

ANALYSIS OF A QURANIC TOPIC IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION TEXTBOOK: HUMAN CREATION AS A SIGN OF ALLAH'S GREATNESS

*Halim Ismail¹, Hilmiah Hassan¹, Madihah Khalid¹ & Muhammad Sabri Sahrir¹

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze and evaluate a Quranic-based topic from a chapter of the Islamic Education for secondary school textbook authorized by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. Textbooks are an essential feature in Malaysian classrooms when implementing the school curriculum. Due to the development and changes in practices and teaching methodology, the quality must be considered before the choice of a specific textbook is made. Policymakers, teachers, and educators should inspect the textbook's content accuracy and recommended teaching and learning practices before determining its suitability. This will benefit teachers and students, leading to meeting the educational objectives. This qualitative study used a content analysis approach to examine the pedagogical value and suitability of a topic and its content with respect to students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor learning domains. After analyzing the data, it was shown that the examined topic met students' capability to interpret the lesson well. A solution to overcome shortcomings was also suggested. The findings from this study will be beneficial to teachers in adapting the recent technique of teaching. It will also benefit the policymakers in making amendments to the subjects' Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document (DSKP).

Keywords: *Textbooks, Pedagogical, Value, DSKP*

[1]
International Islamic University
Malaysia,
Kuala Lumpur
halimismail@iium.edu.my

[1]
International Islamic University
Malaysia,
Kuala Lumpur

[1]
International Islamic University
Malaysia,
Kuala Lumpur

[1]
International Islamic University
Malaysia,
Kuala Lumpur

INTRODUCTION

A textbook is a book that contains detailed information or substance of a particular subject that serves as guidance and reference for teachers and students. It also presents the main principles of that subject. The United Nation Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2008) defined a textbook as a “book which has an exposition of generally accepted principles in one subject intended primarily as a basis for an instructional process in classroom or the pupil -book -teacher situation”. A textbook is also considered a comprehensive compilation of content in a branch of study and is used to meet the needs of teachers or educators at any level of an educational institution.

A textbook is designed primarily to teach students a particular subject. It will generally make students understand the subject matter and acquire needed skills through the exercises and tests it contains. Textbooks are significant in teaching and learning; they are the primary reference source in imparting knowledge and skills, whether at school or at home (Nayef, 2015). Teachers must focus on what sort of skills students can gain when using a textbook in the classroom.

Islamic Education is considered a core subject, as stated in the KBSM and KSSM documents, in which it is made compulsory for Muslim students from the lowest to the highest levels. Students are expected to understand the subjects in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. Islamic education textbooks belong to the nonfiction group of books. Most of the contents are factual documentation derived from the central part of Islamic knowledge and principles such as *Fiqh* (jurisprudence), Theology, Islamic history, Quranic study, al-Hadith, etiquette (*Akhlak*), and so on.

The book chosen and analysed in this study serves as a textbook for Form 3 and is the 1st edition, published in 2018. It was written by a panel of writers based on the Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document. The Department of Curriculum Division initially developed the syllabus after the former curriculum, the Integrated Curriculum of Secondary School (KBSM) 1989, was transformed into the current Curriculum Standard of Secondary School (KKSM) in 2000. The content was enhanced to create a more conducive delivery of the teaching and learning process in a classroom. In the Malaysian context, textbooks are considered a compulsory element of teaching and learning with organized outlines that should be followed in a particular schedule. Hence, textbooks are vital tools within education, and textbook adoption is an essential part of the process. This is stated in the circular of the Ministry of Education as follows:

PROFESSIONAL CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 12/1999: Textbooks and Workbooks and Activities Endorsed by the Ministry of Education. This professional circular is issued for the purpose of informing about the use of Textbooks and Workbooks and Activities in all government schools. All Principals and Headmasters are reminded that Textbooks certified by the Ministry of Education are compulsory for all government schools.

To maintain the quality of textbooks, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has appointed a group of experts in the education sector, such as university lecturers, expert teachers, and academicians in related fields, to bridge the content in textbooks with the standards of learning in Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document (DSKP). MOE also produced a regulation and guideline for textbook writing to ensure the accuracy and relevancy of each textbook.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The education system encounters rapid changes. Similarly, textbooks may also be irrelevant at a certain point in time due to changes in the needs of students and educators. Hence, textbooks which are a powerful tool in disseminating knowledge should be revised accordingly, including the layout and components of the textbook; it should not only be textual but pictorial and graphic and abide by the specific technical specification. These elements must be evaluated and analyzed from time to time by the experts and experienced team members to

ensure the contents are up to date, integrated, and inclusively cover the new enhanced substance of the curriculum.

Several studies have reported that the analysis of textbooks is also expected to provide vital information for teachers and educators to investigate the strengths and weaknesses of the recent subject content of values education. However, the issue is that the textbook may become outdated quickly due to the standards and content continually changing. This may result in declining interest among teachers in using the textbook as the primary reference in the classroom if textbooks are not continuously analyzed (Guat, 2010).

Nayef (2015) explained that textbooks are significant in teaching and learning; they are the primary reference source in imparting knowledge, skills, and learning activities in schools and at home. It is possible to read textbooks via electronic devices in the modern era. However, the main concern is still the suitability and accuracy of the curriculum as the central part to be aware. Hence, content analysis of textbooks must be done regularly, although textbooks require authoring by a group of specialists and experienced professionals in the subject matter (Nayef, 2015).

LITERATURE REVIEW

In Malaysia, most textbook analysis studies arose after the Integrated Curriculum of Secondary School (KBSM) implementation in 1989, where teachers and students have ample time to use and examine the appropriateness of the textbooks. For example, in his study on the Islamic Education textbook for Form 1 (KBSM), Talib (1995) explained that some parts of the content are relevant to high achiever students, and some are irrelevant to slow learners. A similar study done by Ghanem et.al (2013) for the Iraqi Secondary Islamic Education textbook found that questions in lower levels (Knowledge and Comprehension) are (High percentage). Questions in higher levels (application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) are an exceptionally (Low percentage) in Islamic educational textbooks.

There exists substantial evidence, as stated by Guat (2010), that, in general, novice teachers were satisfied with the content in Malay Language Textbook during the KBSR curriculum. A new design of textbooks has inculcated HOTS characteristics that should be utilized by teachers and students wisely. Nayef (2015) asserted that any textbook should have cognitive development and creative thinking characteristics. This characteristic refers to the nature, relevance, and level of learning activities in the textbook. Activities given in the textbook should be according to students' developmental level and the content is helpful in developing thinking skills in the students.

A well-planned strategy should be implemented before, during, and after the textbooks' writing process to lessen errors in the designed syllabus. Anuar (2017) emphasized that a mistake often arises from the writer without them realizing it. This is the reason why an evaluation must be taken into consideration before the textbook is published. Hence any study concerning textbook analysis was not intended to blame the writers but to motivate them to be better writers and to make sure mistakes are avoided in the future.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study examined the topic 'Human Creation as a sign of Allah's Greatness'. This is the last topic from the Quranic chapter in the Islamic Education textbook for Form 3 students. The main objective is to investigate to what extent the textbook used at secondary school levels complies with the School Standards Curriculum framework described in the Document Standard of National Education (DSKP). In this Quranic topic, the objectives, language used, physical appearances, the relevance of the activities, and the assessment at the end of the lesson will be examined based on the content of the Islamic Education (PAI) Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document (DSKP).

On the other hand, this study also highlights new relevant ideas to be implemented by the teacher during Islamic Education lessons. Most of the suggestions originated from researchers' own experience while conducting teaching activities for different levels of students to teach the skills of 21st-century learning.

METHODOLOGY

This paper applies the qualitative research method to study the interpretation of the document that has been analyzed and evaluated on the selected topic of the textbook. This study has examined Islamic Education textbooks for Form 3 students in the Qur'anic topic, namely 'Human creation as a sign of Allah's Greatness'. Bowen (2009) stated that analyzing documents incorporates coding content into themes like how focus groups or interview transcripts are analyzed.

Document from the textbook was analyzed under a systematic procedure for reviewing and evaluating the printed material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that the data be examined and interpreted to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009).

The process starts by choosing the relevant material among the printed documents. Later the analysis document is designed based on the element extracted from the Secondary School Standard Curriculum (KSSM) framework in Curriculum and Assessment Document standard (DSKP) for Islamic Education subjects for form three students. The sheet used for analysis is divided into two parts. The first part refers to al-Quran's reading and memorizing skills, based on the talaqqi and musyafahah method (Rijaludin Yahya *et.al*, 2018).

On the other hand, the second part can be considered a descriptive analysis form to summarize the interpretation output. The elements derived from the KSSM framework are communication, behavioral, spiritual, humanization, self-skill, physical and esthetical development, science, and technology. Islamic Education of KSSM focuses on developing knowledge, practices, and applied knowledge and creating a culture of the Muslim way of life (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2018). The data analysis process also emphasized the 21st-century classroom setting and higher order thinking skills (HOTS) in learning and teaching. Figure 1 shows the Framework for Analysis of the al-Quran topic for the KSSM Textbook.

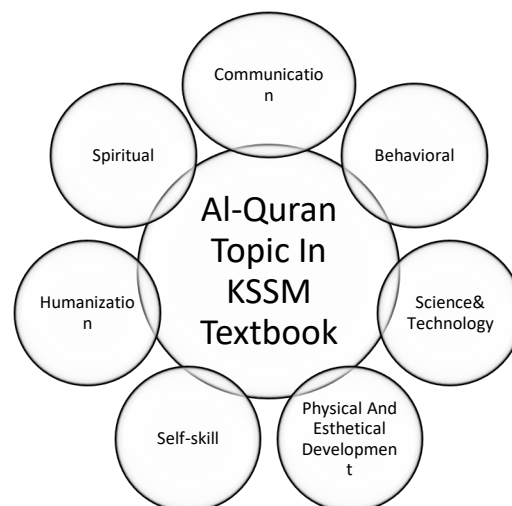


Figure 1: Framework for Analysis of al-Quran topic in KSSM Textbook. Adapted from the Standard Secondary School Curriculum KSSM Framework (Ministry of Education MOE Malaysia, 2018).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Islamic Education Textbook in Malaysian Secondary Schools

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The publication of Islamic education textbooks involved collaborative efforts from different agencies such as the Textbook department under Malaysia MOE, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP), Islamic Education Department (BPI), and Teacher Education Institute (IPG), and other selected schools.

Content of Islamic Education Textbook for Form 3

The Islamic Education textbook for Form 3 comprised six chapters, namely, Al-Quran, Hadith, Theology (Aqidah), Jurisprudence (Fiqh), Islamic History (Sirah), and Etiquette (Akhlaq). The Al-Quran chapter contains eight (8) topics, Hadith - two (2) subjects, Theology (Aqidah) - four (4) topics, Jurisprudence (Fiqh) - six (6) topics, Islamic History (Sirah) - (2) main topics, and Etiquette (Akhlaq) - five (5) topics (Rijaludin Yahya et al. 2018).

Analyzing and Evaluating textbook According to Secondary School Framework Elements

The researcher chose the last topic from the Al-Quran chapter to analyze and evaluate this study. The topic is "Penciptaan Manusia bukti kekuasaan Allah SWT" (Human creation as a sign of Allah's Greatness) (Rijaludin Yahya et al. 2018). This topic refers to verse 40:67 (al-Ghafir). For lower secondary school levels (Forms 1, 2, and 3), the Quran topic will be divided into three segments of the teaching and learning process, where the first part focuses on memorization and recitation, the second on the rules of basic tajwid, and the third focuses on comprehension of the verses.

Based on Figure 1, the following table lists the findings for each element of the framework.

Framework Elements	What the textbook have
1. Communication	The language used is formal and easy to understand
2. Behavioral	Motivates everyone to conduct more investigation and find other material in a different discussion
3. Spiritual	Integrating between science and real life with the recognition of Allah's Greatness in human creation
4. Humanization	Human creation, science
5. Self-Skill	Motivate HOTS, stimulate creative thinking, and the rules of basic tajwid
6. Physical and Esthetical Development	The sequence of human creation and development is organized. Assessment is portrayed as an excellent indicator of global competency because it motivates students to be involved in active thinking activities.
7. Technology use	The sequence of human creation and development is organized QR Codes icon.

Table 1: Frameworks Element Analysis In Al-Quran Topic of KSSM Textbook

Communication

From the part of the textbook content analyzed, the researchers encounter the idea of the chosen topic first. The title integrates curriculum elements (EMK) because the ideas urge the teacher and students to refer to science topics. It fits the age of Form 3 students who have reached the age of puberty to discuss the topic in class. Even though the topic relates to science, it is interesting that the language used is straightforward and formal for students to understand and communicate.

Behavioural

This topic motivates everyone to investigate and find other materials in different discussion groups. This will create a conducive way of learning and teaching in the classroom and improve student behavioural responses. The suggested activities can be practiced in school or done as homework, as shown in Figure 2. Teachers must manage the time accordingly if the activities are planned to be distributed in groups. The assessment part portrayed an excellent indicator of global competency and motivated students to be involved in active thinking. This is a tremendous effort in the era of digitization of the new generation in this century.

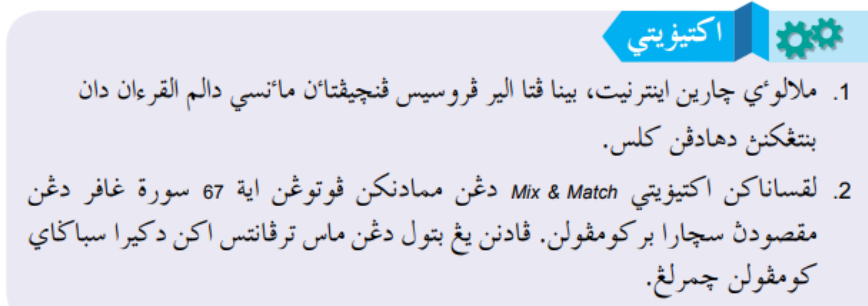


Figure 2: Activities Suggested in Textbook (Rijaludin Yahya et al.,2018)

Spiritual

The content is generally written in a systematic arrangement that aligns with the standard of learning in DSKP. This exciting topic succeeded in integrating science and real-life with the recognition of Allah's Greatness in human creation, which will affect the spiritual aspects of the students, as shown in Figure 3.

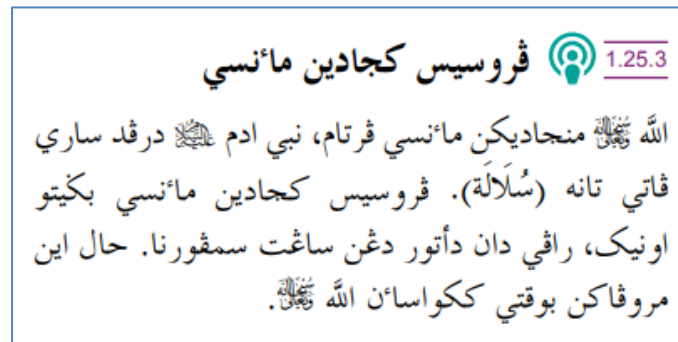


Figure 3: Allah's Greatness In Human Creation (Rijaludin Yahya et al.,2018)

Humanization

The textbook is the most vital teaching aid since it is the primary reference that is both useful for students and assists teachers in accomplishing their objectives. The most apparent feature of the textbooks is in terms of picture management, as their primary function is to disseminate concepts in abstract or concrete form. In this chapter, the sequence of human creation and development is organized with the accurate term used and easy-to-digest information, as shown in figure 4. The color and appearance of the diagram seem exciting and able to guide the student to follow the chronology in the process. In our opinion, we would like to suggest the video of actual human birth is attached as a video to be watched by students accompanied by their teacher for a better explanation. Nayef (2015) stated that a textbook helps achieve the curriculum objectives if it contains valuable materials, has an attractive appearance as well as readable and prolifically written.



Figure 4: Sequence Of Human Creation (Rijaludin Yahya et al.,2018)

Self-Skill

Since the textbook is a new version aligned with the new structure, it appears with introductory pages at the beginning of every chapter to project the general vision and stimulate student motivation. The content was arranged interestingly with an integrated style between the text and the graphics. The activities and assessment were designed to enrich the student's understanding of information, stimulate creative thinking, teach good values, motivate HOTS, and even make students learn about the rules of basic tajwid as shown in Figure 5. All of these skills are part of the primary students' self-skills.

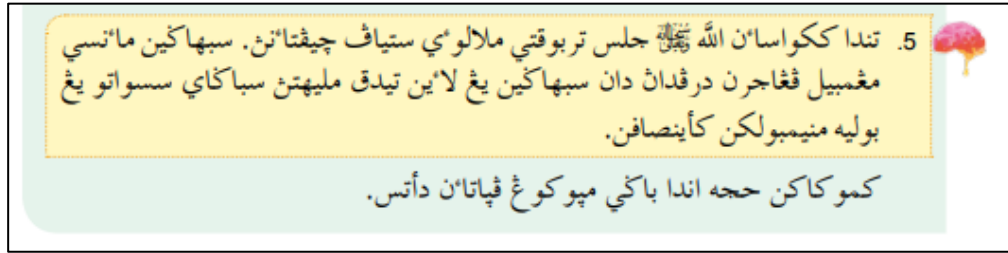


Figure 5: High Order Thinking Skills HOTS (Rijaludin Yahya et al., 2018)

Physical and Esthetical Development

The indexes and glossaries are as crucial as the introduction. Human creation in this topic generally used a lot of biological terms, but none appear in the glossary part of this textbook. The terms used in biology slightly differ from the quranic terminology. Hence, it is a brilliant suggestion if the comparison between the words used to be listed on the last page of the topic exists. Furthermore, most students aren't native Arabic speakers, and with glossaries added, the students and teachers are more interested in uncovering more about the topic. In terms of size, this textbook is aligned with the standard average height of the school textbook with no printing errors and an excellent adaptation to Malaysian Muslim culture in general. The presentations are beautiful in a simple and modern digitized manner. All the iconic features represent unique identification, such as a brief page of every chapter, the standard of learning from the Curriculum and Assessment Document Standard (DSKP), subtopic, or Codes, Practical Part, Prisma Ilmu for added information, Element of Cross-Curriculum (EMK), Teacher Notes, Higher Orders Thinking Skill questions (HOTS), assessment part and activity's part as in Figure 6. These efforts would affect the students' and teachers' physical and esthetical development as it is known that sight and hearing are the essential senses in human learning activities. The learning process using textbooks will be very effective with a sufficient number of related illustrations.

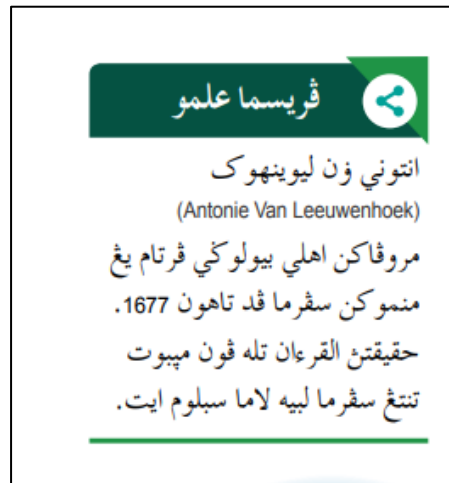


Figure 6: Additional information (Rijaludin Yahya et al., 2018).

Science and Technology

The new printed textbook addressed the latest content edition with up-to-date modern features and digital style. It starts with a text from verse 67, surah al-Ghafir and is supported with the video of the verse recitation using the QR Codes icon, as shown in Figure 7. This promotes interactive learning that aligns with the learning

for the 21st century (PAK 21) to exercise the right way to articulate the characteristics of Hijaiyyah letters in the Al-Quran.



Figure 7: QR Code (Rijaludin Yahya et al., 2018).

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are some areas for improvement that are highlighted. Teachers should accommodate the student with the basic rules of tajwid in reciting the verse since it had been taught in topic three in this chapter. This is an effective technique to revise the tajwid rules in the al-Quran topic. In this textbook, some basics tajwid should be stated and highlighted in the verses to be practised by the student, as stated in the Standard of Performance (SP) in DSKP.

Otherwise, to build students' strong interpretation of the uniqueness of human creation, the comparison between God's words in the Quran and the human theory of evolution can be one of the sub-topics to be discussed in the classroom. These facts need to be proven since many students are interested in debating the concept of a human being, for example, Darwin's Evolution Theory. This will foster higher order thinking skills in analyzing the arguments.

CONCLUSION

We acknowledge that life rapidly changes around the political, economic, and socio-cultural spheres. This is a real challenge for policymakers, educators, curriculum developers, and textbook writers, who need to be aware of the changing needs of students. The current curriculum must be reviewed and re-evaluated by the policymakers, educators, and teachers to determine whether the Basic Course Outlines and the textbooks of values education can disseminate the high value of knowledge. This is in line with the suggestion by Guat (2010) that the textbook should always be updated to avoid declining interest among teachers.

The findings from this study will provide teachers with a more objective view of the textbooks they are using for teaching the necessary skills in education. Both teachers and students will appreciate the textbook as educational material. By analyzing and evaluating the textbooks regularly, teachers gain priceless and valuable information to realize the adequacy of the curriculum procedures, as suggested by Nayef (2015). In addition, they will be able to adjust and amend their weaknesses and maintain their strengths. At the same time, the result will motivate them to evaluate their teaching and incorporate textbooks as an essential and reliable aid for teaching and learning.

The results of this study may motivate other researchers to investigate different aspects of curriculum planning and textbook preparation and evaluate the effectiveness of particular textbooks to realize the purpose and the educational objectives of the subjects. The future authors must look in depth at the quality of education

textbooks in terms of overall content and course outline, which should be included or excluded to meet the expectation of a new Muslim generation.

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