

Exploring the Level of Moral Values Included In Islamiat Single National Curriculum at Primary Level

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Abstract

Many countries in this world are facing the issue of moral decadence and Pakistan has no exception. Curriculum is a vital factor to instill moral values in students. This study aimed to determine the extent to which moral values were involved in the Single National Curriculum at the primary level. This study was delimited to 5th grade Islamiat SNC document and textbook. Data collection sources were SNC documents, and textbook of Islamiat. In order to analyze the data, we enlisted moral values in light of the literature review. For this study, a qualitative content analysis technique was employed to analyze the 5th-grade SNC document and textbook of Islamiat. This study highlighted that the content related to moral values was adequate in Islamiat. This study recommended that the missing moral values in Islamiat SNC document and textbook should be involved and those moral values that were presented briefly in textbooks should be included in detail.

Key Words: Islamiat, Moral Values, Primary Level, Single National Curriculum

Introduction

English Moral values are the set of standards that helps individuals to evaluate right and wrong or good and bad behaviour and acts (Ahmad, 2018). In today's world, a significant problem is the decline of moral standards (George & Uyanga, 2014; Atoi, 2020; Jani, 2018; Tamam, 2017). Societies are rife with bad behaviours which include intolerance, deceitfulness, contempt, disrespect, lying, dishonesty, unfairness, and many other illegal acts (George & Uyanga, 2014; Demirel, et al, 2016; Webber, 2017). Moral degradation is the cause of these problems. The same problem is being faced by Pakistan, just like other countries. Numerous authors have addressed it, including Ahmed et al., (2009) and Omer et al., (2015).

These are the moral values that distinguish human beings from animals. The teaching of moral values to the individual is important because if individuals of societies practice moral values in all walks of life, then that society remains a civilized society. Moral values should be taught to students so that they can become good citizens and better members of society. Various authors believe that moral values can be taught to students through education (Akram et al., 2021; Tamam, 2017; Muzaffar & Javaid, 2018) because education aims to promote a person's overall growth, which also includes moral development. One of the most useful and significant tools in this regard is the curriculum (Alvi, Khanam & Kalsoom, 2020).

In Pakistan, Single National Curriculum (grade 1-5) has been implemented in 2021. According to the Ministry of Education Pakistan, SNC focuses on moral value-based education. Literature shows that a lot of studies have been done on Single National Curriculum but the studies related to the exploration of moral values in SNC are limited. During the review of literature, the study of Bano & Abubakar (2022) was the only study seen which was about the moral and social development aspects in SNC English. The authors used only English curriculum to analyze. So SNC needs to be analyzed for exploration of moral values in other subjects also. In this article, we took SNC Islamiat for the exploration of Moral values. As compared to other curricula, Islamiat curriculum provides more scope for the development of moral values.

According to Mahmood and Afsar (2022), Islamic studies play a significant role in developing morality and thought. One must learn Islamic studies if he/she wishes to have good morals and enlighten his/ her mind with the right thinking.

Literature review

Moral Values

Morality is one of the pillars of Islam, which is a complete way of life. In Islam, anything that promotes the wellbeing of individuals or society and does not conflict with any Islamic principles is good, whereas anything that is ethically dangerous is bad. (Masitah, 2019). Human personality and behaviour are influenced by morality. (Muzaffar, Javaid, & Sohail, 2017). Every society needs it on the most fundamental level. Islam greatly highlights moral values such as tolerance, humility, justice, respect for people, kindness, and brotherhood (Shah, Raza, & Irfan, 2021).

Since moral standards decide whether or not something is good, they are crucial. Sometimes a person's moral principles are used to describe who they are as a person. Someone who has acquired adequate training and upholds high moral standards typically demonstrates the moral values honesty, kindness, forgiveness, tolerance, and justice (Kaur, 2015). It has been demonstrated that respect for one's friends, family, and loved ones helps to fortify societal ties. Human cohabitation can be made better with increased connectedness. Honesty and truthfulness are the highest moral principles that exist in human society. If these principles are upheld, people can easily accomplish their goals. The use of moral values will enhance one's well-being (Sari, 2013).

Morality is one of the major principles of Islam. Islam demands moral behaviour from its believers. A lot of moral guidelines are provided by Islam. Some of them include honesty, covenant-keeping, humility, tolerance, respect, kindness, good manners, avoid backbiting, brotherhood (Halstead, 2007).

Single National Curriculum

Researchers have examined the Single National Curriculum from a variety of aspects. Irfan, (2021) carried out a qualitative study to assess the English as Second Language (ESL) Single National Curriculum for grades 6-8. The expectations and worries of teachers regarding the execution of SNC at the primary level was the main topic of the study of Zaman, Saleem & Ali, (2021). Rauf, Ayub, & Batool, (2022) looked at SNC's goals of teaching ESL (English as Second Language) to students in primary grades. The study of Khan & Ali (2022) was focused on identifying the various ideologies present in English textbooks (SNC-2020) for primary school. The purpose of the study of Hussain, Abbas & Asim, (2021) was to examine the class five Islamiyat's content (session 2019-2020 and 2021-2022). Tayyab, Umer & Sajid (2022) critically analyzed the religious content in English and Urdu textbooks to reveal implicit and explicit ideology at work (based on SNC). Bano & Abubakar, (2022) examined the SNC English textbook for the fifth grade in relation to issues of students' moral and social development by using the content analysis technique.

Material and Methods

The present research was qualitative in nature. A content analysis technique was employed to explore the moral values included in 5th grade Islamiyat Curriculum document and textbook. Islamiyat curriculum document and textbook of grade 5 were selected as the study's material or source of data collection. The textbook used for analysis was published by PCTB (session 2021-22). In the light of the literature review we enlisted moral values in order to analyze the curriculum document and textbook. In order to analyze the material, firstly the material was read carefully and then analyzed by keeping in view the list of moral values.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Analysis of Islamiat Curriculum document

Moral Values	Themes and subthemes	SLOs
Tolerance	✓	✓
Brotherhood	✓	✓
Kindness and forgiveness	✓	✓
honesty	x	✓
Covenant keeping	✓	✓
Respect for people	x	x
humility	x	x
Avoid backbiting	✓	✓
Service of humanity	x	x

The topics and subtopics in the Islamiat curriculum document included moral values like tolerance, brotherhood, kindness, forgiveness, covenant-keeping, avoiding backbiting. The moral values like honesty, respect for people, humility, and service of humanity were not included in the topics suggested for textbook. But some topics were those which might include the moral values like حضرت مشاہیر اسلام و علی رضی اللہ تعالیٰ عنہ. Later some of the moral values that were not seen in the topics were seen in the SLOs. The moral values: kindness, forgiveness, tolerance, honesty, covenant keeping, brotherhood, avoid backbiting were involved in the SLOs. Some moral values were not included in the SLOs like respect for people, humility, service of humanity.

- One SLO related to tolerance is as follows:

"رواداری کے معنی و مفہوم سے آگاہ ہو سکیں۔"

"To Be aware of the meaning of tolerance."

- One SLO related to brotherhood is as follows:

"معاشرے میں مواخات اور بھائی چارے کے فوائد اور اس سے مرتب ہونے والے اثرات سے آگاہ ہو سکیں۔"

"To be aware of the benefits and effects of brotherhood in the society."

- Following is the SLO for keeping covenants:

"نبی اکرم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کے اسوۂ حسنہ اور سیرت صحابہ کرام رضی اللہ تعالیٰ عنہم سے ایفائے عہد کی مثالیں جان سکیں۔"

"Learn about the example of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the biography of the Sahaabah (RA)."

- Following is the one SLO related to Kindness and forgiveness:

"عفو و درگزر اور رحم دلی کی اہمیت جان سکیں۔"

"Know the importance of forgiveness and kindness."

- SLO related to honesty is given below:

"ہجرت مدینہ کے تناظر میں حضرت علی رضی اللہ عنہ کے کردار اور امانتوں کی اہمیت سے آگاہ ہو سکیں۔"

“They could be aware of the importance of Hazrat Ali's role and trusts in the context of migration to Madinah.”

- SLO related to avoiding backbiting is given below:

“چغل خوری کے معنی و مفہوم سے واقف ہوسکیں۔”

“Be able to know the meaning and concept of backbiting.”

Table 2
Analysis of Islamiat textbook

Moral Values	Presence	Page No
Tolerance	✓	65
Brotherhood	✓	48, 81
Kindness and forgiveness	✓	69
Honesty	✓	98
Covenant keeping	✓	77
Respect for people	x	-
Humility	✓	104
Avoid backbiting	✓	85
Service of humanity	✓	104

The Islamiat textbook of 5th grade involved the moral values: tolerance, kindness, forgiveness, honesty, brotherhood, covenant keeping, humility, avoid backbiting, service of humanity. Only one moral value was missing which was “respect for people”.

- In the textbook of Islamiat, a whole chapter (on pg. no 65 and 66) was about the moral value of “tolerance”. The meaning and concept of tolerance were explained in this chapter. The incidental stories from the life of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions were also presented to clarify it. Following text from the textbook shows “tolerance”.

”ہمارے ملک میں مختلف عقائد اور مذاہب کے لوگ رہتے ہیں۔ اس لیے ہمیں ایک دوسرے کے مذہبی عقائد اور معاشرتی رسم و رواج کا احترام کرنا چاہیے۔ کسی کو اس کے مذہب، علاقے، رنگ یا نسل کی وجہ سے تنگ نہ کیا جائے۔ ہر انسان کے بنیادی اور فطری حقوق برابری کی بنیاد پر ادا کیے جائیں۔ ایسا معاشرہ ہی سماجی ہم آہنگی اور رواداری کی جیتی جاگتی مثال بن سکتا ہے۔“

“People of different beliefs and religions live in our country. Therefore, we should respect each other's religious beliefs and social customs. No one should be harassed because of his religion, region, color or caste. The basic and natural rights of every human being should be paid on the basis of equality. Only such a society can become a living example of social harmony and tolerance.”

- Two chapters were about the moral value “brotherhood” on pg. no 48 and 81. Some of the text from pg. 81 is given below:”

”اسلام کی آمد سے پہلے عرب ایک غیر مہذب قوم تھے۔ وہ قبائل میں بٹے ہوئے تھے۔ چھوٹی چھوٹی باتوں پر ایک دوسرے سے لڑتے تھے۔ جب مہاجرین مدینہ منورہ پہنچے تو نبی اکرم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے انصار کو ان کا بھائی بنادیا۔ یہ بھائی چارے کا ایسا شاندار نمونہ ہے جس کی پوری دنیا تا قیامت مثال پیش نہیں کر سکتی۔“

“Before the advent of Islam, the Arabs were an uncivilized nation. They were divided into tribes. They used to fight each other over small things. When the emigrants reached Madinah, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made the Ansar his brothers. This is such a wonderful example of brotherhood that the whole world cannot provide an example of.”

- The moral values kindness and forgiveness were present in a chapter on pg. no 69. This chapter discussed the definition and concept of kindness and forgiveness. These were also explained

by presenting instances from the life of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH). Below is an extract from the chapter pertaining to kindness and forgiveness:

"عفو در گزر سے مراد کسی کی غلطی اور کوتاہی کو معاف کر دینا اور اس سے بدلہ نہ لینا ہے۔ رحم دلی کا مطلب ہے اللہ تعالیٰ کی مخلوق کے ساتھ نرمی اور شفقت سے پیش آنا۔"

"Forgiveness means to forgive someone's mistake and omission and not to take revenge. Compassion means treating God's creatures with gentleness and compassion."

- In the Islamiyat textbook, the moral value covenant keeping was covered in a whole chapter (on pg. 77). The author defined and discussed the idea of keeping a promise in this chapter. Additionally, examples from the life of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) were used to clarify this. Below is a sample of that chapter's text:

"وعدہ خلافی ہے حد ناپسندیدہ عمل ہے۔ جو شخص وعدہ پورا نہیں کرتا، لوگ اسے جھوٹا سمجھتے ہیں۔ وعدہ خلافی اللہ تعالیٰ کی ناراضی اور دنیا میں ذلت و رسوائی کا سبب بنتی ہے۔"

"Breach of promise is highly undesirable. A person who does not fulfill a promise, people consider him a liar. A breach of promise causes displeasure of Allah Almighty and humiliation in the world."

- On page 98, one line represented the moral value of honesty. The following text is from page 98:

"آپ رضی اللہ تعالیٰ عنہ امانت و دیانت میں بے مثال تھے۔"

"He was unparalleled in trust and honesty."

- Below is some text from page 104 that discusses humility:

"آپ رحمۃ اللہ علیہ نے لوگوں کو میانہ روی اختیار کرنے اور غرور و تکبر سے دور رہنے کا درس دیا۔"

"He (may Allah have mercy on him) taught people to be moderate and stay away from arrogance."

- The moral value avoid back biting was there on pg. no 85 in a chapter. Below is some text from the textbook that is related to it:

"حدیث مبارکہ سے اس بات کا بخوبی اندازہ لگایا جاسکتا ہے کہ چغل خوری معمولی گناہ نہیں ہے۔ یہ ہماری نیکیوں کو کھا جاتی ہے اور ہمیں اللہ تعالیٰ کے نافرمانوں میں شامل کر دیتی ہے۔ اسلام چغل خوری کو حرام قرار دیتا ہے۔ اسی لیے کہا گیا ہے کہ اگر کوئی شخص آپ سے کسی کی چغلی کھاتا ہے، تو اس کی بات مان کر، اسی کی تائید مت کریں۔ وہ شخص جھوٹا ہے۔"

"From the blessed hadith, it can be well inferred that gluttony is not a minor sin. It eats up our good deeds and makes us among the disobedient of Allah Ta'ala. Islam prohibits cheating. That is why it has been said that if a person gossips about you, do not support him by obeying him. That person is a liar."

- Text related to service of humanity was present on pg. no 104. It is given below:

"سید محمد راشد روضہ دہنی رحمۃ اللہ علیہ برصغیر کے بہت بڑے عالم دین، صوفی، محدث اور فقیہ ہیں۔ آپ رحمۃ اللہ علیہ 1171 ہجری میں سندھ کے ضلع خیر پور میں پیدا ہوئے۔ آپ رحمۃ اللہ علیہ نے اپنی زندگی کا زیادہ تر حصہ خدمت خلق میں بسر کیا۔"

“Syed Muhammad Rashid Ruza Dhani, may God bless him and grant him peace, is a great religious scholar, Sufi, muhaddith and jurist of the subcontinent. He was born in 1171 Hijri in Khairpur district of Sindh. Most of his life he lived in the service of people.”

Curriculum document

The topics and subtopics in the Islamiat curriculum document included moral values like tolerance, brotherhood, kindness, forgiveness, covenant-keeping, and avoiding backbiting. Moral values like honesty, respect for people, humility, and service of humanity were not included in the topics suggested for the textbook. Some of the moral values that were not seen in the topics were seen in the SLOs. SLOs present in the curriculum document included moral values like tolerance, brotherhood, kindness, forgiveness, honesty, covenant-keeping, avoid backbiting. Some moral values were not included in the SLOs like respect for people, humility, and service of humanity.

Textbook

In the Islamiat textbook of 5th grade, the moral values: tolerance, kindness, forgiveness, honesty, covenant keeping, humility, avoid backbiting, brotherhood, service of humanity were present. Only one moral value was missing in the textbook which was respect for people. The majority of moral values were explained in depth. Moral values like honesty, service of humanity, and humility were presented briefly in the textbook.

Comparison of SNC with the textbook

The textbook contained all of the moral values which were found in the curriculum document of Islamiat. However, the textbook also contained those two moral values which were not from the curriculum document. These moral values were humility, and service of humanity.

Conclusion

On the basis of the aforementioned findings, it was concluded that moral principles like brotherhood, kindness, forgiveness, tolerance, honesty, covenant-keeping, avoid backbiting were included in the Single National Curriculum of Islamiat for fifth grade. However, the moral values: humility, and service of humanity that were not involved in the curriculum document were present in the textbook. It was also revealed that the textbook's content contained all of the moral principles specified in the curriculum document. Only one moral value: respect for people was missing in the SNC document and textbook. The majority of moral values were explained in depth. Hence, Islamiat Single Curriculum of 5th grade had an adequate content related to moral values.

Recommendations

The establishment of moral values is essential for society to be called a civilized society. But unfortunately, many societies including Pakistan are facing moral decline. Policies and curricula of many countries including Pakistan focus on the moral development of students. But the National education policy 2017 highlighted that school curricula pay little or no attention to moral values. So, the SNC document and textbook need to be analyzed to see the extent to which moral values are included in the curriculum and to see whether the moral values highlighted in the curriculum are involved in the textbook or not.

Islamiat curriculum and textbooks are helpful in developing moral values among students so that they can differentiate between what is right and wrong and can become better members of society. Islamic studies play a significant role in developing morality and thought. One must learn Islamic studies if he/she wishes to have good morals and enlighten his/ her mind with the right thinking.

This study aimed to determine the extent to which moral values were present in SNC at the primary level. Findings revealed that the Islamiat SNC document and textbook had moral values: kindness, forgiveness, brotherhood, honesty, covenant-keeping, humility, tolerance, avoiding backbiting, and service of humanity. However, their representation in the textbook was not equal. Among these moral values, few moral values were presented briefly in the textbook. These were honesty, service of humanity, and humility. Therefore, it is recommended that these moral values may also be included in detail in the Islamiat textbook because these are also helpful to train students morally.

Findings of the study also revealed that one moral value “respect for people” was missing. So, it is recommended that this moral value may also be included in the SNC document and textbook of Islamiat because it is also important for student’s moral development.

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