

Study on Countering Extremism and Contemporary Challenges in Islamic
Religion Curricula in Saudi Arabia

A Dissertation

Presented to

The College of Graduate and Professional Studies

Department of Teaching and Learning

Indiana State University

Terre Haute, Indiana

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

By

Alyaa Mohammad Malibari

May 2020

© Alyaa Malibari

Keywords: Saudi Education, Extremism, Teacher training, Islamic curriculum, Curriculum,
Education

ProQuest Number:27958744

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent on the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 27958744

Published by ProQuest LLC (2020). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All Rights Reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee Chair: Susan M. Powers, Ed.D.

Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs

Professor, Department of Teaching and Learning

Indiana State University

Committee Member: Cassandra Caruso Woolard, Ph.D.

Creighton University

Committee Member: Elonda Ervin, Ph.D., CDP

Executive Director

Multicultural Services and Programs

Division of Student Affairs

Indiana State University

ABSTRACT

The reform of the Islamic religion curricula by the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia within the schools is a process that has been ongoing for quite some time. Major revision of the curricula has been occurring since the events of 9/11. Following the announcement of Vision 2030, curricular reform to move toward moderation has been a monumental task for the Saudi Arabian government. This research study was designed to address two questions regarding the contemporary challenges to counter extremism through the Islamic curriculum and to explore the dynamic solutions needed to have a moderate curriculum. The qualitative study used a document analysis methodology. Three types of government documents were reviewed: public records, observational records, and policies. Results from this research demonstrated that curricular reform has had a major impact on the new policies developed by the Ministry of Education. These documents revealed some issues in the current curriculum including the lack of addressing some phenomena, reality in the curriculum, the effect of the Muslim brotherhood extremism ideology on education, the lack of the use of technology, the lack of reliable assessment tools, the lack of providing thinking tools for students, and the lack of teaching skills in regard to the Islamic curriculum. Eventually, the exploration of these issues will potentially help the effort made by the Ministry of Education to reform the curriculum in a way that will help assure a path to achieve the goals of Vision 2030.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|------|
| COMMITTEE MEMBERS | ii |
| ABSTRACT..... | iii |
| LIST OF TABLES | vii |
| LIST OF FIGURES | viii |
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| Importance of Religion in Saudi Arabia | 2 |
| Islam in the Educational System..... | 3 |
| Statement of the Problem..... | 4 |
| Purpose of the Study | 5 |
| Research Questions..... | 6 |
| Significance of the Study | 6 |
| Limitations of the Study..... | 6 |
| Definitions of Terms..... | 7 |
| REVIEW OF LITERATURE | 9 |
| The Foundation of the Curriculum | 10 |
| History of the Islamic Curriculum..... | 13 |
| Extremism and the Islamic Curriculum in Saudi Arabia..... | 13 |
| The Need for a Shift in the Islamic Curriculum | 16 |
| Recent Curriculum Changes | 17 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Changes in Teaching Practices | 19 |
| Countering Extremism with Curriculum Changes | 21 |
| Extremism in Saudi Society | 22 |
| Conclusion | 22 |
| METHODOLOGY | 24 |
| Overview of the Research | 24 |
| Research Questions | 25 |
| Advantages of Document Analysis | 25 |
| Data Selection and Analysis | 26 |
| Data Selection..... | 27 |
| Data Analysis..... | 27 |
| Theme Development Procedures | 30 |
| Summary | 32 |
| RESULTS | 34 |
| Public Texts Results..... | 34 |
| Tawhid..... | 34 |
| Fiqh | 37 |
| Observational Records Results | 41 |
| Observational Records Made by Different Sectors of the M.O.E | 41 |
| Observational Records Made by the M.O.E..... | 44 |
| Findings. from Observation Reports | 47 |
| Observational Records Sorted by Objectives | 48 |
| Policies Examined..... | 50 |

| | |
|--|----|
| The Current Status of the Religion Curriculum | 50 |
| The Concepts of Moderation and Accepting Others | 51 |
| Teaching Requirements | 52 |
| The Saudi Crown Prince Announcement on Islamic Education in Saudi Arabia | 55 |
| Summary | 55 |
| DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... | 57 |
| Discussion | 58 |
| Research Question 1 | 58 |
| Research Question 2 | 65 |
| Recommendations for Further Research..... | 75 |
| Conclusion | 76 |
| REFERENCES | 77 |
| APPENDIX A..... | 85 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 1. Definition of Data Sources | 27 |
| Table 2. Islamic Curriculum: Main Topics..... | 29 |
| Table 3. Analysis of the Objectives and Topics: Theme | 30 |
| Table 4. Tawhid Curriculum: Concepts of a Moderate Religion..... | 35 |
| Table 5. Tawhid Curriculum: Content Regarding Muslim Relations to Others..... | 36 |
| Table 6. Percentages for Tawhid Objectives and Topics..... | 37 |
| Table 7. Fiqh Curriculum: Concepts of a Moderate Religion | 38 |
| Table 8. Fiqh Curriculum: Content Regarding Muslim Relations to Others..... | 39 |
| Table 9. Percentages for Fiqh Objectives and Topics..... | 39 |
| Table 10. Topics Covered in Tawhid and Fiqh Curricula | 41 |
| Table 11. General Points of Observation Regarding the Islamic Curriculum in Saudi Arabia | 48 |
| Table 12. Analysis of the Objectives and Points: Themes..... | 49 |
| Table 13. Policies Regarding the Current Status of the Religion Curriculum..... | 51 |
| Table 14. Policies Regarding the Concepts of Moderation and Accepting Others | 52 |
| Table 15. Policies Regarding Teaching Requirements | 54 |
| Table 16. Policies Regarding MBS Announcement on the Effect of the Muslim Brotherhood on Islamic Education in Saudi Arabia..... | 55 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: M.O.E. Logos | 10 |
| Figure 2: Example of an Observation Made for M.O.E. 2017 | 31 |
| Figure 3: Policies Regarding the Center of Thinking for Islam..... | 32 |
| Figure 4: Journal of Educational Sciences I.M.A.M.U (2017)..... | 42 |
| Figure 5: Findings Regarding the Future Islamic Teachers Based on their Study at U.Q.U (I.M.A.M.U, 2017) | 43 |
| Figure 6: Final Annual Infographic of the Main Report Made for Academic Year 2016-2017 (M.O.E. 2017) | 45 |
| Figure 7: Saudi Education Minister Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Issa Announces Finding of the Status of the Curriculum Based on the Government Observations (M.O.E, 2018b) | 47 |
| Figure 8: Saudi Final Annual Report on the Center of Thinking Islam Made for Academic Year 2016–2017 | 65 |
| Figure 9: Saudi Final Annual Report on the Microsoft Teacher Contest for Academic Year 2016–2017 | 67 |
| Figure 10: Saudi Final Annual Report on the Future Gate for Academic Year 2016–2017 | 68 |
| Figure 11: Saudi Final Annual Report on the Digital Development Initiative Policy for Academic Year 2016–2017 | 69 |
| Figure 12: Saudi Final Annual Report on the Production Center Policy for Academic Year 2016–2017 | 70 |

Figure 13: Saudi Final Annual Report on the Production Center Policy for

Academic Year 2016–201771

Figure 14: Saudi Final Annual Report on the Experiences Policy for

Academic Year 2016–201774

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On April 25, 2016, Saudis received this statement from King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud: "My first objective is for our country to be a pioneer and successful global model of excellence on all fronts, and I will work with you to achieve that" (M. Al Saud, 2016, p. 7). The quote was followed by the announcement of Vision 2030. Deputy Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman (MBS) announced the new vision plan (Khashan, 2017):

It is my pleasure to present Saudi Arabia's vision for the future. It is an ambitious yet achievable blueprint, which expresses our long-term goals and expectations and reflects our country's strengths and capabilities. All success stories start with a vision, and successful visions are based on strong pillars. (M. Al Saud, 2016, para.1)

This vision is meant to improve the lives of all citizens of Saudi Arabia. It will address significant reforms in various aspects and sectors of the country. These reforms will not be made by the government or the royal family; rather, they are to be made by all Saudis by studying and working to improve their lives. It is a vision that requires cooperation from all.

Importance of Religion in Saudi Arabia

Islam is the main aim of the country, which means following Islam, practicing Islam, serving Islam, and ruling by Islam. The constitution of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (K.S.A) declares:

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a sovereign Arab Islamic state with Islam as its religion; God's Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet, God's prayers and peace be upon him, are its Constitution, Arabic is its language, and Riyadh is its capital. (K.S.A Const. art. I, 1992)

The vision statement addresses strong pillars that will help the kingdom attain its goals. The first pillar is Islam which indicates the importance of this religion to the country. MBS stated:

The first pillar of our vision is our status as the heart of the Arab and Islamic worlds. We recognize that Allah (God) the Almighty has bestowed on our lands a gift more precious than oil. Our Kingdom is the Land of the Two Holy Mosques, the most sacred sites on earth, and the direction of the Kaaba (Qibla) to which more than a billion Muslims turn at prayer. (M. Al Saud, 2016, para. 1)

In that sense, Saudi Arabia is the leading Islamic country among all others. This significant role comes from its location first as the mainland of Makkah, the capital city of Islam. Makkah is known as the hometown of Prophet Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, while the same city has been known as a holy city since the time of Prophet Ibrahim. It is to this great city that all Muslims face during prayer, all over the world. The facing toward Makkah is known as Al Qiblah. Having Makkah as the main Qibla in Islam gives the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia its dominant position in the Islamic world. Furthermore, the other holy city, Madinah, is located in Saudi Arabia as well. This city, which includes another holy mosque, was built by the prophet of Islam himself, which gives the region great importance for the entire Muslim world (El-Awaisi,

2017).

On September 23, 1932, Saudi Arabia took control of an area that included two holy mosques, resulting in these mosques becoming central to the country. The importance of the two sacred mosques led the third King of Saudi Arabia, King Faisal bin Abdul Aziz (1906–1975), to assume the title "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques" (Fakkar, 2015, para. 4). Saudi Arabia's history as the birthplace of Islam is one of the main reasons Islam is central to the kingdom. In addition, Saudi Arabia's sacred lands are associated with the traditions of Arabs in that area.

Islam in the Educational System

Since Islam plays an essential role in the kingdom, it provides a link between religion, the citizens of Saudi Arabia, and education. Islam remains the core of education and the primary path for knowledge, even in the general foundation of education in the country. According to the Ministry of Education (M.O.E., 1969a) in Saudi Arabia: "Establishing intelligent human civilization inspired by Message brought by Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and achieving glory and happiness in this life and hereafter, are the ideals of Islam" (M.O.E., 1969a, para. 7). Therefore, all the education systems or Kuttab involve specific aspects related to Islam. These aspects include separating boys and girls, dividing the curriculum into different subjects of Islam, and teaching from the Qur'an. Other aspects include small details such as the pictures of women in modest clothes in all the textbooks, the uniforms for all to show unity, the Islamic objectives that must be presented with all the other topics that are taught in the education system, and the mandatory prayer periods in all schools. These Islamic aspects are a way of educating and raising children to be good Muslims.

In general education all over the country, which includes public schools, private schools, and international schools, the Islamic curriculum is presented daily to students as a mandatory

curriculum. The different subjects are The Qur'an (the holy book of Islam), the Hadith (which are saying of Prophet Mohammad), the Tawhid (which is the statement that God is one and single), and the Fiqh (the study of the religion for daily practice). Other more detailed subjects include Tafseer (the study of the meaning of Qur'an), Tajweed (the study of how to read the Qur'an), and Sanad (the study of the history of Hadith writers to explore their authenticity). In general, these subjects are the main focus for all general education in K.S.A. as part of the national curriculum and education (Al shaer, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

The attacks on America on September 11, 2001, have been linked to a terrorist group known as Al-Qaeda (The Base). This terrorist group is “an international terrorist network founded by Osama bin Laden in the late 1980s. It seeks to rid Muslim countries of what it sees as the profane influence of the West and replace their governments with fundamentalist Islamic regimes” (Bajoria & Bruno, 2012, para. 1). Osama bin Laden was a former Saudi citizen until 1994 when Saudi Arabia revoked his citizenship and would not tolerate his presence in the country (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, 2004). Regardless of the nationality revocation by the Saudi government, many blamed Islam because they associated the religion with the terrorist group. Additionally, since 15 of the 19 terrorists were citizens of Saudi Arabia, allegations implied that Saudi Arabia was to blame (Central Intelligence Agency, 2001).

The main focus of Al-Qaeda is al-jihad, which is defined by terrorists as a holy war; however, in the Arabic language, the word's meaning is to struggle or strive (Ramlan et al., 2016). Furthermore, the concept of takfir approves the murdering of Muslims and non-Muslims alike if they show a different way of practicing Islam rather than the one that is followed by the

terrorist group; albeit, it is a concept not approved by the Saudi government although it is used by some in the country. This ideology of extremism, as cited by Al Shammari (2013), stated that "the kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been afflicted by the takfir doctrine particularly upon the appearance of Al-Qaeda. Not only have many Saudi youths been influenced by it, but it has spread to other nations too" (p. 18).

Especially after 9/11, "Saudi Arabia's religion curriculum has been targeted in the U.S. media for allegedly fostering hostility against non-Muslims, exclusivity among Muslims, and incitement toward military jihad" (Doumato, 2003, p. 230). For most, education is what shapes any generation. In the case that a particular generation has an issue, the education structure they were exposed to will be blamed. In the case of religious extremism, when criminals justify their crimes toward others based on religion, religion education will also receive the blame.

Purpose of the Study

The M.O.E. continually makes changes in the curriculum; these changes are vital for the new vision of 2030. Reform of the different curricula, including the religion curriculum, is mandatory to achieve the vision. According to one M.O.E. announcement, the new curriculum improvement will be presented in 2020 (M.O.E, 2019). The purpose of this study was to provide an analysis to assist the M.O.E. in implementing a religion curriculum and potentially reform it in a way that will counter extremism and assure a curriculum that represents a more moderate Islam. The analysis broadly:

- Analyzed the current status of the religion curriculum in general education
- Identified the essential concepts of a moderate religion in the new curriculum
- Recognized the areas of the religion contents regarding the Muslim relation with others (jihad & takfir concepts)

- Determined the teaching requirements teachers might need to teach the religion curriculum

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the contemporary challenges to countering extremism through the Islamic religion curriculum?
2. What are the dynamic solutions and teacher training needed to have a moderate curriculum?

Significance of the Study

This research was designed to discover the status of the religion curriculum in general education in Saudi Arabia. This curriculum affects about six million students in the country (M.O.E., 2018a). The study provided a focused review of the current Islamic Religion Curriculum (I.R.C.) and potentially identified ways to create a more moderate curriculum. The results and recommendations of this research study will help the M.O.E. in Saudi Arabia to identify areas that promote a moderate Islam. It will assist in the implementation of strategies in schools to align with Vision 2030. Also, it will help to identify the needed training to prepare the teachers to adopt and teach the moderate curriculum.

Limitations of the Study

This research was conducted based on the documents provided by the M.O.E. and available textbooks. Islam is not practiced as one type; different types of Islamic Mazhabs, or groups, appear in Saudi Arabia and the Islamic world in general. This research is based on the official and national type adopted by the Saudi government. Sunnah is the official Islamic Mazhab of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the study documents that were analyzed were

solely represented by Sunnah.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms are defined to help the reader understand the context of each term in this study.

- Curriculum: for this study, curriculum refers solely to the textbooks used in the schools. The M.O.E. does not produce any other materials to support the content covered.
- Extremism: according to the Oxford English Dictionary (1989), extremism can be defined as “the holding of extreme political or religious views; fanaticism” para. 1).
- Mazhab: a school of Islamic jurisprudence describing the different styles of practicing Islam (Mughal, 2012).
- Moderate curriculum: less extreme, intense, rigorous, or violent curriculum based on moderate Islam (Shawat, 2001).
- PBUH: peace be upon him; an honorific phrase used after pronouncing, writing, or mentioning the prophet Muhammad (Dodge, 2018).
- Saudi Arabia’s Vision: a plan to reduce Saudi Arabia's dependence on oil, diversify its economy, and develop public service sectors such as health, education, infrastructure, recreation, and tourism. Goals include reinforcing economic and investment activities, increasing non-oil industry trade between countries through goods and consumer products, and increasing government spending on the military, manufacturing equipment, and ammunition (M. Al Saud, 2016).

- Sunnah: the body of traditional social and legal customs and practices of the Islamic community, along with the Qur'an (the holy book of Islam) and Hadith (recorded sayings of the Prophet Muhammad; Afsaruddin, 2008).
- Teacher training: the process of teacher training in Saudi Arabia does not follow a typical western approach that includes a teacher education program in higher education. The process is more like teacher enculturation whereby the training occurs by the M.O.E. in the schools, led by practicing teachers in the school.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Read! In the Name of your Lord Who has created (all that exists). He has created Man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has taught (the writing) by the pen. He has taught man that which he knew not. (Qur'an, 96:1-5)

The first word in the Qur'an, written 1,440 years ago, was "read." Seeking knowledge and learning is emphasized a great deal in the Qur'an and Sunnah. For many Muslims, learning is an essential aspect of their life. This word "read" has been presented as an open book logo of the M.O.E. since its establishment in 1951 (see Figure 1). This basic message is written in textbooks and schools all over the country. This image shows that Islam is considered the leading influence of learning or education in K.S.A. In addition to providing the reason for learning, Islam has a great influence on the infrastructure of the education system through all of its structure.

Figure 1*M.O.E. Logos*

The Foundation of the Curriculum

In Islam, learning is a divine command from God and must be provided to all at no cost. This command is the main point accentuated by the education system in Saudi Arabia. Starting from this religious aspect, the curriculum in Saudi Arabia in all subjects must contain the following principles, according to the M.O.E (1969b):

1. Faith in Allah as God, and Islam as religion and Mohammed (PBUH) as Messenger and Prophet of Allah almighty.
2. Establish rational human civilization inspired by the Message brought by Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and achieving glory and happiness in this life and hereafter, are the ideals of Islam.
3. Believe in human dignity as decreed in the Holy Qur'an [*sic*], and entrusted by Allah to practice honestly on earth. "And indeed we have honored the Children of Adam, and we have carried them on Land and Sea, and have provided them with At-Tayyibat (lawful good things), and have preferred them to many of those whom we have created with a

marked preferment” (chapter Al-Isra, verse 70.

4. Growth-oriented opportunities for the student to contribute in the development of the society where he/she lives, and obtain benefits from the development in which he participates.
5. In Islam, seeking knowledge is obligatory on everyone. Moreover, it is a state obligation to facilitate it in different stages, and the government should put every possible effort toward education.
6. Religious knowledge is required in all educational years of primary, intermediate, and secondary branches. Basic courses of Islamic culture are taught in all higher education years.
7. Direct different sciences and knowledge and materials in curriculum, adapt and teach them with an Islamic perspective in dealing with issues, and rule on its theories and investment methods, so that they stem from Islam and are consistent with proper Islamic thinking.
8. Take benefit from all good human knowledge of various kinds in the light of Islam, and uplift the nation and its living standard, as wisdom is a believer's lost property and he has to claim it.
9. Compatible coordination with science, technical and practical approaches are considered as important tools of cultural, socio-economic, and health development, to uplift our community and nation and take part in world cultural advancement.
10. Connection of all educational levels with the national development plan.
11. Sensible dealings with global cultural developments in the fields of science, culture, and literature, following them, participating in them, and directing them to the benefit of

society and humanity for good, and in progress.

12. Having full trust in the Islamic nation's capacities, values and in the notion that it is the best nation brought out to people and confidence in its unity of different races and colors and difference of their homes (Truly, this, your Ummah [Shariah or Religion (Islamic Monotheism)] is one religion, and I am your Lord, therefore worship Me (Alone).
(Chapter Al-Anbiya, verse 92)
13. Create a solid link between our nations' [*sic*] history and civilization of our Islamic religion, and benefitting ourselves from the progress of our ancestors, as inspiration for us in the present and future.
14. Respect for general laws and rights, as required by Islam, and make laws to protect our security, to realize stability in the Muslim community in religion, life, progeny, and considerations, intellect, and wealth.
15. Social solidarity between community individuals by cooperation, admiration, fraternity, and preferring common good to self-interest.
16. Reciprocal counsel between patron and subjects, for what is required in rights and duties, fostering relationships and candor.
17. Saudi Arabia has a unique position (character) because of custody of Islamic sanctities, and preservation of revelation place, and adoption of Islam as faith, and worship and law, and constitution for life, and has a sense of great responsibility to guide humankind to Islam (goodness).
18. The medium of instruction is Arabic at all levels and materials, instructions can be given in other languages if the situation necessitates. (M.O.E, 1969b)

These 18 principles, which are part of the Saudi constitution, state that all curricula must be

based on Islam to serve Muslims. These principles have never been removed but have been modified recently to help to achieve the vision of 2030. These principles originated from the Qur'an and have been implemented within the curriculum of the M.O.E. in Saudi Arabia since 1932.

For most, Vision 2030 is a reforming vision, but it does not eliminate religion or the tradition of the country. This vision is not the only reform plan that has aimed to improve the curriculum. Another example is the 10-year strategic plan that was introduced by the M.O.E. from 2004–2014. This reform plan emphasized the importance of globalization to increase overseas scholarship and employment (M.O.E, 2005).

History of the Islamic Curriculum

Years before even having a ministry of education established in 1951, the teaching of Islamic subjects was part of the daily work of the mosque or what is known in Arabic as “kutaab, or tahfiz,” two names that describe the designated place for Muslims to memorize the Qur'an in every city or neighborhood. Studying religion has never been for seeking certificates or a better future; it is part of understanding life as a Muslim and how to worship God. Some of these Islamic schools were monitored by the government and the M.O.E. when the M.O.E. became an official ministry. According to Marghalani (2017), “The government allocates rewards for attendees of these schools to encourage memorization of the Quraan” (p. 8). Later, with an increased emphasis on having more advanced education regarding the Islamic religion, the government built many universities that only emphasize Islamic subjects.

Extremism and the Islamic Curriculum in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is one of the nations affected by the issue of global extremism and terrorism. Radical ideologies have always been a part of society due to various institutions,

including both religion and education (Borum, 2011). Al Nafjan (2012) elucidated that religious fanaticism and extremism have historically been a part of human society. Although they have been evident in the region for centuries, fanaticism and extremism have reached an unprecedented level in recent years, leading to extreme damage to property and loss of life. However, Saudi Arabia has implemented measures to address the global problem and improve its image through an aggressive counterterrorism campaign (Chirot, 2017). Gambetta and Hertog (2017) observed that efforts were made following the September 11, 2001 (9/11) attack on the United States, although the result of these efforts to solve this matter was not clear. Despite the efforts made by various researchers to investigate the relationship between extremism and Islamic curriculum in the country, support for such research in the Arab region was almost non-existent. Recently, in 2016, the crown prince of Saudi Arabia introduced Vision 2030 (M. Al Saud, 2016) which included reviving moderate Islam and countering extremism. The establishment of this vision is an opportunity for researchers and scholars to carry out in-depth studies of the relationship between extremism and Islamic curriculum to counter extremism.

Major terrorist attacks in various parts of the world have brought up questions regarding the type of education taught in Islamic societies, such as Saudi Arabia, and the role of the Islamic religion in influencing Muslim attitudes toward non-Muslims. Regardless of the complexity of the debate on Islam in Muslim education, some evidence exists regarding the effect of education on developing extremists (Rabasa et al., 2004).

Saudi Arabia works to improve citizens' lives and to maintain good relationships with other nations such as the United States. For this reason, a movement encouraged by the royal family confronted the idea of extremism and religious hate. Gambetta and Hertog (2017) argued that Islamist extremist terror should be addressed to achieve real change in Saudi Arabia.

Scholars in the United States and Saudi Arabia revisited the Saudi education system following the 9/11 attack (Borum, 2011; Gambetta & Hertog 2017). According to Al Nafjan (2012), it was imperative to explain the reason why 79% of the terrorists who attacked the United States, including their leader, came from Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia's education system was brought to question in an attempt to find answers relating to the most heinous attack on American soil. Bradley (2015) added that the answers potentially lie in the Kingdom's interpretation of Islam. Religion is at the core of the country's education system and educators might be responsible for instigating hate and violence against the West (Bradley, 2015).

Scholars in the United States, including American Muslims, have analyzed the Kingdom's education system to see if a connection with extremism exists. Bradley (2015) and Al Nafjan (2012) are among the scholars who have collected, translated, and analyzed Saudi textbooks to establish the relationship between the Saudi religious curriculum and religious extremism. In 2003, Saudi King Abdullah commissioned a scholarly panel to evaluate middle and high school religious content. The panel studied three main subjects: Hadith (tradition), Fiqh (law), and Tawhid (beliefs about monotheism; Borum, 2011). Findings from different circles revealed the reality that the Saudi Kingdom's religious studies curriculum may instigate extremism, hate, and violence against other religions in a few areas of the curriculum. Without explaining the context of information presented about these areas, some might use the content to mislead young people by telling them they should safeguard their religion by violently repressing and even physically eliminating others.

The Islamic education system is not about being hateful or violent against those considered an opponent of the Islamic religion. A few texts in certain religion classes teach that the ideology of violence and hatred toward Christians, Jews, Hindus, or different Muslim groups,

such as Shiites, Sufis and Ahmadis, Yizidis, Bahais, sorcerers, animists, and “infidels” are not accepted by the original Islamic tenet (Gereluk, 2012). Some offensive passages are included in religious textbooks designed for the middle and high school levels. In 2010, the Kingdom’s government called for reforms in the elementary schools as a start to implementing a general reform for all the levels. However, the religious books for this educational level are not the main issue; the prohibition of thinking is the problem. In general, the lack of critical thinking techniques taught by teachers who follow a more conservative, older ideology prevents students from exploring and fully understanding Islamic tenets (Ihsanoglu, 2010). Therefore, despite many efforts, the education system in the country remains largely unchanged, especially concerning the teaching of the Islamic religion in schools.

The Need for a Shift in the Islamic Curriculum

The Islamic school curriculum in recent years, especially since the turn of the 21st century, has been under increased criticism. Stakeholders in the country and internationally have aired their views regarding the implications of Islamic studies in the Saudi education system (Gereluk, 2012). According to N.B.A Al Saud (2009), the system is perceived as being problematic in both non-Muslim and Muslim contexts. Within the political context, studies highlight the implications of educating students through the extremist lens. The increase in the rate of terrorist activities across the world has also increased demands for governments in Islamic countries to revisit their education systems. In Saudi Arabia and other countries in the Islamic world, the issue has been the use of education as an indoctrination process for young children (Blanchard, 2010). Global terrorist incidents have emphasized the need to modify the Saudi education system to change the image of the country as a breeding ground for terrorists.

Saudi Arabia’s leadership has a huge interest in the education system. Although the Saudi

government, just as governments in other countries, has always engaged in educational reform, the major shift in the Islamic curriculum in the country started after the 9/11 attack (Casptack, 2015). Following the attack and the role played by Saudi Arabian extremists, the government committed to help in the fight against extremism and terrorism. Major educational reforms were introduced in the decade after the attack. The changes focused on the school system as well as the curriculum. For example, King Abdullah Al-Saud introduced a comprehensive reform in 2005 to be completed in four phases. According to N.B.A Al Saud (2009), the reforms were aimed at improving the content of the curriculum. One of the subjects affected by this initiative was Islamic studies.

The Saudi government launched the changes in the curriculum to improve the country's global image of Saudi Arabia. In fact, following the terrorist attack on the United States, the Saudi government launched major reforms in the education system, mostly targeting the curriculum (Blanchard, 2010). The major reforms included the use of technology as a significant component in education, the development of concise textbooks, and the alignment of curriculum content with a global education standard. However, in reviewing the curriculum, the government realized that one of the main causes of extremism and terrorism was the monopolization of the creation of the curriculum in the country. Only a single group of people known as Sunnah, with religious ideals, write the curriculum in the country. Therefore, in 2005 King Abdullah implemented the plan for "education development" that would result in major changes to the Islamic Studies curriculum (Casptack, 2015)

Recent Curriculum Changes

In 2005, reforms in the Saudi curriculum affected various education levels. For example, Blanchard (2010) revealed that Saudi Arabia's M.O.E published new editions of textbooks

targeting Grades 1 through 12. Gendron (2010) noted that the new editions of religious texts and teaching resources included changes in content, wording, and placement. However, over the last decade, the content has essentially remained the same, containing violent directives and passages. The subject of Islam remains the most criticized part of the Saudi education curriculum. Khalil and Karim (2016) revealed that in the education system, especially in private schools, religion is still taught under various subjects, including Islamiyyat, al-tarbiyya al-islamiyya (Islamic education), talimat-e dini (religious instruction), or Islamic studies. Therefore, regardless of the changes in the education curriculum, the country maintains the same religious forms that they have had for many decades.

Regardless of the changes introduced by King Abdullah Al-Saud, the Saudi curriculum remains largely the same, with religion being at the core of teaching and learning. Furthermore, religious studies in the country and region are based fundamentally on the teachings of the scriptures (Labidi, 2010). Khalil and Karim (2016) added that major changes to the Saudi curriculum have been largely opposed by clerics and other interest groups composed of scholars, judges, and professors. Given that the curriculum is based on Islam, they suggested that major changes might affect the religious ideals of education. According to Clary and Karlin (2011), religious leaders argue that distorting or deleting content from textbooks written by imams (Muslim leaders) and/or Islamic scholars might contradict the state's allegiance to its faith. Therefore, efforts by King Abdullah Al-Saud did not result in major changes in the Saudi curriculum.

Reformers in government have targeted changes in the curriculum to change the interpretation of religious texts and adapt to global demands to reform the Islamic education system. However, reformers have encountered resistance, especially relating to changes in

textbooks. Labidi (2010) stated that reformers have managed to change some sections of textbooks on jihad and Muslims' relationship with non-Muslims with a focus on changing the extreme views taught in Saudi classrooms. However, Clary and Karlin (2011) posited that the current change is not enough to create an education system that is completely free from extremist principles. Regardless of the reforms in the wake of the 21st century, Khalil and Karim (2016) concluded that the textbooks used in the Saudi curriculum still lay the ideological foundations of extremists that have been emphasized since 1979. At that point, the entire country came under this strong Islamic view after the incidents of the 1979 Grand Mosque Seizure. This incident gave power to the religious men at that time to put their extreme ideology into the education system. The first counter step that was taken by the government was to announce Vision 2030. The crown prince M.B.S. observed that Saudi Arabia was not like this before the incidents in 1979 and that the goal is to return to a moderate Islam that is open to all religions (M. Al Saud, 2016). It is important to make these changes to coexist with and contribute to the world.

Changes in Teaching Practices

Education tamim¹ in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia recognizes the importance of the curriculum in teaching. According to Article 206 of the education policy in the country, the curriculum is considered by the state as one of the critical elements of education and teaching practice (Labidi, 2010). Therefore, any change in the curriculum affects teaching practice, including teacher training materials, curriculum guides, and other teacher support documentation. Changes in teaching practice should align with reforms in the curriculum. For example, the implementation of a new teacher training curriculum should accompany the

¹ Tamim is compulsory policy in Saudi Arabia. The words policy and policies are used through this study, but at all times refers to Tamim or Tamims (plural).

reforms. Whether such changes have occurred in Saudi Arabia alongside the recent reforms remains unclear in research and practice.

Teachers are responsible for implementing curriculum changes in Saudi Arabia. Educators at each grade level are expected to define the Islamic goal in all lessons, as directed by the M.O.E. Clary and Karlin (2011) revealed that successful reforms in education will change the process and the concept of teaching in Saudi classrooms. Curriculum changes impact some principles depicted in the country's textbooks. For instance, the changes will permit moderate interpretations of the learning resources. According to Niyozov and Memon (2011), although some individuals in the country, such as teachers, maintain extremist views in Islam, the reforms aim at changing the curriculum content and class texts to create a more realistic view of religion as a hospitable way of living. However, it remains questionable as to whether Saudi teachers will embrace a different interpretation of religious teachings in the classroom.

Although the government has mandated major changes in the curriculum, including textbook content, it has not implemented significant changes in teaching practice. Davies (2016) argued that effective changes to address extremism should target the curriculum and its implementers, such as teachers. However, the government has not instigated any concerted efforts affecting teacher training and practice in the country. Consequently, teachers retain their conservative ideals and interpretation of the Islamic religion. Most educators retain allegiance to faith and teach according to their conservative understanding of the religion. They uphold the view that they should teach the fundamental and religious sciences based on Islamic religion (Saada, 2013). Therefore, effective changes should affect the conventional beliefs relating to religion and education; otherwise, teachers will continue to use religious ideals in other subjects introduced into the Saudi curriculum, such as languages.

The reforms may have achieved changes in the curriculum, including moderating it and replacing textbooks, but the teaching practice remains largely unchanged. The same teachers who have held conservative views of Islamic religious education remain in schools and continue teaching children according to their beliefs. Therefore, policymakers in government and other supporters of the change concur that teachers need to be trained and taught how to accept and implement the reforms. Saada (2013) recommended the need to have periodical and deliberate new changes required by the leaders of the country to address opposition and resistance, especially among scholars and educators. The change must occur in phases since sudden transformations can have detrimental effects on the education system and society in general (Saada, 2013). It is important to recognize that the country is addressing serious ideologies and fundamental ideas, which cannot change overnight. The society needs time and patience to change and accept the new curriculum and education system.

Countering Extremism with Curriculum Changes

Changes in education are necessary to support systematic adjustment to address the issue of extremism in Saudi Arabia. Niyozov and Memon (2011) elucidated that the problem is not inherent in the curriculum or the textbooks. The issue relates to the conservative interpretation and the narrow understanding of the religion. Koranic verses require careful interpretation to ensure that they do not promote hatred and violence. For example, some verses such as on the concept of jihad, or holy war, tend to be misinterpreted to perpetuate hatred toward the non-Muslim community (Ramady, 2010). Therefore, major changes in the curriculum will be effective in addressing the problem that is entrenched fundamentally in Islamic society.

Extremism in Saudi Society

Extremism in Saudi society extends beyond the classroom. For example, there are various other teaching venues for children within the Saudi community, such as mosques. Therefore, Gray (2014) suggested that changes in the curriculum will not affect teachings that occur informally outside the classroom. Potentially, Saudi students might still learn about extremist and religious intolerance in other settings. Critics of educational reforms in the country are concerned about the extent of religious materials that are evident in various subjects taught in schools and settings outside the formal classroom arrangement (Yaacob, 2017). Therefore, although the changes in the Saudi curriculum may help reduce extremism, they are not adequate to solve the problem entirely.

Although the government initiated major changes in the curriculum after 9/11, the reforms have faced considerable resistance from various parts of society, including religion and education sectors. Gereluk (2012) noted the emergence of influential clerics and their supporters who oppose the changes, arguing that they are influenced by Western political ideologies and should not be accepted in Saudi Arabia. These clerics view educational changes as being unjust to Islam, which is the fundamental religion and a way of life. Gray (2014) argued that Islam is not simply faith, but the fundamental guideline for how Muslims must live and behave. As a result, efforts to deal with extremism in the society should go beyond targeting the classroom.

Conclusion

The literature review focused on the prevalence of the Islamic curriculum in Saudi Arabia and the recent attempts to reform the education system, including the Islamic curriculum, to achieve the goals of Vision 2030. One of these goals is to return to a moderate Islam and counter extremism. The Saudi education system has been founded on the Islamic religion since historical

times. The religious materials embedded in school textbooks are accused of having content that instigates hatred and violence. Since the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, the Saudi government has committed to change the education system, including the Islamic curriculum. The state has initiated major changes since the incident, but their effect on transforming the education sector remains controversial. The country has experienced resistance and criticism of such reforms. Overall, education reforms are important but not the only attempt needed in dealing with extremism in Saudi Arabia. Major changes are necessary. These changes have the potential to transform the entire society since Islam permeates all aspects of Saudi society and is considered a way of life.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research methodology that was utilized in this study. The first part explores the grounds for the research design and is accompanied by the research questions and information regarding the entire study. Then, data collection and data analysis procedures are discussed.

Overview of the Research

The purpose of this study was to determine the status of the Islamic Religion Curriculum (I.R.C.) in the general education system in Saudi Arabia and to provide dynamic solutions based on the current situation to achieve a moderate curriculum. I used a document analysis methodology, which is a form of qualitative research:

Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge. (Bowen, 2009, p. 27)

Three types of documents were reviewed: public records (textbooks for both the teachers and students), observational records (records produced by the curriculum supervisors, or the records reported by research centers in the country), and policies (documents created by M.O.E. to

enforce a policy regarding the curriculum, teaching technique, or methods; O'Leary, 2014).

This analysis was based on the Islamic religion curriculum, which is the national curriculum developed mainly from the M.O.E. The curriculum committee is part of the M.O.E., and teachers are not involved in the development of curriculum. By examining how the curriculum was created and how it was changed based on the given documents from the main source, a better understanding of the situation regarding the Islamic religion curriculum was gained.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following questions:

1. What are the contemporary challenges to countering extremism through the Islamic religion curriculum?
2. What are the dynamic solutions and the teacher training needed to have a moderate curriculum?

Advantages of Document Analysis

Document analysis is a reliable tool for this research because it analyzes the source of where all curriculum was created and the development process. This tool includes some advantages as stated by Bowen (2009):

1. Efficient method and less time-consuming
2. Availability because many documents are in the public domain or through the internet
3. Cost-effectiveness and less costly than other research methods
4. Lack of obtrusiveness and reactivity
5. Reflexivity which requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings attached to the research

6. Stability of documents which will never change based on views
7. Exactness which is the inclusion of exact names, references, and details of events
8. Broad coverage which includes covering a long span of time, many events, and many settings. (Bowen, 2009, p. 31)

In the case of a big country like Saudi Arabia, Islam is the main religion; however, different types of Islam exist. The different Mazahebs of Islam could create different types of bias. The official Saudi Arabia Mazhab is Sunnah, but according to the U.S. State Department. "Approximately 2 million citizens are Shi'a Muslims, the vast majority of whom live in the Eastern Province, where they constitute between 40 and 50 percent of the Province's citizen population" (International Religious Freedom Report, 2004, p. 590).

Sunnis themselves have four different schools of thought to follow. These schools are named after the first Imam of each school. They share the same concepts of Tawhid but few differences on Fiqh. These four schools are Hanafi, Maliki, Shafii, and Hanbali (Randeree, 2013). In this sense, relying on personal opinions for the evaluation of the national, religious curriculum could be misguided based on individual Islamic beliefs. Therefore, the documents that were created from the national organization regarding the reform or the improvement of the curriculum are not a personal judgment and instead represent a national common ground.

Data Selection and Analysis

For selecting the needed documents for the research, an eight-step process was implemented for selecting the documents for this research by O'Leary (2014) for document analysis:

1. Gather relevant texts
2. Develop an organization and management scheme

3. Make copies of the originals for annotation
4. Assess authenticity of documents
5. Explore the document's agenda, biases
6. Explore background information (e.g., tone, style, purpose)
7. Ask questions about the document (e.g., who produced it? Why? When? Type of data?)
8. Explore content. (p. 4)

This process guided the analysis of the data to address the research questions.

Data Selection

The data were pulled from three different public sources: public texts, observational records, and policies. A separate matrix on a spreadsheet was created for each data source to identify the information on each analysis point. The definitions and examples that comprised each data source are in Table 1.

Table 1

Definition of Data Sources

| Data Source | Definition |
|-----------------------|---|
| Public Texts | The textbooks, handouts, and other curricular materials that are created by the M.O.E. for use in all schools. |
| Observational Records | These are the public records of teaching observations done by university-level supervisors and sent to the M.O.E. to document how the state-mandated curriculum is being delivered. |
| Policies | These are policy statements and memorandum created by the M.O.E. when it is determined that clarification on what and how to teach the state-mandated curriculum is needed. |

Data Analysis

After the documents were collected and the matrices created, each document was duplicated so that documents could be appropriately marked up, as per the analysis points

identified in Table 2. At the high school level (grades 10–12), the Islamic curriculum must address these 18 topics to fulfill the main objectives of the curriculum and education at this level. Determination of authenticity and potential bias were not relevant in this analysis as all documents were received directly from the M.O.E. The annotations on each document explored the purpose, tone, background, and content (O’Leary, 2014). After annotation and recording of data into the analysis matrix, additional matrices were made to create coding, pattern, and theme development procedures for each document. For example, the main topics required by M.O.E were examined, as listed in Table 2. Later, these topics were divided based on the two research objectives (see Table 3). Each document was studied based on these topics and the main subjects in the Islamic curriculum at the high school level (grades 10–12). Then the observational records were explored to determine what observations were made by supervisors and other research centers on how this topic was introduced to the students, followed by what policies were created by the M.O.E. to ensure the accurate delivery of the topic. The same analysis point was also explored on the second subject, Fiqh, which is the law of Islam for Muslims.

Table 2*Islamic Curriculum: Main Topics*

| Main Topics |
|--|
| 1. Worship God as one and only God |
| 2. Show love of prophet Muhammad |
| 3. Obey the guardian |
| 4. Deny violence |
| 5. Emphasize the love of the country |
| 6. Emphasize the importance of the group over the importance of individuals |
| 7. Accepting others regardless of their differences |
| 8. Honoring the souls of others |
| 9. Emphasize the rights of living safe in regards to life or belongings |
| 10. Calling others to learn or follow Islam |
| 11. Emphasize the moderate Islam |
| 12. Correct misconception about Islam |
| 13. Reject any “Takfir” or calling others unbelievers for being different |
| 14. Call for love and solidarity |
| 15. Reject extremism |
| 16. Deny the causes of separation between Muslims |
| 17. Prevent religion lost |
| 18. Emphasize the importance of avoiding misleading calls in the name of Islam |

Theme Development Procedures

The 18 main topics of Islamic curriculum were divided into themes to explore the two main objectives in this research: (a) concepts of a moderate religion and (b) content regarding Muslim relations with others. Using these 18 main topics, the contents and concepts that work for these two objectives were identified as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Analysis of the Objectives and Topics: Theme

| Objectives | Main topics |
|--|--|
| Concepts of a moderate religion | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Worship God as one and only God 2. Show love of prophet Muhammad 3. Deny violence 4. Emphasize the love of the country 5. Emphasize the importance of the group over the importance of individuals 6. Emphasize the rights of living safe in regards to life or belongings 7. Emphasize the moderate Islam 8. Correct misconceptions about Islam 9. Call for love and solidarity 10. Reject extremism 11. Prevent religion lost 12. Emphasize the importance of avoiding misleading calls in the name of Islam |
| Content regarding Muslim relations with others | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Obey the guardian 2. Accept others regardless of their differences 3. Honor the souls of others 4. Reject any "Takfir" or calling others unbelievers for being different 5. Call others to learn or follow Islam 6. Deny the causes of separation between Muslims |

First, public records were studied to reveal topics regarding the objectives in Tawhid (way of believing), and in Fiqh (law of Islam). Then the observational records were explored to see what observations were made by supervisors and other research centers on how these topics were introduced and taught to the students. A sample observation is presented in Figure 2. In the case of the analysis point regarding the relationship between Muslims and others, the document in Figure 2 is an example of the government's universities' presentation of their observations to the M.O.E. In this observation, a gap between the two subjects (Fiqh and Tawhid) was identified. Specifically, the Tawhid curriculum lacked any specific mention of how Muslims must look to others or deal with them. The same analysis points were explored on the second subject, Fiqh, which is the law of Islam for Muslims.

Figure 2

Example of an Observation Made for M.O.E. 2017

مناهج التربية الإسلامية في المملكة العربية السعودية ودورها في مواجهة الإرهاب والتطرف (دراسة تقييمية لمجوى كتب المرحلة الثانوية).

بقرائة الجدولين السابقين (٦٠٥) يبين الآتي:

١- التفاوت الواضح في نسب التوافر بين المواصفات التي ارتضتها الدراسة لمجابهة ظاهرة الإرهاب والتطرف؛ حيث توافرت بعض المواصفات بنسب مرتفعة وتمثل في معياري: الدعوة إلى عبادة الله وحده وتقريده بالعبودية والربوبية، و الدعوة إلى حب النبي وإتباع منهجه والتأسي بأخلاقه. ويرى الباحث أن ذلك جاء تماشياً مع أهداف المنهج ومحتواه؛ باعتبار الإيمان بالله وإتباع سنة نبيه صلى الله عليه وسلم هما أساس العمل الصالح بعد الإيمان بالله وتقريده بالعبودية والربوبية.

٢- تحقق باقي المواصفات بعدد تكرار قليل ونسب مئوية منخفضة؛ حيث تنوعت ما بين: مرتفعة (وهي قليلة للغاية)، ومنخفضة، ومتوسطة. وذلك بداية من المعيار رقم (٧) "الوقاية من الانحراف في العقيدة" وانتهاء بالمعيار رقم (١٧) "غرس ثقافة الدعوة إلى الله بالحكمة والموعظة الحسنة"؛ حيث تفاوتت نسب التحقق ما بين (٩١.٢% - ١٥.٦%) بأعداد تكرار تفاوتت ما بين (٢٤ - ٤ من أصل ٢٧ هي العدد الإجمالي لمرات التكرار في محتوى الكتاب ككل).

٣- هناك بعض المواصفات لم يتضمنها محتوى كتاب التوحيد؛ حيث لم تتحقق بأي نسب تذكر (مرتفعة، أو متوسطة، أو منخفضة). وتمثل ذلك في معيار (١٨) "تعزيز الشعور بحب الوطن والانتماء إليه". وهو المعيار الوحيد الذي غاب في محتوى الكتابين (التوحيد، والفقه)؛ حيث لم يرد المعيار في أي من الكتابين بأي نسبة (0%)، وعدد تكرار (صفر).

٤- يرى الباحث أن بعض مستويات التحقق جاءت متوافقة مع موضوع الدرس المتحققة من خلاله. مثال على ذلك: التأكيد على أهمية دور الحاكم ووجوب الطاعة له وعدم الخروج عليه في موضوع الإرهاب والتطرف. كما يرى الباحث أن هذا الموضوع رغم أنه الموضوع الأوحد في محتوى كتاب التوحيد الذي عالج صراحة ظاهرة الإرهاب والتطرف إلا أنه اعتلده الكثير من أوجه القصور؛ لافتقاده العديد من المعايير الأخرى.

Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

Finally, the policies made by the government based on the observations were examined.

In this example, the policy did not address the textbook itself, but rather addressed the way of thinking. In 2017, the M.O.E created a policy for all the public and private schools to open a center for students to study ways of thinking in their sect of Islam. This policy emphasized self-study strategies for religion. It is incumbent upon the student to look beyond the required books and not simply to follow the opinions of others (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

Policies Regarding the Center of Thinking for Islam



Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

Summary

This chapter discussed the research methodology that was used in this study. Analysis followed a modified document analysis method. This tool has an important use for exploring the national Islamic religion curriculum in Saudi Arabia without the biases that may occur from human subjects' research. A study focused on personal beliefs and reactions would be largely

influenced by regional or religious groups. To eliminate the factor of unreliable findings, documents were determined to be a better tool for these research questions.

Public documents of three types (curricular materials, observational records, and M.O.E. policies) formed the basis for the document analysis. After gathering the needed data to explore each analysis point for this research, charts were made for additional understanding of each document. The full examination of each document helped to answer the research questions. The findings are presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The Islamic Religion curricula includes different subjects. For this analysis, two subjects were examined: The Tawhid (which is the statement that God is one and single), and the Fiqh (the study of the religion for daily practice). These two subjects were chosen because they are used to teach “how to” practice and “how to” believe as a Muslim. The other subjects are mainly about memorization of the contents such as the holy book of Islam (the Qur’an) and Prophet Mohammad sayings (Hadith). These topics are taught in high schools (grades 10–12), so the examined textbooks were from this level.

Public Texts Results

Tawhid

Tawhid is an insistence that God’s unity is complete and God's rule extends across every aspect of human life supports the notion that religion, politics, and society are inseparable within Islam—although their relationship to one another has differed across time and place. (Berkley Center for Religion, n.d, para. 2)

There are 18 topics that are required to be covered within Tawhid, and these topics can be subcategorized as supporting the concept of a moderate religion (12 topics) and the concept of Muslims’ relations with others (6 topics). The analysis (as shown in Tables 4 and 5) as to

whether or not these concepts are mentioned in the textbook and how often the repeated was completed.

Table 4

Tawhid Curriculum: Concepts of a Moderate Religion

| Main topics | Mentioned in textbook | Repeated | Total |
|--|--------------------------|----------|-------|
| 1. Worship God as one and only God | 1 | 25 | 26 |
| 2. Show love of prophet Muhammad | 1 | 9 | 10 |
| 3. Deny violence | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. Emphasize the love of the country | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. Emphasize the importance of the group over the importance of individuals | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Emphasize the rights of living safe in regards to life or belongings | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. Emphasize the moderate Islam | 1 | 9 | 10 |
| 8. Correct misconceptions about Islam | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. Call for love and solidarity | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 10. Reject extremism | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 11. Prevent religion lost | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. Emphasize the importance of avoiding misleading calls in the name of Islam | 1 | 0 | 1 |

| | |
|-------|----|
| Total | 59 |
|-------|----|

Note. High school Level (10–12)

Table 5

Tawhid Curriculum: Content Regarding Muslim Relations to Others

| Main topics | Mentioned in textbook | Repeated | Total |
|---|--------------------------|----------|-------|
| 1. Obey the guardian | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. Accept others regardless of their differences | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Honor the souls of others | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. Reject any “Takfier” or calling others unbelievers for being different | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 5. Call others to learn or follow Islam | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 6. Deny the causes of separation between Muslims | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | | | 5 |

Note. High school Level (10–12)

The two objectives of this research covered the 18 topics of Islamic curriculum, and Table 6 presents the frequency and percentage of these topics contained in the Tawhid curriculum. The concept of moderate religion is required to include 12 out of the full 18 topics from the religion main topics; however, the actual Tawhid textbooks included only 9 out of 12 topics which equals 75%. Alternatively, the content regarding Muslim relations with others must include 6 topics out of the full 18. But, the Tawhid textbooks included only 3 topics out of 6, or

50 %. Finally, only 12 of the topics required for both objectives were included, which means there are 6 topics not mentioned at all for levels 10–12 in the Tawhid curriculum. Hence, one third of the topics that are meant to be included are not present in the Tawhid textbooks for this level as shown in Figure 4. The total number for all the topics written in the Tawhid curriculum is 64 topics.

Table 6

Percentages for Tawhid Objectives and Topics

| Objectives | Topics required to be included | Topics included | Percentage of included topics |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Concepts of a moderate religion | 12 | 9 | 75.0% |
| Content regarding Muslim relations with others | 6 | 3 | 50.0% |

Note. High school Level (10–12)

Of the two objectives that are important for countering extremism in the Islamic curricula, the Tawhid curriculum for the high school levels shows great emphasis on concepts such as worshipping God as one and only God, which was recorded 26 times and considered the most prevalent topic in the curriculum. Furthermore, the next group of prevalent topics were the love of Prophet Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, and emphasizing a moderate Islam, both of which were recorded 10 times in the textbooks. On the other hand, topics such as denying violence and accepting others regardless of their differences were not contained at all in the textbooks.

Fiqh

Fiqh is “the knowledge and understanding of the guidance, the rulings and the way of life regarding the actions only, excluding the areas of belief and moral character” (Hamza, 2019,

para. 5). The Fiqh curriculum in the high school level shares the same topics and objectives as the Tawhid curriculum. In fact, all of the religion curricula share the same objectives and topics at each level. The result regarding the Fiqh textbooks are shown in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7

Fiqh Curriculum: Concepts of a Moderate Religion

| Main topics | Mentioned in textbook | Repeated | Total |
|--|-----------------------|----------|-------|
| 1. Worship God as one and only God | 1 | 26 | 27 |
| 2. Show love of prophet Muhammad | 1 | 26 | 27 |
| 3. Deny violence | 1 | 8 | 9 |
| 4. Emphasize the love of the country | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. Emphasize the importance of the group over the importance of individuals | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Emphasize the rights of living safe in regards to life or belongings | 1 | 22 | 23 |
| 7. Emphasize the moderate Islam | 1 | 12 | 13 |
| 8. Correct misconceptions about Islam | 1 | 17 | 18 |
| 9. Call for love and solidarity | 1 | 13 | 14 |
| 10. Reject extremism | 1 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. Prevent religion lost | 1 | 23 | 24 |
| 12. Emphasize the importance of avoiding misleading calls in the name of Islam | 1 | 18 | 19 |

| | |
|-------|-----|
| Total | 184 |
|-------|-----|

Note. High school Level (10–12) **Table 8**

Fiqh Curriculum: Content Regarding Muslim Relations to Others

| Main topics | Mentioned in textbook | Repeated | Total |
|---|--------------------------|----------|-------|
| 1. Obey the guardian | 1 | 10 | 11 |
| 2. Accept others regardless of their differences | 1 | 15 | 16 |
| 3. Honor the souls of others | 1 | 20 | 21 |
| 4. Reject any “Takfier” or calling others unbelievers for being different | 1 | 9 | 10 |
| 5. Call others to learn or follow Islam | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Deny the causes of separation between Muslims | 1 | 14 | 15 |
| Total | | | 77 |

Note. High school Level (10–12)

Based on the 18 main topics in the Islamic curriculum fundamental to the two research objectives, the percentage of the topics included in the Fiqh curriculum is shown in Table 9. Of the 12 topics for a moderate religion, the Fiqh textbooks contained 11, or 91.6%. On the other hand, the content regarding Muslim relation to others, the Fiqh curriculum contained all the 6 topics, which is considered 100%. The total numbers for all topics written in the Fiqh curriculum were 261.

Table 9

Percentages for Fiqh Objectives and Topics

| Objectives | Topics supposed to be included | Topics included | Percentage |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Concepts of a moderate religion | 12 | 11 | 91.6% |
| Content regarding Muslim relations with others | 6 | 6 | 100.0% |

Note. High school Level (10–12)

Of the two objectives that are important for countering extremism in the Islamic curricula, the Fiqh curriculum for the high school levels show great emphasis on concepts such as worshipping God as one and only God and loving Prophet Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, both of which were recorded 27 times and are considered as the utmost topics in the curriculum. Furthermore, the second most emphasized topic was the prevention of religion loss which was recorded 24 times. While most of the topics that guide students on how to deal with others, accepting others, or valuing others were recorded more than 10 times at least for each topic. Unfortunately, the only topic that was not included in the textbooks was the emphasis on the love of country.

Based on the results in the analysis of Tawhid and Fiqh textbooks at the high school level (10–12), the Fiqh curriculum covered more topics than the Tawhid curriculum. Furthermore, the topics occurred in Fiqh more than in Tawhid (see Table 10).

Table 10*Topics Covered in Tawhid and Fiqh Curricula*

| Curriculum | Topics Included | Total of Repetition |
|------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Tawhid | 12 | 64 |
| Fiqh | 17 | 261 |

Note. High school Level (10–12)

Observational Records Results

The observational records are part of the annual reports by the M.O.E. According to the M.O.E (1969b), the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has five main geographical regions, and general departments of education are distributed in them for administrative purposes. The documents described were based on two observational entities within the M.O.E. The observational public records of teaching were mostly done by university-level supervisors and sent to the M.O.E. to document how the state-mandated curriculum was being delivered. There are two types of general observations made by the government and announced to the public since 2016 when Deputy Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman (MBS) announced the new vision plan (Khashan, 2017). First, there are the observational records produced by the different sectors of the M.O.E. Second, there are the final reports made by the M.O.E. to summarize all the observations made regarding education in general since 2016.

Observational Records Made by Different Sectors of the M.O.E

The M.O.E. oversees both general education and higher education. Most of the time, higher education examines general education to improve the education environment for all. The purpose is to provide a better foundation to students before entering the real world (Baqadir et al., 2011). The observations are usually made by the government universities and published as

reports or as part of their journals for the M.O.E. In this study, the documents reviewed involved observations of the Islamic curriculum for the high school level and were collected from different universities and regions in Saudi Arabia.

The first document was published in 2017 by Al-Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (I.M.A.M.U) in the central region and the capital of Saudi Arabia (see Figure 4). In the 2017 journal, two observational documents were published in cooperation with two universities from the west region. The first study published the observational results on the status of the Islamic curriculum provided to new teachers during their studies at the university. The other study published the observational document about the Fiqh curriculum provided at the high school level in Saudi Arabia.

Figure 4

Journal of Educational Sciences I.M.A.M.U (2017)



Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

Evaluation of the Islamic Curriculum Provided for New Teachers at Umm Al-Qura University (U.Q.U)

In this observational document made by I.M.A.M.U. (2017), the supervisor examined the actual preparation of the new teachers of the Islamic curriculum to address what they might need when they teach the curriculum for students. One of the major observations reported was that the way the Islamic curriculum was delivered lacked the empowerment to think analytically about the different subjects of the Islamic curriculum (see Figure 5). The problem points to the issue that memorization is the general strategy used to teach the Islamic curriculum. The document concluded that the students in this department were the weakest in comparison to other departments within the university on how to conduct scientific-based research regarding their Islamic subject. The other main observation regarded the lack of use of technology in teaching the Islamic curriculum.

Figure 5

Findings Regarding the Future Islamic Teachers Based on their Study at U.Q.U (I.M.A.M.U, 2017)

وتتفق هذه النتيجة مع ما توصلت إليه نتائج المقابلة من حيث أن أكثر نقاط الضعف في برامج الدراسات العليا التي يقدمها قسم التربية الإسلامية والمقارنة تتمثل في: ضعف بعض أعضاء هيئة التدريس من الناحية البحثية ومن ثم ضعف الاستفادة منهم، قلة الاهتمام بالتدريب على تصميم أدوات البحث العلمي، عدم توافق أعضاء القسم على مدرسة علمية أو توجه منهجي معين، عدم وجود أدلة توضيحية ومحددة بالقسم تخص البحث العلمي، عدم توظيف التقنية الحديثة في مجال التدريس والإشراف والبحث، تهميش دور الطالب في الأمور الخاصة بالبحث والإشراف، ويؤكد هذه النتيجة ما توصلت إليه كل من دراسة عيسى (٢٠١٢م) التي أظهرت أن طلاب قسم التربية الإسلامية بالدراسات العليا تتحقق لديهم صعوبات البحث العلمي المنهجية والإحصائية أكثر من غيرهم، ودراسة الحارثي (٢٠٠٩م) التي أوضحت أن طلاب قسم التربية الإسلامية بالدراسات العليا هم الأقل تمكناً في المعارف الأساسية الخاصة بإعداد خطة البحوث التربوية، ودراسة العريني (٢٠٠٩م) التي بينت عدم رضا الدراسات عن الإشراف الأكاديمي، وعن استخدام التقنيات في البرنامج، أما نتيجة ضعف اهتمام القسم بالأمور الأكاديمية والإدارية للطلبة، فتختلف مع دراسة الرزقي (٢٠١٤م) التي أوضحت أن طلاب الدراسات العليا التربوية بالجامعات السعودية يمارسون الحرية الأكاديمية ومهارات الاتصال واتخاذ القرار بدرجة متوسطة.

Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

After revealing the findings, a recommendation was made by the University to enhance the tools to teach an understanding of the Islamic curriculum that would not rely on just memorizing it. Additionally, the document recommended the importance of acquiring new models for teachers to help their students acquire critical thinking skills to examine the topic scientifically to prevent them from believing without thinking. Additionally, the use of technology should also be present in the teaching to enhance learning experiences for this generation.

The Contents of the Fiqh Curriculum in High School Textbooks in Light of Islam Moderation Principles from Tibah University (T.U)

In this observational document, the examination went through the entire Fiqh curriculum from level 10 up to 12 in Saudi Arabia. There was a list of observations made by the researcher and the observers after exploring the curriculum. Al-Juhani (2017) elucidated:

The study findings show there is a lack of moderation in high school Fiqh textbooks.

They reveal that these textbooks do not address some phenomena that do not conform to moderation such as relating to exaggeration in religion and extremism. They insufficiently and inadequately deal with phenomena such as excessiveness, negligence, extremism and terrorism, while some of the books do not deal at all with such phenomena. (Al-Juhani as cited in I.M.A.M.U, 2017, p. 386)

Observational Records Made by the M.O.E

First, the M.O.E. published their annual report for 2016–2017 regarding the general status of education in the country (see Figure 6). The report included the observations and the efforts made to correct the issues, as well as the proposed solutions made by the M.O.E. to address all these points along with other observations about education in general.

The report conducted the following observations related to Islamic education:

1. The teachers lack certain skills
2. The students lack the tools for critical thinking
3. The curriculum lacks major information about famous Muslim scientists
4. The technology was not used enough for teaching students
5. The general lack of supervision and sufficient reports on teacher performance and the curriculum
6. The lack of a good assessment tool
7. Some topics are not related to the students' real lives
8. The lack of major thinking topics

Figure 6

Final Annual Infographic of the Main Report Made for the Academic Year 2016–2017 (M.O.E, 2017)



Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

The following year, in an interview with 60 Minutes (CBS News, 2018), MBS announced the observations regarding Islamic education in Saudi Arabia. MBS stated that “Saudi schools have been invaded by many elements from the Muslim Brotherhood organization, surely to a great extent. Even now, there are some elements left. It will be a short while until they are all eradicated completely” (CBS News, 2018). The next day after the interview, on March 20 of 2018, Saudi Education Minister Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Issa announced the report on the comments made by the crown prince (see Figure 7), based on the actual report and the infographics provided by M.O.E which stated that the Saudi curriculum, in general, is affected by the radical Muslim brotherhood ideology in different areas. The result will be a big reformation plan that will include different sub plans. This document addresses directly the extremism concept that was associated with Islamic curriculum for years. The announcements outlined solutions to reform the education system and the curriculum.

Figure 7

Saudi Education Minister Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Issa Announces Finding of the Status of the Curriculum Based on Government Observations (M.O.E, 2018b)

وزير التعليم: سنجت فكر الإخوان المتطرف من مدارسنا

طاهر عثمان
الرياض

مكة
Makkahmp

خطر فكر الجماعة من خلال الأنشطة الفكرية في الجامعات والمدارس. المتطرف يحتاج إلى جهد متواصل وإلى نظراً لاختلافه بعيره من المدارس الفكرية الإسلامية، وتخفي بعض المتعاطفين مع الجماعة. وشهد العيسى على أهمية أن يعي متبريد الجامعات ومسؤولو الوزارة ومدبرو التعليم في المناطق خطر الجماعات التي محاربة هذا الفكر، وبما كل جهد ممكن لتنظيف نظام التعليم من فكر الجماعات الإرهابية وتخليص بلادنا من شرورها.

أحمد العيسى

على جماعة الإخوان المسلمين من جميع المدارس والجامعات إضافة إلى إبعاد كل من يتعاطف مع الجماعة أو فكرها أو رموزها من أي منصب إداري أو من التدريس، والتوعية

السعودي، وتأثر بهم بعض المسؤولين والمدرسين والمعلمين وساهموا في صياغة المناهج الشرعية ونظموا النشاطات الطلابية وفق منهج الجماعة المنحرف. وأضاف الدكتور العيسى أنه لم يتنبه العيون على الدين والوطن على خطر الجماعة إلا في وقت متأخر، حيث بدأت الجهود ولا تزال لتخليص النظام التعليمي من شرائب منهج الجماعة. وأسفرت عن وزير التعليم جهود الوزارة في محاربة الفكر المتطرف من خلال إعادة صياغة المناهج الدراسية وتطوير الكتب المدرسية، وضمان خلوها من منهج جماعة الإخوان المحظورة، ومنع الكتب المحسوبة

أكثر وزير التعليم الدكتور أحمد العيسى أن ما أشار إليه ولي العهد نائب رئيس مجلس الوزراء وزير الدفاع الأمير محمد بن سلمان في الحوار التلفزيوني على شبكة سي بي إس نيوز الأمريكية بشأن غزو فكر جماعة الإخوان المسلمين الإرهابية لنظام التعليم في المملكة، ومضي المملكة في اجتناب كل من ينتمي لهذا الفكر أو يتعاطف معه في فترة قصيرة قادمة حقيقة لا تقبل النقاش. وأوضح في تصريح عبر الموقع الرسمي للوزارة أمس، أن ذلك جاء بعد أن انخرط بعض رموز الجماعة الذين هربوا من مصر في الستينات والسبعينات الميلادية من القرن الماضي في التدريس والتعليم العام والجامعي

كيف تتصدى التعليم للأفكار المنحرفة؟

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>التوعية والتثقيف</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • الأنشطة الموسمية • البرامج الفكرية • تأسيس مركز الوعي الفكري | <p>المكتبات الجامعية والمدارسية</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • منع الكتب المحسوبة على جماعة الإخوان • سحب الكتب التي ثبت وجودها • متابعة تنفيذ التوجيه الذي صدر بذلك | <p>المناهج</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • إعادة صياغة المناهج الدراسية • تطوير الكتب المدرسية • تنقيحها من الأفكار المنحرفة |
|---|--|---|

Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

Findings From Observation Reports

The observation records collected the following points regarding the Islamic curriculum for the high school level in Saudi Arabia as shown in Table 11. These 10 points were recorded in the different reports or studies by MOE or its different entities.

Table 11*General Points of Observation Regarding the Islamic Curriculum in Saudi Arabia*

| Points | Made by Different Sectors of MOE | Made by MOE |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------|
| The lack of analytical thinking | ✓ | ✓ |
| The lack of scientific research | ✓ | ✓ |
| The lack of the use of technology | ✓ | ✓ |
| The lack of addressing some phenomena | ✓ | ✓ |
| The lack of supervision and sufficient reports on teacher performance and the curriculum in general | ✓ | ✓ |
| The lack of a good assessment tool | ✓ | ✓ |
| The lack of reality in the curriculum | | ✓ |
| The lack of providing thinking tools for students | ✓ | ✓ |
| The lack of teaching skills | ✓ | ✓ |
| The existence of an external ideology that might affect the education system in Saudi Arabia | | ✓ |

Observational Records Sorted by Objectives

The 10 main points observed regarding the Islamic curriculum were divided into themes to explore some of the main objectives of this research.

1. The current status of the religion curriculum
2. The concepts of moderation and accepting others
3. The teaching requirements

By going through the main points, the themes that related to these objectives were organized as shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Analysis of the Objectives and Points: Themes

| Objectives | Main topics |
|---|--|
| The current status of the religion curriculum | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of analytical thinking The lack of scientific research The lack of supervision and sufficient reports on teacher performance and the curriculum in general The existence of an external ideology might affect the education system in Saudi Arabia |
| The concepts of moderation and accepting others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of addressing some phenomena The lack of reality in the curriculum |
| The teaching requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of the use of technology The lack of a good assessment tool The lack of providing thinking tools for students The lack of teaching skills |

Based on these findings, the concept of “moderation and accepting of others” was reported as an issue in two areas out of 10. The “current status of the religion curriculum” and the “teaching requirements” issues had greater attention in the reports and were reported as having four points that need attention.

Policies Examined

The policies made by the government after receipt of these observations in 2016 were examined. These policies were organized based on the three objectives addressed in the observational records.

The Current Status of the Religion Curriculum

The M.O.E. announced the policies that aimed to correct and reform the education system in general and Islamic education in particular. These policies were part of the report made for the academic year 2016–2017. The four main points observed were the following:

1. The lack of analytical thinking
2. The lack of scientific research
3. The lack of sufficient reports from the supervisors on the teacher performance and the curriculum
4. The existence of an external ideology might affect the education system in Saudi Arabia

Ten policies were made to address these four issues and are listed in Table 13 as part of the report, and known as “The National Transformation Initiatives for 2020 (N.T.I.2020)” (M.O.E, 2017).

Table 13*Policies Regarding the Current Status of the Religion Curriculum*

| Current Status | Policies |
|---|---|
| The lack of analytical thinking | Education award for excellence thinking student policy Center of thinking Islam policy |
| The lack of scientific research | The national Olympiad of scientific innovation policy The system of invention project policy |
| The lack of supervision and sufficient reports on teacher performance and curriculum in general | Qualitative professional development program (experiences) policy Professional development program for educational leaders' policy Indicators of the supervisory and school performance system policy |
| The existence of an external ideology that might affect the education system in Saudi Arabia | Development of the educational curricula and programs policy Live Saudi policy Intellectual security and non-violence policy |

The Concepts of Moderation and Accepting Others

These policies created to address the moderation issue change were part of the report made for the academic year of 2016–2017. The main points observed were the following:

1. Lack of addressing some phenomena
2. The lack of reality in the curriculum

To address these two issues, 11 policies were made and are listed in Table 15; these policies are part of the report and known as “The National Transformation Initiatives for 2020 (N.T.I.2020)” (M.O.E, 2017). N.T.I., as cited in Vision 2030, is “The program uses innovative methods to

identify challenges, seize opportunities, adopt effective planning tools, activate the role of the private sector, bring about implementation, and evaluate performances” (M. Al Saud, 2016, p. 7).

Table 14

Policies Regarding the Concepts of Moderation and Accepting Others

| Concepts | Policies |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| The lack of addressing some phenomena | Development of the educational curricula and the programs policy National peer violence prevention project (Bullying) policy Companion program policy Citizenship policy Supportive educational content production policy Volunteerism policy Female physical education enhanced health initiative policy |
| The lack of reality in the curriculum | Internship policy Technical excellence and smart learning policy Promote participation in international scientific competitions policy Partnership between universities and technical colleges and the handicapped association policy |

Teaching Requirements

The teaching requirements policies that aimed to correct and reform the education system in general and Islamic education were part of the report made for the academic year 2016–2017.

The four main points observed were the following:

1. The lack of the use of technology
2. The lack of a good assessment tool
3. The lack of providing thinking tools for students

4. The lack of teaching skills

These issues were addressed by the development of 20 policies as shown in Table 15 as part of the report and known as “The National Transformation Initiatives for 2020 (N.T.I.2020)”.

(M.O.E, 2017)

Table 15*Policies Regarding Teaching Requirements*

| Teaching Requirements | Policies |
|---|--|
| The lack of the use of technology | <p>Science and technology education development center policy</p> <p>Microsoft teacher contest policy</p> <p>The shift toward digital education for student and teacher progress (Future Gateway) initiative policy</p> <p>National education portal policy</p> <p>Secure interactive screens policy</p> <p>Virtual school policy</p> <p>The initiative of the software and electronic applications production center policy</p> <p>The e-course development and distance education initiative policy</p> <p>Digital development initiative policy</p> |
| The lack of a good assessment tool | <p>Measuring the educational performance of male and female students' policy</p> <p>The initiative to develop a system of comprehensive assessment policy</p> |
| The lack of providing thinking tools for students | <p>Securing cooperative classes policy</p> <p>Intellectual security and non-violence policy</p> <p>Center of thinking Islam policy</p> <p>The system of invention project policy</p> |
| The lack of teaching skills | <p>Qualitative professional development program (experiences) policy</p> <p>Continuing education center development initiative policy</p> <p>Academic talent development initiative for teachers' policy</p> <p>Center for excellence in teaching and learning policy.</p> <p>The shift toward digital education for student and teacher progress (Future Gateway) initiative policy</p> |

The Saudi Crown Prince Announcement on Islamic Education in Saudi Arabia

After the report on 60 Minutes (CBS News, 2018) regarding the influence of the extremist group known as the Muslim brotherhood on the education system, the Saudi Education Minister, Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Issa, announced the policies being made to address this issue. This issue was tackled by creating nine policies intended to manage three different areas as shown in Table 16.

Table 16

Policies Regarding MBS Announcement on the Effect of the Muslim Brotherhood on Islamic Education in Saudi Arabia

| Areas of Addressing the Issue | Policies |
|---|---|
| The curriculum | Reform the curriculum policy Update the public textbooks in the general and higher education policy Remove the twisted ideology |
| The school libraries and university libraries | Prevent adding the books affected by the Brotherhood group policy Withdraw the Brotherhood books policy Supervision policy |
| Prevention | Thinking program policy Season's activities policy Update the center of thinking Islam policy |

Summary

Three types of documents were reviewed: public records (textbooks for two Islamic curricula), observational records (records produced by M.O.E. and its different entities) and

policies (documents created by M.O.E. to enforce a policy regarding the observations they received or from the rural areas of the country). The findings were organized in tables to compare them with the objectives of this study.

The results from the examination of the public records focused on the high school level. The findings showed missing major content required by the government. Furthermore, the findings revealed a lack of consistency in the presentation of the intended content to ensure a moderate Islamic curriculum across the different subjects taught in high school. A description was given to show how much the Tawhid curriculum lacked concepts in comparison to the Fiqh curriculum.

The results from the observations produced by the M.O.E., government entities, and M.B.S revealed other observations about the Islamic curriculum and teaching methods. The findings found four major issues related to the objectives of this study and summarized all the points of observations reported to the M.O.E.

Finally, these points of observations appeared in the policies that were made to improve the Islamic curriculum in Saudi Arabia. The findings of the policies and the projects related to these points of issue showed the direct approach by the M.O.E. Additionally, the policies emphasized certain issues more than others as presented in the documents.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter discusses the findings of the study that were presented in Chapter 4. The main purpose of this study was to provide an analysis that will assist the M.O.E. in understanding the implementation of religion curriculum and potentially reform it in a way that will counter extremism and assure a curriculum that represents a more moderate Islam. This study was conducted based on documents provided by the M.O.E. Data were pulled from three different public sources: public texts, observational records, and policies.

This study was qualitative in nature and conducted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the contemporary challenges to countering extremism through the Islamic religion curriculum?
2. What are the dynamic solutions and the teacher training needed to have a moderate curriculum?

After gathering the needed data to explore each analysis point for this research, charts were made to create an additional understanding of each document. The full examination of each document helped to answer the research questions.

Discussion

Research Question 1

What are the contemporary challenges to countering extremism through the Islamic religion curriculum?

The Islamic religion, as the way it was introduced since the beginning of Islam hundreds of years ago, affects education as being central to all in the Islamic world (Martin, 2016). So, for the birthplace of Islam, Saudi Arabia's general education system respects the Islamic fact which is expressed as learning is a divine command from God and must be provided to all with no cost (M.O.E., 1969b). This concept is accentuated by the education system in Saudi Arabia and gives the Islamic religion a great deal of attention in the schools. According to Ibrahim (1994), the reformation of the Islamic curriculum started to change in the 1990s with “the efforts of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia to limit Islamic fundamentalism by establishing Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs” (para. 2).

After 9/11, according to the testimony of Shea (2017), “79% of the terrorists who waged the murderous attacks on American soil that day, not to mention the plot’s mastermind, Osama bin Laden, were sons of Saudi Arabia, Saudi Arabia’s education system was brought into question” (p. 1). The Islamic curriculum was accused by the American media and members of the U.S. Congress to be the reason behind the sad incident in the U.S.A. and other terrorist attacks all over the world (Bahgat, 2004). According to Gazi Al Gosaibi (as cited in Prokop, 2003), many reforms were accrued by the M.O.E. in Saudi Arabia to examine and modify the Islamic religion curriculum to counter extremism. These reforms were demanded by the Saudi government to improve the quality of life for all (Prokop, 2003).

Since 2015, the largest reform in the education system was to emphasize a moderate life,

starting in the schools. Later on, with the announcement of Vision 2030 in 2017, M.B.S. became involved in the reform plan and even described the issue of extremism affecting the curriculum, helping to increase research on the current curriculum. The M.O.E. enhanced its observation process and produced many reports on the findings (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2019). The official reports stated that there were certain challenges the curriculum will need to overcome to counter extremism. These contemporary challenges were documented by M.O.E regarding the concepts of moderation and accepting others in the Islamic education curricula in Saudi Arabia. The main three issues listed and published as official observations were the following:

1. The lack of addressing some phenomena
2. The lack of reality in the curriculum
3. The effect of the Muslim brotherhood extremism ideology on Islamic education in Saudi Arabia

The M.O.E. created 20 policies to cover these three issues.

The Lack of Addressing Some Phenomena

Based on the 18 main topics of Islamic curriculum for the high school level studied for the main two subjects (Tawhid and Fiqh), there are two topic categories based on the main objectives of the study:

1. Concepts of a moderate religion
2. Content regarding Muslim relations to others

The results revealed that in Tawhid; the concept of a moderate religion was covered only 75% in terms of the required topics dealing with moderation. The content regarding Muslim relations to others was covered only 50% in terms of all of the required topics for this objective. Thirty-three percent of the topics required to ensure the curriculum is countering extremism were not present

in the Tawhid textbooks for this grade level. The total number for all the topics written in the Tawhid curriculum was 64.

On the other hand, the results revealed that, in Fiqh, the concept of moderate religion covered 91.6% of all the required topics dealing with moderation; the content regarding Muslims' relations with others was covered 100% of all the required topics for this objective. Only one of the required topics (emphasize the love of the country) was not present in the Fiqh textbooks for this level. The total number for all the topics written in the Fiqh curriculum was 261. According to the data, the Fiqh subject included more content to counter extremism, which included 261 topics related to the needed topics in comparison to the Tawhid subject which included only 64 topics, with many topics not addressed at all in the entire curriculum.

While these data, especially regarding the Fiqh subject, show the presence of these topics and content in the curriculum, other government documents and the studies revealed that even these topics are not enough to counter extremism. The only topic that dealt directly with extremism was the topic entitled "rejecting extremism," and it was recorded only one time in the Tawhid curriculum for the entire Grade 10-12 level and six times in the Fiqh curriculum. Regular topics such as "emphasize moderate Islam" were recorded more than 10 times in both curricula. "These topics insufficiently and inadequately deal with phenomena such as excessiveness, negligence, extremism and terrorism, while some of the books do not deal at all with such phenomena." (Al-Juhani as cited in I.M.A.M.U, 2017, p. 386).

These two concepts show that the Islamic curriculum mostly covered topics related to "worshiping God as the one and only God." Even a topic such as "deny violence" was introduced in Fiqh only nine times as part of "worshiping God to be kind and avoid violence." This topic neglected the importance of avoiding violence to be a good person. "If education is

broadly concerned with the development of good personality, then Islamic education is concerned with making man more aware of his nature as a human being and his role as vice-regent of God” (Abdul Kabir, 2016, p. 37).

The M.O.E. (2017) proposed policies as solutions to address the lack of some phenomena to encounter extremism. Some of these solutions are the following:

1. Development of the educational curricula and programs policy
2. National peer violence prevention project (bullying) policy
3. Companion program policy
4. Citizenship policy
5. Supportive educational content production policy
6. Volunteerism policy
7. Female physical education enhanced health initiative policy

These policies included general guidance on how to counter extremism in the curriculum by updating the curriculum to include the missing topics, creating different programs and projects to enhance the love of the country, and removing any prejudice toward females. The M.O.E. also created programs to encourage volunteerism to keep students active within their community while not becoming involved with others who might mislead them. The most important policy entitled “the development of the educational curricula and the programs policy 2017” did not contain any details on what to add or what to remove from the curriculum. The M.O.E. did not publish any report on the exact content of the new curriculum.

The Lack of Reality in the Curriculum

The analysis of the documents showed that the Islamic curriculum did not involve any analytical or critical thinking in the proposed books. The traditional way of studying,

memorization, was the norm. However, this instructional strategy is not sufficient in this era when “we are living in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world where ideas, ideologies, and people transfer across nations and cultures. Muslims, consequently, should be able to explain their own religious and moral attitudes to other Muslims, non-Muslims, and non-believers” (Saada & Gross, 2017, p. 812). The Tibah University, which is in one of the M.O.E sectors, in 2017 recommended the importance of acquiring new models for teachers to help its students learn about critical thinking with tools to conduct scientific research to prevent them from believing without thinking (I.M.A.M.U, 2017).

This recommendation and observation led the M.O.E. (2017) to create some policies to deal with this lack of reality in the Islamic curriculum and education in general by providing the following solutions and policies:

1. Internship policy
2. Technical excellence and smart learning policy
3. Promote participation in international scientific competitions policy
4. Partnership between universities and technical colleges and the handicapped association policy

These policies included activities in the curriculum to encourage the connection between the Islamic curriculum and the students’ real lives. Scholars were trying to improve Islamic education by rejecting the separation of the soul, heart, and mind of the learners and not following the old belief that Islam could be learned while ignoring the fact that Islam is a way of living (Lahmar, 2011). The M.O.E. acknowledged this fact and worked to provide solutions. For example, in the “internship policy,” the student will be provided with the opportunity to do an internship with an Islamic institution during their study. Also, in the “Technical excellence and

smart learning policy” the Islamic curriculum will be processed as math or science, opening the door for investigating and thinking. Furthermore, the third policy is intended to prepare students to use Islamic education in international competitions that require scientific research and analytical thinking skills. Last but not least, “partnership between universities and technical colleges and the handicapped association policy” are ways to prepare students with an Islamic education to go through higher education with a good Islamic foundation, not just information.

Finally, the M.O.E in their annual report (2017) never included the exact detail of the new content that will be included to counter extremism directly. The entire policies listed as a reform plan for all education in Saudi Arabia to make students connected to the real world are not specific or detailed.

The Effect of the Muslim Brotherhood Extremism Ideology on the Islamic Education in Saudi Arabia

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna. According to Farahat (2017), this group is known in the world as the root of terrorism, and “it is responsible for almost a century of terror since the young Banna engaged in the intimidation and harassment of his Christian and moderate Muslim neighbors” (para. 29). Saudi Arabia in 2014 declared the Muslim Brotherhood to be a terrorist organization (Kirkpatrick & Hubbard, 2014). That declaration, followed by the announcement made by M.B.S in 2018, and the M.O.E report which included nine policies, together were considered the first official announcements of the fact that there was another ideology impacting the curriculum in Saudi Arabia. The Islamic curriculum is affected the most because that was the main interest of the Muslim Brotherhood radical group.

The policies and solutions that were proposed by the M.O.E (2018b) to counter the Muslim Brotherhood included the following points:

1. Reform the curriculum policy
2. Update the public textbooks in the general and higher education policy
3. Remove the twisted ideology
4. Prevent adding the books affected by the Brotherhood group policy
5. Withdraw the Brotherhood books policy
6. Supervision policy
7. Thinking program policy
8. Season's activities policy
9. Update the center of thinking Islam policy

These policies were published in 2018 for the reformation plan that is intended to start in 2020.

There were no details on what contents will be removed from the curriculum or what contents will be added. Also, there was no description of how the policies will work to assure a moderate ideology in Saudi Arabia. The only detailed policy was regarding the center of thinking Islam policy. The center of thinking Islam policy started in 2017 and, according to M.O.E final report, has been 100% accomplished both in terms of planning and operation (see Figure 8). After the announcement of the external ideology, the M.O.E. added an update to the policy of the center of thinking Islam policy. Although the report announced the update, it did not include in which areas the policy needed an update.

Figure 8

Saudi Final Annual Report on the Center of Thinking Islam Made for Academic Year 2016–2017



Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

By the end of the year, and after changing the majority of the curriculum, the M.O.E. in Saudi Arabia (2018b) said that “the books and the curricula in our schools have no link with the Muslim Brotherhood dogma” (Toumi & Chief, 2018, para. 2). The declaration targeted not only the curriculum but also teachers who were influenced by the radical ideology.

Research Question 2

What are the dynamic solutions for teacher training needed to have a moderate curriculum?

There were different views about the teaching practices with regard to teachers of the Islamic curriculum, such as the retention of the traditional ways of thinking and teaching (Saada, 2013). Official reports published by M.O.E stated that there are certain challenges for preparing teachers to ensure a moderate curriculum and society. These challenges were documented by M.O.E regarding teaching requirements for Islamic teachers in Saudi Arabia. The main issues listed and published are the following:

1. The lack of the use of technology

2. The lack of a good assessment tool
3. The lack of providing thinking tools for students
4. The lack of non-teacher-centered teaching skills

The M.O.E. created 20 policies to cover these four issues.

The Lack of the Use of Technology

The actual preparation of new teachers in the Islamic curriculum reported that the traditional method of memorization and then the teaching of the Islamic content is the main focus in new teacher training or as part of the internship in teaching. Based on the conclusion in the *Journal of Educational Sciences* (I.M.A.M.U., 2017), it was found that new teachers were the weakest in comparison to other departments all over the university in terms of their methods of teaching by using new tools and technology.

This observation led the M.O.E. (2017) to create policies to deal with this lack of use of technology by teachers in teaching the Islamic curriculum specifically, as well as across all education in general:

1. Science and technology education development center policy
2. Microsoft teacher contest policy
3. The shift toward digital education for student and teacher progress (Future Gate) initiative policy
4. National education portal policy
5. Secure interactive screens policy
6. Virtual school policy
7. The initiative of the software and electronic applications production center policy
8. The e-course development and distance education initiative policy

9. Digital development initiative policy

All of these policies included general guidance on how to advance the use of technology by teachers in education in general and as a mandatory tool in teaching all the curricula, including the Islamic curriculum. For years, the Islamic curriculum teaching method was traditional and isolated from all other curricula. Furthermore, the Islamic curriculum never used any international content that allowed for ways to cooperate with other countries in competitions. A description of policies enacted since 2017 follow.

Microsoft Teacher Contest Policy. The ministry prepared nine teachers from all over the country to be the first to join this program as shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Saudi Final Annual Report on the Microsoft Teacher Contest for Academic Year 2016-2017

| مسابقة معلمي مايكروسوفت e2 Exchange Education | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>• المخرجات</p> <p>مشاركة 9 معلمين من المملكة في المسابقة العالمية.</p> |
| <p>• الوصف</p> <p>المشاركة في مسابقة معلمي مايكروسوفت.</p> | <p>• الأهداف</p> <p>تعزيز التقنية في العملية التعليمية عبر إشراك المعلمين السعوديين في المسابقات العالمية.</p> |
| <p>• الشركاء</p> <p>شركة مايكروسوفت.</p> | |

Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

The Shift Toward Digital Education for Student and Teacher Progress (Future Gate) Initiative Policy. The M.O.E. reported that this policy was active and working; 100% of the project was accomplished during the first stage (see Figure 10). This stage included 150 public schools all over the country. According to the M.O.E (2017), this gate was designed to

help teachers teach using technology and other new tools to present their lessons and reduce the usage of the old traditional methods of teaching.

Figure 10

Saudi Final Annual Report on the Future Gate for Academic Year 2016-2017



Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

National Education Portal Policy. The M.O.E. reported that this policy was the first form of a national digital portal that was shared with and made mandatory for all schools all over the country. As shown in Figure 11, the portal accomplished the following numbers in the academic year of 2016-2017:

1. 700,000 registered users
2. 35,000 digital content elements for all the required curricula including the Islamic curriculum
3. 8,000,000 visitors to the portal

These numbers demonstrate that this policy was considered to be one of the most accomplished policies and projects to improve the use of technology in one year only. According to the M.O.E

(2017), this policy was different from the Future Gate policy which aimed to incorporate more elements of technology but applied to only 150 schools.

Figure 11

Saudi Final Annual Report on the National Education Portal for Academic Year 2016-2017



Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

Digital Development Initiative Policy. The M.O.E. reported that this policy was active and working; 100% of the project was accomplished during the first stage (see Figure 11). This policy was created and applied within only one city in Saudi Arabia (Almagmaha). According to the M.O.E (2017), this policy was designed to help teachers to teach by using technology and new tools to motivate a self-learning methodology. This policy included a specific type of training for students on how to use technology for the great good in life.

Figure 12

Saudi Final Annual Report on the Digital Development Initiative Policy for Academic Year 2016-2017



Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

The Initiative of the Software and Electronic Applications Production Center Policy. This policy helped teachers to use technology by producing all types of digital components needed for the curriculum. The teachers, in this case, were trained on using the components, not on creating them. According to the M.O.E (2017), there will be no required training for the teachers on creating any digital materials. The only needed training will be on how to use digital materials in teaching (see Figure 13). This policy was applied by Hail University in only one sector of the M.O.E.

Figure 13

Saudi Final Annual Report on the Production Center Policy for Academic Year 2016–2017



Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

The report of the M.O.E (2017) announced that the following four policies were still not fully accomplished. No explanation or time frame was provided in the report, only the percentage of the accomplishment in this particular academic year.

1. Science and technology education development center policy (Did not start)
2. Secure interactive screens policy (10%)
3. Virtual school policy (90%)
4. E-course development and distance education initiative policy (10%)

The Lack of a Good Assessment Tool

The actual usage of the traditional methodology in teaching the Islamic curriculum created difficulties in the ability to measure students' level of comprehension of the Islamic content. The traditional way of memorization was easy to measure through regular activities and tests. Yet, to achieve a moderate level, memorization is not the only desired goal of the Islamic curriculum; rather, it is critical to develop understanding. That desired result was not observed, even with the updated curriculum and methods. As a result, the M.O.E. added two policies to resolve this issue:

1. Measuring the educational performance of male and female students' policy
2. The initiative to develop a system of comprehensive assessment policy

The Lack of Providing Thinking Tools for Students.

The current teachers of the Islamic curriculum were students in the past. They have never studied the Islamic curriculum with an emphasis on analytical thinking. Furthermore, teacher training during their internship for their teaching degree showed a great lack of preparation of analytical skills when compared to other student training in other university curricula. (I.M.A.M.U, 2017).

This observation led the M.O.E. (2017) to create policies to deal with this issue for current and future teachers on how to teach the Islamic curriculum. The M.O.E (2017) provided the following solutions and policies:

1. Securing cooperative classes policy
2. Intellectual security and non-violence policy
3. Center of thinking Islam policy
4. The system of invention project policy

All these policies included projects to improve the students' ways of thinking analytically about Islamic curriculum in the future. However, none of the policies explained how the teachers will run these projects and what type of special training teachers will need to make the projects and students successful.

The Lack of Teaching Skills

The lack of active learning teaching skills among the teachers of Islamic curriculum was observed often. These observations led the M.O.E. (2017) to create policies to deal with this

issue to help assure a moderate Islamic curriculum and moderate teachers. The M.O.E. provided the following solutions and policies:

1. Qualitative professional development program (experiences) policy
2. Continuing education center development initiative policy
3. Academic talent development initiative for teachers' policy
4. Center for excellence in teaching and learning policy
5. The shift toward digital education for student and teacher progress (Future Gate) initiative policy

Most of these policies affected equally the teachers of the Islamic curriculum as well as the other teachers who teach science or languages.

Qualitative Professional Development Program (Experiences) Policy. This policy created the top international development program for teachers in the country. It involves a one-year training program for current teachers in six different countries all over the world including the United States of America. The teachers spend one year at international universities that include regular visits to schools in those countries. The goal of this policy is to enhance teachers' skills through experience and not just by learning about teaching in a workshop or a classroom. The policy aims to have teachers gain a variety of teaching methodologies from all over the world (see Figure 13).

Figure 14

Saudi Final Annual Report on the Experiences Policy for Academic Year 2016–2017



Note. A translation is provided in Appendix A.

According to the annual report by M.O.E., the other three policies created programs to enhance variability in the teaching skills in different areas and include all teachers. These policies were:

1. Continuing education center development initiative policy
2. Academic talent development initiative for teachers' policy
3. Center for excellence in teaching and learning policy

All of these policies were introduced as projects without further details on how or when they would be implemented.

Recommendations for Further Research

With regard to the current status of the Islamic curriculum, the Saudi government reported the issues that might create challenges for the Islamic curriculum to counter extremism. At the same time, the government created policies and procedures to deal with the issues that were observed. I suggest that similar research needs to be done by the M.O.E. to add more detail to the suggested policies which aim to counter extremism in the Islamic curriculum, along with other curricula in general. Also, I recommend conducting a further study to find exactly what the Islamic curriculum misses as topics and contents which had no further explanation from the official documents on topics to add to promote a moderate curriculum. Most of the policies dealt with erasing the content that might be considered not moderate.

Also, I recommend connecting the Islamic curriculum with some of the multicultural² current concepts to show the real image of Islam, not just one version. Other studies might need to be conducted to connect the Friday speeches at the mosque with the moderate curriculum to give unity to what the students learn in school and what they hear in mosques.

Concerning the teachers of the Islamic curriculum, I recommend investigating their status as moderate or as unwilling to address their thinking and behavior before improving their teaching skills. Regarding the teachers who were affected by the period before 2016 and Vision 2030, they may need special preparation on thinking, learning, and how to incorporate technology in their teaching. Finally, I suggest that future studies need to be done by different researchers from all the regions, including a center of development that presents full detailed

² Multiculturalism for Saudis is composed of two cultures (Saudis and non-Saudis) living together. The recommendations in this study use the concept of a society where people with different dialects, customs, ethnicity, mazhabs, religions, and social classes live together.

reports on every step to achieve the transparency that M.B.S requested from all the government sectors.

Conclusion

Hopefully, this study will assist the M.O.E. to implement a religion curriculum and potentially reform the curriculum in a way that will counter extremism and assure a curriculum that represents a more moderate Islam. Furthermore, the hope is that this study might contribute to diagnosing and improving the curriculum in Saudi Arabia in general. The M.O.E. progressed well in approaching the obstacles and issues to ensure that the Islamic curriculum is moderate. This study may help to develop general guidelines for the administration and teachers to be prepared, as well as to direct the M.O.E. as to what was missing in these policies.

REFERENCES

- Abdul Kabir, A. I. (2016). The needs and direction for changes in curriculum standards for Islamic education. *Islamiyyat (International Journal of Islamic Studies)*, 38(1), 35–44.
<https://doi.org/10.17576/islamiyyat-2016-3801-04>
- Afsaruddin, A. (2008). *The first Muslims: History and memory*. Oneworld Publications.
<http://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743809091417>
- Allmnakrah, A., & Evers, C. (2019). The need for a fundamental shift in the Saudi education system: Implementing the Saudi Arabian economic vision 2030. *Research in Education*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0034523719851534>
- Al Nafjan, E. (2012, April 23). Teaching intolerance. *Foreign Policy*.
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/04/23/teaching-intolerance/>
- Al Saud, M. (2016). *Kingdom of Saudi Arabia vision report*. <https://vision2030.gov.sa/en>
- Al Saud, N. B. A. (2009). Saudi Arabia's strategy to combat terrorism: An insider's perspective. *The Royal United Services Institute Journal*, 154(6), 74–80.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/03071840903532965>
- Al shaer, A. (2007). *Education for all programmers in the Kingdom of Saud*.
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000155498>

- Al shammari, M. S. H. (2013). *Takfir and terrorism: Historical roots, contemporary challenges and dynamic solutions with special reference to al-Qa'ida and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. [Doctoral thesis, University of Leeds] White Rose.
<http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/5340/>
- Bahgat, G. (2004). Saudi Arabia and the war on terrorism. *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 26(1), 51-63.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41858472>
- Bajoria, J., & Bruno, G. (2012, June 6). *Al-Qaeda (a.k.a. al-Qaida, al-Qa'ida)*. Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/background/al-qaeda-aka-al-qaida-al-qaida>
- Baqadir, A., Patrick, F., & Burns, G. (2011) Addressing the skills gap in Saudi Arabia: Does vocational education address the needs of private sector employers? *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 63(4), 551–561. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2011.589533>
- Berkley Center for Religion. (n.d.). Tawhid. <https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/essays/tawhid>
- Blanchard, C. M. (2010). *Saudi Arabia: Background and US relations*. Congressional Research Service. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33533.pdf>
- Borum, R. (2011). Radicalization into violent extremism II: A review of conceptual models and empirical research. *Journal of Strategic Security*, 4(4), 37–62. <http://doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.4.4.2>
- Bowen, G. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>
- Bradley, J. R. (2015). *Saudi Arabia exposed: Inside a kingdom in crisis*. St. Martin's Press.
- Casptack, A. (2015). *Deradicalization programs in Saudi Arabia: A case study*. Middle East Institute. <http://education.mei.edu/sites/default/files/Casptack.pdf>

CBS. (2018, March 19). Saudi Arabia's heir to the throne talks to 60 Minutes.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/saudi-crown-prince-talks-to-60-minutes/>

Central Intelligence Agency. (2001, June 18). *DCI Testimony Before the Joint Inquiry Into*

Terrorist Attacks Against the United States. [https://www.cia.gov/news-](https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2002/DCI_18_June_testimony_new.pdf)

[information/speeches-testimony/2002/DCI_18_June_testimony_new.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2002/DCI_18_June_testimony_new.pdf)

Chirot, D. (2017). The war against modernity: The theology and politics of contemporary

Muslim extremism. *Sociology Ethnology*, 26(1), 1–5.

Clary, C., & Karlin, M. E. (2011). Saudi Arabia's reform gamble. *Survival*, 53(5), 15–20.

<http://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2011.621619>

Davies, L. (2016). Security, extremism and education: Safeguarding or surveillance? *British*

Journal of Educational Studies, 64(1), 1–19. <http://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2015.1107022>

Dodge, H. (2018). Islamic abbreviation: PBUH. *Learn Religions*.

<https://www.learnreligions.com/islamic-abbreviation-pbuh-2004288>

Doumato, E. (2003). Manning the barricades: Islam according to Saudi Arabia's school texts.

The Middle East Journal, 57(2), 230–247. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4329879>

El-Awaisi, K. (2017). Mapping the borders of holiness: Islamic Jerusalem and its holy land.

Milel Ve Nihal, 14(2), 125–159. <https://doi.org/10.17131/milel.377636>

Extremism. (1989). In *Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Fakkar, G. (2015, January 26). Story behind the king's title. *Arab News*.

<http://www.arabnews.com/saudi-arabia/news/695351>

- Farahat, C. (2017). The Muslim Brotherhood: Fountain of Islamist violence. *Middle East Quarterly*, 24(2), 1–10.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=122233717&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Gambetta, D., & Hertog, S. (2017). *Engineers of jihad: The curious connection between violent extremism and education*. Princeton University Press.
- Gendron, A. (2010). Confronting terrorism in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Intelligence and Counter Intelligence*, 23, 487–508. <http://doi.org/10.1080/08850601003780946>
- Gereluk, D. (2012). *Education, extremism and terrorism: What should be taught in citizenship education and why*. Continuum International Publishing.
- Gray, M. (2014). *Global security watch: Saudi Arabia*. Praeger.
- Hamza, W. (2019). What is Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence)? <https://aboutislam.net/shariah/shariah-and-humanity>
- Ibrahim, Y. M. (1994, October 6). Saudi king trying to dilute Islamic radicalism. *New York Times*, 144(49841), A5.
- Ihsanoglu, E. (2010). *The Islamic world in the new century: The organization of the Islamic conference*. Columbia University Press.
- I.M.A.M.U. (2017). *Journal of Educational Sciences*, 9(1), 1–482.
<https://units.imamu.edu.sa/deanships/SR/Units/Vice/Magazines/Documents/مجلة العلوم التربوية/تربوية عدد 9.pdf>
- International Religious Freedom Report. (2004). <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CPRT-108JPRT20429/pdf/CPRT-108JPRT20429.pdf>

Khalil, D., & Karim, M. (2016). Saudi Arabia: School leadership in Saudi Arabia. In a decade of research on school principals. *Studies in Educational Leadership*, 21, 503–520.

<http://doi.org/10.1007/978.3-319-23027-6-24>

Khashan, H. (2017). Saudi Arabia's flawed "vision 2030". *Middle East Quarterly*, 24(1), 1–8.

<https://www.meforum.org/6397/saudi-arabia-flawed-vision-2030>

Kirkpatrick, D. D., & Hubbard, B. (2014, March 8). Saudis place terrorist label on the Muslim Brotherhood. *New York Times*, 163(56434), A4

K.S.A Const. art. I. (1992).

https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Saudi_Arabia_2005.pdf

Labidi, I. (2010). Arab education going medieval: Sanitizing western representation in Arab schools. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, 8(2), 1–5. <http://www.jceps.com/wp-content/uploads/PDFs/08-2-07.pdf>

<http://www.jceps.com/wp-content/uploads/PDFs/08-2-07.pdf>

Lahmar, F. (2011). Discourses in Islamic educational theory in the light of texts and contexts.

Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 32(4), 479–495.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2011.601548>

Martin, R. (2016). *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*. Gale Publications, Inc.

Marghalani S. A. R. A. (2017). Islamic education in Saudi Arabia. In H. Daun & R. Arjmand

(Eds.) *Handbook of Islamic education. International handbooks of religion and education*

(Vol 7). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-53620-0_28-1

Ministry of Education. (1969a). *Ministry of education – Establishment*.

<https://www.moe.gov.sa/en/TheMinistry/AboutMinistry/Pages/EstablishmentoftheMinistryofEducation.aspx>

Ministry of Education. (1969b). *General education foundations in Saudi Arabia*.

<https://www.moe.gov.sa/en/PublicEducation/ResidentsAndVisitors/Pages/TheGeneral-Principles.aspx>

Ministry of Education. (2005). *Scholarship in Saudi Arabia*.

<https://www.moe.gov.sa/en/HigherEducation/ExternalEducation/Pages/TheCustodianofTheTwoHolyMosquesOverseasScholarshipProgram.aspx>

Ministry of Education. (2017). Final annual report made for the academic year 2016-2017.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/kpcjxdd0pezrzi/%28FINAL%20VERSION%29%20MOE%20Annual%20Report%202018.pdf?dl=0>

Ministry of Education. (2018a). *Statistics*. <https://bit.ly/2LEsOgb>

Ministry of Education. (2018b). *News*. <https://www.moe.gov.sa/ar/news/Pages/br-g.aspx>

Ministry of Education. (2019). *Objectives*.

<https://www.moe.gov.sa/en/TheMinistry/AboutMinistry/Pages/Objectives.aspx>

Mughal, M. A. (2012). Schools of Islamic jurisprudence. *Social Science Research Network*

Electronic Journal. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1996514>

National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. (2004). *The 9/11 commission*

report: Executive summary. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-911REPORT/pdf/GPO-911REPORT.pdf>

Niyozov, S., & Memon, N. (2011). Islamic education and Islamization: Evolution of themes, continuities and new directions. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 31(1), 5–30.

<http://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2011.556886>

O’Leary, Z. (2014). *The essential guide to doing your research project* (2nd ed.). Sage

Publications, Inc.

Prokop, M. (2003). Saudi Arabia: The politics of education. *International Affairs*, 79(1), 77–89.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.00296>

Rabasa, A., Benard, C., Chalk, P., Fair, C., Karasik, T., Lal, R., Lesser, I., & Thaler, D. (2004).

The Muslim world after 9/11. RAND Corporation.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg246af>

Ramady, M. A. (2010). *The Saudi Arabian economy: Policies, achievements, and challenges*.

Springer Science & Business Media.

Ramlan, R., Erwinsyahbana, T., & Hakim, N. (2016). The concept of jihad in Islam. *Journal of*

Humanities and Social Science, 21(2), 35–42. <http://doi.org/10.31227/osf.io/8gb35>

Randeree, K. (2013). The four eponyms of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence. *The International*

Journal of Civic, Political, and Community Studies, 10, 19-27.

<https://doi.org/10.18848/2327-0047/CGP/v10i04/43528>

Saada, N. L. (2013). Teachers' perspectives on citizenship education in Islamic schools in

Michigan. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 41, 247–273.

<http://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2013.782528>

Saada, N. L., & Gross, Z. (2017). Islamic education and the challenge of democratic citizenship:

A critical perspective. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 38(6), 807–

822. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2016.1191011>

Shawat, H. M. (2001). *The moderate curriculum: Its necessity and its impact on the message of*

Islamic institutions. <https://www.alukah.net/library/0/94260/>.

Shea teaching hate, inspiring terrorism: Saudi Arabia's educational curriculum. (2017). *Hearings*

Before The United States House Committee on Foreign Affairs. (Testimony of Nina Shea).

The Qur'an 96:1. <https://quran.com/96>

Toumi, H., & Chief, B. (2018). Saudi schools free of Muslim Brotherhood influence. *Gulf News*.

<https://gulfnews.com/world/gulf/saudi/saudi-schools-free-of-muslim-brotherhood-influence-1.2281181>

Yaacob, S. B. (2017). Islamic education curricula in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its role in countering terrorism and extremism (Evaluative study of secondary school curricula from the perspective of teachers). *Journal of Education*, 49(1), 119–194.

APPENDIX A

Translation for Figure 2

Observation on the Islamic Curriculum in Saudi Arabia and Its Role in Fighting Terrorism and Extremism

By reading the previous observations (5, 6):

1. Different characteristics associated with the curriculum. Some elements in the curriculum emphasized the objective of loving God and his prophet more than other objectives not related directly to the faith.
2. Some characteristics of the curriculum have some demonstration on the objectives related to the general topic of calling to Islam which might stressed during the entire curriculum including all the main subjects more than 91%, while other objectives will be ignored or less than 16% addressed.
3. A gap between the two subjects (Fiqh and Tawhid) identified in the observations. The Tawhid curriculum lacked the topics that addressed many objectives such as Muslim relationship with others. While in Fiqh subject have stressed that more.
4. The researcher noticed that there is a shortness on providing many new topics in the curriculum especially in tawhid that support the objectives of the ministry to fight terrorism and extremism.

Translation for Figure 3Left Figure

Tamim to all public and private schools

The venerable school leader

Peace, mercy and blessings of God and then,

We ask God for help, success, and rectitude based on the Tamim of His Excellency the Minister of Education No. 371750073 and dated 3/12/1437 H, which includes reference to the emergency media plan (immunity): and the programs and mechanisms it included, including its sixth program: (Organizing Islamic Awareness Committees), and changing its name to: (Intellectual Awareness

Right Figure

Tamim to all education departments in the regions and governorates

His Excellency the general director of Education in the region

His Excellency the director of education in the province

Peace, mercy, and mercy be upon you and then:

In implementation of the high orders, Our decision was made No. 51095 and date 7/4/1439 AH, approving the establishment of

Unite: the Center of Thinking for Islam) and applying this in public and private schools, it depends on the following:

First: Change the name: Islamic Awareness Committee, to the Intellectual Awareness Unite (the Center of Thinking for Islam), while continuing with the plan of Islamic awareness programs and organizing them according to generalization No. 371797147 and the date of 25/12/1437 H (Boys), and generalization NO. 388403 And date 1/1/1438 H (Girls).

Second: the formation of a school of intellectual awareness unit under your leadership and with the membership of your team, according to the functions of the Committee by according to the attached, and submit them to the Office of Education that the school affiliated to.

Please accept my regards and appreciation.

The assistant general manager for educational affairs

Hamad Bn Abd Allah ALshnebr

the Intellectual Awareness Unite (Center of Thinking for Islam) at the Ministry of Education and transfer all intellectual awareness activities and programs (Shrewd – Immunity - Islamic Awareness) administratively and financially with its employees under the supervision and management of the center.

Based on the text of the aforementioned decision, the following shall be decided:

1. Terminating the assignment of all participants to these programs and end their association with the Center as of that date.
2. Cancelling all the committees related to those programs, and establishing a higher committee headed by the Director of Education and the membership of two of his assistants whose tasks are as follows:
 - Supervising the implementation of the qualifications for competitions related to the center.
 - Supervising the implementation and follow-up of the programs that the ministry has chartered with the other ministries according to instructions and regulations received from the center.
 - To coordinate and follow up on the implementation of activities and events that are approved by the center.
3. The center undertakes performing all the tasks assigned to it regarding these programs and developing them in coordination with the above formed committee and the formed committee will be distributing employees according to the education management's need.
4. Canceling all social media accounts linked to the above-mentioned programs, and just settle the official education

administration account on this social media.

And accept my regards

Minister of education

Dr. Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Issa

Translation for Figure 4

The Journal of Educational Sciences

Peer reviewed journal

9th addition

Second of the fourth month of the Islamic calendar year of 1438

Deanship of the scientific research

Translation for Figure 5

This result is consistent with the results of the interview in terms of that the most weakness points in the postgraduate programs offered by the Department of Islamic Education and Comparison are the weakness of some members of the teaching faculty from the research point of view and then the weakness of getting benefit from them, the lack of interest in training in the design of scientific research tools. The members of the department do not agree on a scientific school or a specific methodological orientation, the absence of explanatory and specific evidence in the department pertaining to scientific research, failure to employ modern technology in the field of teaching, supervision, and research. marginalizing the student's role in matters of research and supervision. This result confirms the findings of each of the studies of Asiri (2012 A.C) that showed that students (new teachers) of the Department of Islamic Education in postgraduate studies achieve the difficulties of scientific, methodological and statistical research more than others, and the study of Al-Harthy (2009 A.C) that showed that students of the Department of Islamic Education in postgraduate studies are the least able in the basic special knowledge of preparing the educational research plan, and the study of Al-Orini (2009 A.C), which showed the students' dissatisfaction with academic supervision, and with the use of techniques in the program. As for the result: The department's lack of interest in academic and administrative matters for students, It varies with the study of Al-Rizqi (1434 H), which indicated that educational postgraduate students in Saudi universities practice academic freedom, communication skills, and decision-making at an intermediate level.

Translation for Figure 6

Final Annual Report (Infographic) for Ministry of Education for the Year 1438 H – 1439 AH

His Excellency, Dr. Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Issa, stated that the report is the summary of the course of education during the year 1438 H – 1439 AH, which was full of accomplishments under our rational leadership, and the release of such a report summarizes for the researchers and those interested in education the course of our education within a year. It monitors its transformations and variables and reads the future with it. It will be an opportunity for discussion about it and participation in it from near or far, and we have included the following:

1. The annual report provides a comprehensive overview of the Ministry's process and readership for its performance using the assistance of reflecting the facts, data and statistics, in addition to monitoring the achievements and challenges that have been faced.
2. The education and training strategy came based on the pillars of the country's vision, the aspirations of its leaders and citizens, and a contribution to achieving its commitments in the National Transformation Program 2020 and all related executive programs.
3. A presentation of the Ministry's strategy, which is based on five priorities. The primary driver of the educational system is the first axis. Quality and excellence. The second axis. Equal opportunities. The third axis. Comprehensive education compatible with the requirements of the labor market. The fourth axis. Sowing values and stability. Fifth axis. An efficient and effective system.
4. In its mission, the Ministry is committed to preparing a learner who achieves his highest potential, a participant in the development of his community and country through a high-quality educational system and a global competitor.
5. Harnessing all the capabilities of the Ministry of Human and Material and all that the world of technology is serious about, technologies and software of high quality, while making sure to develop school curricula in light of the original values and requirements of modern science.
6. Ensuring the activation of the social partnership and strengthening the partnerships with the governmental and private sector and civil society institutions represented in the non-profit sector and participating with distinction in local, regional and international competitions.
7. The challenges faced by the Ministry of Education were classified according to six areas, the first is the field of educational jobs; the second is the field of special education; the third is the field of contracts; the fourth, the field of investment and private education; the fifth is the field of building and school buildings; the sixth the field of security and safety.
8. Based on the ambitious and inspiring vision, the vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Ministry of Education was keen to support this national strategy within a system of all state ministries and its various sectors.
9. The Ministry's annual report begins with a review of organizational developments and the most prominent measures taken to improve administrative organization in line with developments.
10. A total of 11,191 initiatives were presented in light of these strategic priorities and goals, and they were consistent with the National Transformation Program 2020 and linked to all aspects of the educational process.

Translation for Figure 7

The Minister of Education: We will root out the extremist Brotherhood's thought from our schools

The Minister of Education, Dr. Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Issa, confirmed the Crown Prince, Vice-President of the Council, and Minister of Defense Prince Mohammed bin Salman, in the TV dialogue on CBS American News according to Invasion of the Muslim Brotherhood's terrorist ideology on the education system in the kingdom. And the kingdom went on to eradicate all those who belong to this idea or sympathize with it in a short period to come, which is an indisputable fact.

He explained in a statement via the official website of the ministry yesterday, that this came after some of the group's symbols who fled from Egypt in the 1960s and 1970s of the previous century were involved in teaching in Saudi public and university education, and some officials, supervisors and teachers were influenced by them and contributed to shaping the legal curricula and organized student activities according to the deviant group's approach.

And Dr. al-Issa added that those who are jealous of religion and the homeland didn't notice the danger of the group until only lately, where efforts began and are still continuing to rid the educational system of the group's impurities approaches.

The Minister of Education reviewed the ministry's efforts in fighting extremist ideology by reformulating the curricula, developing textbooks, and ensuring that they are free from the outlawed Brotherhood approach, and banning books related to the Muslim Brotherhood from all schools and universities, in addition removing all who sympathize with the group or its ideas or symbols from any supervisory position or from teaching, and raising awareness of the group's ideology danger through intellectual activities in universities and schools.

He hinted that eradicating the group's extremist ideology needs constant effort, vigilance and attention from all ministry officials due to its mixing with other Islamic intellectual schools and hiding some sympathizers with the group.

al-Issa stressed the importance of awareness by university administrators, ministry officials and education directors in the regions to the danger of being complacent in fighting this ideology, and making every effort to clean up the education system from the thinking of terrorist groups and rid our country of its evils.

How does education address deviant ideas?

Curricula

1. Curriculum reformulation
2. Development of schoolbooks
3. Revised from perverted ideas

School and Universities libraries

1. Preventing books affiliated with the Brotherhood

2. Check out books that have been found
3. Follow up the implementation of the directive that was issued

Awareness and education

1. Seasonal activities
2. Intellectual programs
3. Establishing a center for intellectual awareness unite (Center of thinking for Islam)

Translation for Figure 8

Second field: Intellectual security and non-violence
Intellectual awareness Unite (Center of Thinking Islam)

Description:

A center that seeks to achieve the supreme policy of the country in preserving the national identity that coexists with the life changes in our world today and preserving moderate Islamic and Arab values that are marred by their behavior and ideas.

Goals:

1. Setting continuous plans and programs according to a scientific methodology to increase the level of students' intellectual awareness
2. Working to establish national principles and enhancing loyalty and belonging to the homeland and its leaders
3. Building an institutional base for dealing with extraneous ideas

Achievement Ratio:

The planning stage is 100%, and work is done to operate the center

Translation for Figure 9

Microsoft Teachers Contest (e2 Exchange Education)

Description: Participating in Microsoft Teachers contest.

Goals: Enhancing technology in the educational process by involving Saudi teachers in international competitions

Output: Participation of 9 teachers from the Kingdom in the international competition

Partners: Microsoft Corporation.

Translation for Figure 10

The Initiative of the Shift Towards Digital Education for Student and Teacher Progress (Gateway to the Future Gate) (National Transformation)

Description:

The initiative is concerned with creating a new educational environment that relies on technology to deliver knowledge to the student and increase the educational outcome for him. It also supports the development of teachers' scientific and educational capabilities, the initiative seeks to gradual transition to an electronic learning environment in all schools of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Goals:

1. Changing the traditional pattern of education
2. Creating an enjoyable learning environment with positive interaction between students and teachers
3. Switching to an e-learning environment and getting rid of the burdens of the traditional paper environment
4. Benefiting from students' turnout for modern technologies and directing them to positive use of technology products
5. Expanding teaching and learning processes beyond the scope of the semester and school environment
6. Empowering the student with the personal skills that make him more ready for university studies and the labor market

Implementation phases:

The first phase was applied to 150 schools in three educational regions (Riyadh, Eastern, and Jeddah) during the academic year 1438-1439 AH. (100%)

The second stage is to expand the number of education departments and the number of schools during academic year 1439-1440 AH.

The third stage is to continue expanding during the academic year 1441 AH.

Translation for Figure 11**iEN (National Education Portal)****Description:**

An electronic platform concerned with providing e-learning services and solutions, and it deals with all components of the educational process through awareness-raising methods, and targets all Kingdom students, teachers, parents and school and educational leaders.

Statistics of the National Education Portal (Figure No. (95):

1. More than 700 thousand registered
403,741 students and parents.
298,494 teachers and school leaders.
2. 46 Educational managements
20% over the year of 2016 AD
3. More than 35 thousand digital content pieces
Text lessons, games, interactive experiments, smart applications.
4. More than 8 million visitors

7,846,072 from inside the Kingdom
399,094 from the rest of the world

Translation for Figure 12

The Digital Development Initiative (National Transformation)

The initiative seeks to take advantage of the competencies in the field of information technology to qualify general and higher education students and community groups associated in the geographical scope of the University of Almaghama to achieve the necessary competencies to build a digital society able to compete in the labor market and use technical means in technical knowledge production, and the initiative is based on four basic projects: Technical Camps Project, Digital Citizenship Project, Future Programmer's Project, and Technical Adviser Project. The Digital Citizenship project targets students of the Faculties of Computer and Information Sciences to qualify them for professional certificates mainly in the field of information security and network fields, operating systems and huge data analysis. This project seeks to achieve a performance index with the qualification of 500 students holding international professional certificates and licenses from internationally leading organizations and companies.

Goals:

1. Qualify basic education students with the basic skills to learn programming in a simple way using creative logical thinking that allows them to develop their own software and allows them to develop their own capabilities to succeed in their career paths in an early time
2. Provide the necessary skills that underlie the concept of digital citizenship to deal effectively with electronic transactions
3. Qualify graduates of students of computer science and information specializations for professional certificates
4. Enable faculty members to provide their technical advisory services through an interactive electronic platform

The owner: The University of Almaghama

Accomplishment: 100%

Translation for Figure 13

The Initiative of the Software and Electronic Applications Production Center (National Transformation)

Accomplishment percentage 100%

Description:

An initiative to localize software production.

The owner:

The University of Hail

Goals:

1. Software industry localization
2. Providing particularism financial resources for the institution

Translation for Figure 14

Qualitative Professional Development Program (Experiences)

Accomplishment percentage 100%

Description:

Specific program aimed at developing the professional practices of teachers, student candidates, school leaders and educational supervisors within the framework of international standards and in accordance with the basic requirements of educational work and the requirements of the professional reality of the targeted categories and the needs of development and change in the ministries of education. This program is implemented in the framework of an international partnership that has rich and distinct educational experiences.

Goals:

1. Establishing strategic partnerships with educational entities with rich and distinct experiences worldwide, enabling the Ministry of Education to invest those experiences and trials in developing education, and to make a specific leap that responds to the Kingdom's vision (2030)
2. Developing educational and leadership skills for teachers, student guides, school leaders, and educational supervisors through live coexistence with professional practices in schools that enjoy rich experiences and distinguished educational performance
3. Achieving high-quality standards for teaching and learning processes in schools
4. Establishing a professional school environment that supports the orientations of the Ministry of Education to start from the school in the processes of development and improvement, through the model of professional learning societies, in which educational cadres exchange learning energies, and build their experiences through experimentation and focusing on results

Partners:

31 prestigious international universities in (America – Canada – Britain – Australia – New Zealand – Finland)