the table Chi-square value of 9.49. Therefore, it is not statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level, indicating no significant differences between the religious values in the fourth-year middle school Islamic Education textbook. This shows that the values are distributed moderately and relatively equally.

This result aligns with Suwaidi's study (1409 AH), which found no differences between religious values in the fourth-year middle school Islamic Education textbook in Algeria, and with Abbadi's study (2004), which noted the prominent place of religious values in textbooks. It also aligns with Duwairi's study (1996). However, it differs from Siqli's study (2012), which found that the fourth-year middle school Islamic Education textbook contains a significant portion of religious values.

Conclusion:

This study shows that religious values hold great importance as they instill good morals and virtuous behaviors in students, guiding them to become upstanding individuals in the future—a primary goal of the school system. The commitment of the responsible authorities to religious values is also clearly evident, as a substantial portion of the fourth-year middle school Islamic Education textbook is dedicated to these values.

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