ANALYZING ISLAMIC EDUCATION TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IRAQ

EMAN GHANEM NAYEF

UNIVERSITY SAINS MALAYSIA

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ANALYZING ISLAMIC EDUCATION TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IRAQ

by

EMAN GHANEM NAYEF

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"All praises and thanks to ALLAH"

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ANALISIS TERHADAP SOALAN- SOALAN DALAM BUKU TEKS PENDIDIKAN ISLAM SEKOLAH MENENGAH DI IRAQ

ABSTRAK

Matlamat kajian ini adalah untuk menganalisis soalan-soalan dalam buku teks Pendidikan Islam pada tiga peringkat (gred 1,2,3) di sekolah-sekolah menengah di Iraq mengikut domain kognitif taksonomi Bloom dan untuk memberi cadangan bagi membina dan menambahbaik soalan-soalan dalam ketiga-tiga buku teks tersebut. Penganalisisan soalan-soalan dalam buku teks ini adalah sangat penting untuk mencapai objektif pendidikan. Analisis ini merujuk kepada pengklasifikasian semua soalan mengikut taksonomi Bloom berdasarkan konteks soalan tersebut , cara soalan tersebut dijawab dan kata-kata kunci yang terdapat dalam soalan tersebut. Penyelidik mereka suatu senarai semak yang mengandungi beberapa unit, soalan, dan muka surat yang berkaitan. Senarai semak ini juga mempunyai soalan teks yang penuh dalam Bahasa Arab dan Inggeris di samping tahap-tahap kognitif taksonomi Bloom. Kajian ini menggunakan jadual kekerapan dan graf bar bagi mempersembahkan dapatan kajian. Penyelidik membina lapan soalan temu bual untuk mendapat maklumbalas daripada guru pendidikan Islam di Iraq mengenai tahap soalan-soalan berdasarkan domain kognitif taksonomi Bloom.Keputusan kajian menunjukkan bahawa majoriti soalan dikategorikan di bawah dua tahap pertama pada taksonomi tersebut. Sebanyak 123 daripada 226 soalan (54.42%) adalah berkaitan dengan *Pengetahuan*. Tahap *Kefahaman* ada kekerapan sebanyak 92 kali (40.71%). Kekerapan untuk dua tahap pertama ini adalah sebanyak 215 (95.13%) soalan. Dalam empat tahap berikutnya, hanya terdapat 11 soalan (4.88%) sahaja.Tahap *Aplikasi* mempunyai jumlah soalan yang sangat sedikit iaitu satu soalan sahaja

(0.44%), dan tahap *Analisis* tidak mempunyai sebarang soalan (0%).Tahap *Sintesis* mempunyai 6 soalan (2.65%), dan tahap *Penilaian* mempunyai 4 soalan (1.77%). Keputusan ini menunjukkan kecenderungan bahawa kebanyakan soalan berada pada dua tahap terbawah (215 soalan) berbanding dengan soalan yang berada dalam empat tahap kognitif teratas (11 soalan). Oleh itu, tumpuan soalan-soalan buku teks Pendidikan Islam di tiga gred sekolah menengah berfokus dalam dua tahap taksonomi Bloom ini (*Pengetahuan dan Kefahaman*). Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan perbezaan yang signifikan (+40.13%) antara peratusan Bloom yang normal dan peratusan sebenar dalam tahap rendah domain kognitf ini.Terdapat juga perbezaan yang signifikan (-40.13%) antara peratusan Bloom yang normal dan peratusan sebenar dalam tahap tinggi domain kognitf (Aplikasi, Analisis, Sintesis, dan Penilaian). Dapatan borang temu bual menunjukkan bahawa peratusan soalan tahap rendah adalah lebih banyak berbanding peratusan soalan tahap tinggi. Oleh itu, adalah diharapkan agar hasil dapatan ini digunakan untuk membina semula soalan-soalan dalam buku teks Pendidikan Islam pada peringkat gred 1, 2, dan 3 mengikut tahap kognitif taksonomi Bloom berdasarkan peratusan berikut : 45% *Pengetahuan*, 10% *Kefahaman*, 20% *Aplikasi*, 10 *Analisis*, 10% *Sintesis* dan 5% Penilaian.

ANALYZING ISLAMIC EDUCATION TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IRAQ

ABSTRACT

The study aimed to analyze questions in Islamic education textbooks in the three grades (grade 1,2,3) of secondary schools in Iraq according to Bloom's taxonomy cognitive domain and to provide recommendations to develop and improve the questions in these three textbooks. The analysis of textbook questions is highly important in achieving educational objectives. The analysis refers on classifying all questions according to Bloom's Taxonomy depending on the context of the question, the way of answering it and the keywords in the questions. The researcher designs a checklist contained number of units, number of questions, and corresponding page. The checklist also includes the full text question in Arabic and English besides the cognitive levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. This research use frequency tables and bar graphs in order to present the research findings. The researcher also develop eight interview questions to receive feedback from the teachers regarding the questions levels in the textbooks based on Bloom's taxonomy cognitive domain. The results show that majority of the questions were categorized under the first two taxonomic levels. A total of 123 questions out of the 226 (54.42%) were concerned with *Knowledge*. The *Comprehension* level had a frequency of 92 (40.71%). In total, the frequency of the two lower levels was 215 questions (95.13%). The remaining four levels had a total of 11 questions (4.88%). The *Application* level had a low number of questions, with only 1 question (0.44%), and the *Analysis* level was even lower with 0 questions (0%). The *Synthesis* level had 6 questions (2.65%), and the

Evaluation level had only 4 questions (1.77%). The results showed a preponderance of the questions on the two lower cognitive levels (215 questions) compared with the questions posted in the four higher cognitive levels (11 questions). The finding reveals that the Islamic education textbook questions of the three grades of secondary schools tend to focuses on the first two levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (K*nowledge and Comprehension*). This research shows that there was a significant difference (+40.13%) between normal Bloom's percentage and actual percentage in lower levels of cognitive domain (K*nowledge and Comprehension*), and there was a significant difference (-40.13%) between normal Bloom's percentage and actual percentage in all higher levels of cognitive domain (A*pplication, Analysis, Syntheses and Evaluation).* Results from the interview indicate the percentage of questions in lower levels (*Knowledge and Comprehension*) are high and the percentage of the questions in higher levels (*application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation*) are very low. Thus, it is hoped that the findings of this study can be used to reconstruct the Islamic education textbooks questions of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade according to Bloom's taxonomy cognitive levels with the following percentage; *Knowledge 45%, comprehension 10%, application 20%, analysis 10%, syntheses 10% and evaluation 5%.*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Education is one of the most important aspects of human development and comprises the most influential social institution in any society. In general, education aims to transmit a common set of beliefs, values, norms, and understanding from the adult generation to the youth. Morality, on the other hand, aims to maintain order in a society; to respect people and regard them 'holistically'(Kabir, 2008).

The educational process is clearly necessary for human upbringing and the formation of a balanced, proper, and integrated personality. The educational process is as important as the nutrition needed by the body. Education preserves humans and directs them to a safe life. In particular, considering that the period of human childhood is longer compared with that of other creatures, parents and educators are given the responsibilities to provide an educational system (Alzantani, 1993).

The educational system contains three elements: the teacher, student, and the curriculum. A textbook is considered as a source of knowledge for a student (Alul, 2000). According to(Hindi, 2009), a textbook is the most important means of teaching subjects in schools and is generally a tool of the educational process. A textbook helps to achieve the curriculum objectives if it contains useful materials, has an attractive appearance, and is authored in a smooth, readable way.

Textbooks are significant in the teaching and learning process; they are the major reference source in imparting knowledge, skills, and learning in schools and even at home. Textbooks also function as the main teaching aid of teachers. As a whole, the basic knowledge relayed by the teacher is based on the source, material, and information referred to by a textbook. Thus, a textbook requires good quality (Saedah & Zahrah, 2004).

As the textbook users (teachers) and assumed knowledge experts, the responsibility to choose textbooks for their learners (students) is often given to the science experts educators themselves who specialize in authoring educational textbooks and has long experience in curriculum development(Lemmer, Edwards, & Rapule, 2008).The textbook is still the most important instructional material provided. It is considered as the most important educational tool in the knowledge explosion era and in the spread of education, in addition to being an effective mediator between a teacher and learner (Tayseer, 1995).According to Abdul-Jalel, Islamic educational textbooks have a clear effect on helping teachers of Islamic education on *Tafser*, *Hadith*, *Ethics*, and *Muamalat*; these teachings should prevail in the society and between people (Abdul-Jalel, 2003).

Islamic education refers to the efforts by the Muslim community to educate its own and to pass along the Islamic knowledge heritage, first and foremost, through its primary sources, namely, the Qur'an and the Sunnah. This Muslim education may occur in mosques, schools, universities, and other organizations established by Muslims over the centuries (Douglass & Shaikh, 2004).

Education is generally believed to be a strong weapon for the facilitation and promotion of national unity and international understanding, therefore, present status

for Muslims can be improved by modifying the Islamic educational curriculum and the methods used in its teaching. Integrating Islamic moral values into the Islamic educational curriculum and analyzing the strategies of inculcating such values in the new generation are equally necessary (Kabir, 2008).

Aslan (2011) view the questions are parts of a textbook that interact with the student and are directly posed to students.The importance of the questions in each topic would be based on the importance of the evaluation process in education and learning. Given that these questions measure the achievements of the topic objectives, the questions should cover all these topic objectives (Algobory & Alajrash, 2008). The questions are the teacher's tools to achieve the educational goals, let students attain learning skills, and to make teachers recognize the level of any difficulties faced by the students (Algobory & Alajrash, 2008).

With the aim to stimulate student interest in the subject, questions are considered as one of the most important components in a textbook. In addition, questions help students think and realize, and thus, to formulate their own ideas and views about what they have studied (Alul, 2000). Thus, to measures levels of questions and to classify objectives and assessment items for the cognitive domain, In 1956 Bloom et al create a widely appropriate taxonomy. This taxonomy includes six levels of understanding, with each higher level subsuming the properties of the lower level. The levels of the taxonomy were from the highest to the lowest: evaluation, synthesis, analysis, application, comprehension, and knowledge (Alul, 2000).

The textbook requires authoring by a group of specialists and experienced professionals in the subject matter. Most important in the authoring process is a specialist in teaching methods who could contribute to the consistency between the

scientific material and the process used by teachers using educational styles. The second specialist should be an expert in the educational methods who could help provide the most important educational tools that fit the subject matter. The third specialist should be a language expert to ensure the safety of linguistic structures and consistency with the level of awareness of the learners. The fourth specialist should ensure the quality of the overall shape of the textbook (Sa'ada & Ibrahim, 1997).

In Iraq, secondary school Islamic educational textbooks have been authored by specialized committees in the Ministry of Education. The teaching objectives of these textbooks are mentioned in the introduction, and can be summarized as follows: to consolidate the faith, enlighten the students to occurrences in the Islamic religion, encourage the students to learn the Holy Quran, and to know the Islamic civilization.

In Iraqi secondary schools, Islamic educational textbooks comprise three textbooks; one textbook for each grade, and the three textbooks each contain an introduction and two chapters. The first chapter is on Hadith and the second is on Serah. The textbook for the first grade of secondary school contains two chapters with 56 pages. Chapter 1 contains nine Hadith and Chapter 2 consists of three studies on Serah of Sahaba and Ahlu-Albayt and the textbook contains 82 questions. The textbook for the second grade contains two chapters with 48 pages. Chapter 1 contains ten Hadith and Chapter 2 consists of three studies on Serah of Sahaba and the textbook contains 71 questions. The textbook for the third grade contains two chapters with 66 pages. Chapter 1 contains nine Hadith and Chapter 2 consists of Serah studies and the textbook contains 73 questions. All three textbooks have four to six questions after each lesson. Moreover, all three textbooks only concentrate on Hadith and Serah; they do not contain lessons on Fiqh and Taoheed, which are also important topics in

Islamic education. In addition, some lessons in these textbooks do not have any questions.

Table 1.1 Islamic Education Textbooks in Secondary Schools in Iraq

Grade	Number of Textbooks	Title of Textbook	Year	Number of pages	Researches (components of Islamic education)	Number of lessons in Hadith	Number of lessons in Serah	Number of Questions	Content of Textbook		
									introduction	Objectives	Names of authors
1st grade secondary school	one	Islamic Education	2011	56	Hadith and Sera	9	3	82	yes	yes	yes
2nd grade secondary school	one	Islamic Education	2011	48	Hadith and Sera	10	7	71	yes	yes	yes
3rd grade secondary school	one	Islamic Education	2011	68	Hadith and Sera	9	9	73	yes	yes	No

1.2 Problem statement

The Ministry of Education in Iraq pays due attention to the quality of education, in that, it is keen to improve and amend its content and approaches to be in cope with the requirements of the era. The interest of the Ministry is providing curricula, and textbooks in matter which rival the international standards in terms of quality, having taking into account that the educational curricula should be linked with the reality of the students` daily life, focusing on the applicable and functional aspects of curricula besides, connecting knowledge with the local society matters aiming at building new generations that are able to face the requirements of development in 21st century through improving the educational approaches, and promoting the concepts of participation and cooperation and providing them with experts, abilities and skills to enable them to meet the revolution and globalization of knowledge (Educational-Research-Centre, 2004). Reports of ministry of education in Iraq and UNESCO(Educational-Research-Centre, 2004; UNESCO-Iraq-office, 2010; UNESCO, 2004) explain the importance of education

in Iraq in their reports that the educational institutions were given due attention to qualitative changes in the various components of or the educational system. Since education is the process of a comprehensive national and conditions essential to ensure social integration, it must cooperate all efforts to provide urgent and adequate support, either financially or consultatively from developed countries. And so the Iraqi people can put his feet on the right path towards building a new Iraq that embraces all citizens who will enjoy the right to live together in freedom and safety under the umbrella of human rights as God decreed in his heavenly legislation and as defined national laws on the ground. They will work to collect for the welfare of their seizure of scientific and technical progress that today `s civilization has to offer to enrich their lives and the progress of mankind.

In Iraq, the educational legislations aim to ensuring the state`s supervision over the educational policy as well as organizing, financing and orienting the various types of general education in accordance with the educational philosophy, trends, general objectives of education and the aims of various educational levels. This can be achieved by means of legislations, laws, regulations and instructions which organize the various aspects of the educational process in particular, free education for all at all gradesand compulsory primary education. They also generalize secondary schooling and widen its standards and horizons as preciously govern the educational supervision. These legislations determine the rules governing students` behaviours and discipline; organize the curricula as general and school examinations(Educational-Research-Centre, 2004)

In recent decades, a number of regulations, and issued laws and regulations that contribute to the development of the educational process, The Ministry is working actively studied to introduce some innovative ideas so that the ministry will be able

to meet the requirements of scientific and educational developments. And in particular in the field of public education and training programs for teachers and educational supervision, questions and evaluation aiming at rebuilding the educational system in the light of modern progressive standards and applying modern approaches, means and measurements of education.(Educational-Research-Centre, 2004)

In Iraqi educational policy one of the main focusing is on the questions and evaluation. In order to build the teaching and learning in parallel with the modern educational standard, the textbook questions are an important to reach that target. In this research, textbook questions is observed as the main tool in achieving that target. The Ministry of Education in Iraq is keen to implement new educational policy concerning general education at all gradesand suggest development plans as regards structure, programs, methodologies and equipment with a view to link them to the needs and demands of the socioeconomic development plans. Thus, the Ministry of Iraq follows up the teaching–learning process.(Educational-Research-Centre, 2004)

Ministry of education in Iraq (Educational-Research-Centre, 2004; UNESCO-Iraq-office, 2010; UNESCO, 2004)aims to develop and modernizing the Iraqi curriculum. It is the utmost of the priorities of the educational process. This process is based on educational philosophy and its objectives, strategiesof teaching and learning. Curriculum and textbooks should be reviewed. For this goal, there is a committee for developing curricula, textbooks, examinations and questions undertakes the responsibility for developing, amending and improving curriculum. The Iraqi ministry of education encourages research and studies that lead to the development of the Iraqi curriculum and textbooks. Thus, every student is given textbooks for free.

In teaching and learning, textbook is one of the most important means of teaching subjects in schools and is generally a tool of the educational process. A textbook helps to achieve the curriculum objectives if it contains useful materials, has an attractive appearance, and is authored in a smooth, readable way(Hindi, 2009).

Textbook includes philosophies, values, and principles that characterize the society teaching the curriculum in its contents (Alnajjar, 2003). Choosing the appropriate textbook for use in a science classroom is not an easy task. A textbook is an interpretation of the curriculum, guided by the world-views, values, and presuppositions of the authors (Leite, 1999). Therefore, the message of a textbook is neither neutral nor a faithful specification of any curriculum. Textbooks are also under the influence of constraints, such as economics and precedents set by states (Hubisz, 2003).

Any textbook should have a characteristic of cognitive development and creative thinking. This characteristic refers to the nature, relevance and level of learning activities included in the textbook. Activities given in the textbook are according to students' developmental level and the content is helpful in developing thinking skills in the students (Mahmood, 2011).In textbook, beside the content, questions is one of the main attribute, questions are one of the basic components contained in the textbooks that have significant importance for both students and teachers(Alul, 2000).

According to Jo &Bednarz (2011), on one hand, the questions that address low-order level cognitive processes require teachers to *"ask a learner to repeat or recognize some information exactly as it was presented in lesson."(page 70).*On the other hand, the questions that address higher-order level cognitive processes require teachers to

"ask the student to mentally manipulate bits of information previously learned to create an answer, or to support an answer with logically reasoned."(*page 70).*

Typically, the achievement in the school and higher order thinking skills among students are assessed using different forms of questions or tests. However, most of the items used in these assessments only focus on the level of knowing and thinking without any connection with higher order thinking skills. Hoeppel (1980) and Humblen (1984) found the objective of the question used in most educational levels overwhelmingly tap the lower understanding levels. Thus, if the test questions used only lower type level of thinking skills, students would not be able to develop and use their higher-order skills.

Textbook questions, according to Aslan (2011), are part of a textbook that interact with the student, and are directly posed to students. The thinking activity begins with the questions. However, only qualified and effective questions motivate students to exert intellectual effort. Aslan (2011), Jo and Bednarz (2009) stated the importances of using higher-order qualified questions as to;

1- Improve students' reasoning skills and cognitive processes.

2- Encourage students to synthesize their own knowledge and experiences with what they learn at school.

3- Encourage students to improve their personal viewpoints and interpretation of a topic.

4- Create new fields of questioning in the minds of students, and Ensure that the students can use other viewpoints

5-Improve students' understanding of content.

6- Assist students in identifying critical information in the textbook.

7-Help students to build strategies in processing given information.

8- Stimulate students' problem solving skills.

Many educational aims are obtained from textbook questions, and these effects depend on how often these questions are used by teachers and in what way they are used.

The above discussion shows that, the textbook questions are indeed important in the teaching and learning. Thus the developers or designers or authors should develop their textbook questions in according to the need of the cognitive domain. The importance of the questions in each topic would be based on the importance of the evaluation process in teaching and learning. As the questions are to measure the achievements of the objectives in a topic, the questions should cover all these objectives. The questions are the teacher's instrument to achieve the educational goals, make students attain learning skills, and to make teachers recognize any difficulties faced by the students (Algobory & Alajrash, 2008).

According to Jo and Bednarz (2011) all questions in textbooks can be classified into six levels of Bloom's taxonomy, these six levels are: Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation. These six levels also can be classified into two major categories: the lower levels (Knowledge and Comprehension) and the higher levels (Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation). Depending on the relationship between the level of student thinking (Low-order and Higher-order thinking skills) and the cognitive level of questions

according to Bloom’s taxonomy, students should be asked higher-order thinking skills questions to develop their student thinking skills.

Considering the importance of questions, many studies have analyzed textbook questions in different subjects(Algobory & Alajrash, 2008; Alshahri, 2008;Alul, 2000). There are also studies that have been analyzed Islamic education textbook questions in different countriesas Al-Ayasirah (2004) in Jordan found the lower level questions represented 67.9% of the total questions, Alshuaily (2003) in Sultanate of Oman found that (73.7%) from the total question in lower level, Al-Sewidi (2000) in Qatar found the questions heavily focused on three levels: comprehension knowledge and application, Salman and Khawaledeh (2009) in Jordan found the questions in cognitive domain was placed on low thinking levels (comprehension and knowledge) as well as on essay questions.However, the Iraqi Islamic education textbooksquestions in secondary schools are not as adequately analyzed as the other countries, and as the researcher's knowledge, this is the first study to analyze textbook questions of Islamic education for the secondary schools in Iraq.

Corresponding to the above discussion on the textbook question, this study is concerned with analyzing questions of Islamic education textbooks of secondary schools in Iraq according to Bloom’s taxonomy cognitive domain. Considering that the Islamic textbook questions are supposed to cover all levels of cognitive domain,(Al-Sewidi, 2000) Iraqi Islamic education textbooks questions are not exempted from this rule, An analysis of Islamic textbook questions is necessary to determine the extent that these questions measure cognitive domain. Based on this need, the researcher expresses the need to analyze the Islamic educational textbook questions of secondary schools in Iraq based on Bloom’s taxonomy.

1.3 Objectives of the study:

The objectives of the study are:

1- To analyze the types of questions in Islamic education textbooks according to Bloom's taxonomy(cognitive domain) for the:

   a) First grade secondary school.
   b) Second grade secondary school.
   c) Third grade secondary school.

2-

   a) To explore teachers' opinions on the cognitive levels of the Islamic education textbooks questions for the first, second and third grade secondary schools.
   b) To examine the perspective of the teachers on increasing number of existing questions in each cognitive level.

1.4 Research questions:

1- What are the types of questions in Islamic education textbooks according to Bloom's taxonomy (cognitive domain) for the:

   a) First grade secondary school?
   b) Second grade secondary school?
   c) Third grade secondary school?

2-

a) What are the teachers' response on the cognitive levels of the Islamic education textbooks questions for the first, second and third grade secondary schools?
b) What is the perspective of the teachers on increasing number of existing questions in each cognitive level?

1.5 Significance of the study:

The present study is the first attempt in Iraq to analyze Islamic educational textbook questions in secondary schools. This study is hoped to be a helpful aid to researchers and curriculum designers at the Ministry of Education in Iraq. Iraqi curriculum planners and developers may also find effective educational ideas in this study by introducing different levels of questions and activities in their planning of the new Iraqi curriculum and textbooks.

1.6 Limitations of the study:

This study was limited to:

1- The analysis of Islamic educational textbook questions in secondary schools in Iraq, noting that this study only aims to analyze questions of textbooks and not the contents.
2- This study will only focus on the questions of three Islamic educational textbooks for three grades in secondary schools in Iraq.
3- Textbook question analysis according to Bloom's Taxonomy cognitive domain.
4- Examine the perspective of only six teachers on the cognitive levels of the Islamic educational textbooks' questions in secondary schools in Iraq.

1.7 Definition of terms:

1.7.1 *Analysis:*

From terminology point of view, analysis is the process of separating something into its constituent elements ("Oxford-Dictionaries-Online," 2013).Dosari (2000) defines analysis as the fragmentation of the message to its elements and basic components.

In this study, analysis is the process of classifying the questions of the three Islamic educational textbooks in Iraqi secondary schools according to cognitive levels and finding the percentages for each level.

1.7.2 *Islamic Educational Textbook:*

Textbooks are the books that are prepared by the Ministry of Education to teach Islamic education to students in the schools (Al-Sewidi, 2000).

Textbooks of Islamic education in this study are the three textbooks approved by the Iraqi Ministry of Education for teaching Islamic education in the three gradesof secondary schools. These three textbooks are 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade Islamic education textbooks.

1.7.3 *Questions:*

Questions refers to a sentence worded or expressed to elicit information ("Oxford-Dictionaries-Online," 2013). Questions, according to Aslan (2011), are parts of a textbook that interactwith the student and are directly posed to students. The thinking activity begins with questions.In the teaching concept, questions are phrases that require answer from students(Al-Sewidi, 2000).

In this study, questions are all those listed at the end of each lesson in Islamic educational textbooks in the three grades of secondary schools in Iraq.

1.7.4 *Secondary schools:*

The educational ladder in the Republic of Iraq consists of three stages: primary (6 years)that beginning when the student has 6 years old, secondary (3 years), and high school (3 years). The secondary school is the second stage in the educational ladder in the Republic of Iraq. The secondary school is called Motauasitta in Iraq.

1.7.5 *Blooms Taxonomy:*

In 1956, Bloom and his colleagues proposed a classification system of six levels: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to measure educational objectives (Alul, 2000).

Algobory and Alajrash (2008) define Blooms Taxonomy as an extensive range of behaviouralstyles to be achieved by the learner. They report that Blooms Taxonomy is the most commonly used classification in selecting the educational objectives of behavioural styles that are included in this classification.

In this study, Blooms Taxonomy is a tool to analyze the questions of the three Islamic educational textbooks in Iraqi secondary schools and classifying these questions to the six cognitive levels according to Bloom's taxonomy.

1.8 Summary

This study aimed to analyze textbook questions in Islamic education textbooks in the three grades of secondary schools in Iraq according to Bloom's taxonomy cognitive domain. In this chapter, problem statement, objective of study, research questions, significance of study, definition of terms and limitations of study were presented. An analysis of Islamic textbook questions is necessary to determine the extent that these questions measure cognitive domain. Based on this need, the researcher expresses the

need to analyze the Islamic educational textbook questions of secondary schools in Iraq. Thus, in the next chapter the critical literature review will be discussed.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction:

The discussion in this chapter will focus on thetaxonomies of analysis textbooks questions, bloom taxonomy, importance of textbook questions, Islamic education textbooks in secondary schools in Iraq, past research, and conceptual framework.

2.2 Taxonomies of analysis textbooks questions

There are many taxonomiesused to construct and analyze the textbooks questions such as Wilson and Lorien W. Anderson taxonomies.The most famous of these taxonomies was designed by Benjamin Bloom.

2.2.1 Bloom's taxonomy

Benjamin Bloom developed the Taxonomy of Cognitive Objectives in the 1950s by qualitatively expressing different types of thinking. Benjamin Samuel Bloom was born on February 21, 1913 in Lansford, Pennsylvania, USA. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the Pennsylvania State University in 1935. In March 1942, he received his doctoral degree from the University of Chicago. Bloom died on September 13, 1999(Honan, 1999).

Bloom's Taxonomy provided developed definitions for each of the six major categories that he defined in the cognitive domain. The categories are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Krathwohl, 2002).In 1956, Bloom and his team has published the (Bloom's taxonomy) for classifying the

objectives and assessment items in the cognitive domain(Bloom, 1956). This taxonomy specified six levels of cognitive domain. Each higher level would subsume the properties of the lower ones. The taxonomy levels from the lowest to the highest are: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Alul, 2000).The following are the definitions of Bloom's Taxonomy levels:

1- Knowledge:

Bloom (1956) defined knowledge as remembering previously learned material. This involved recalling a wide range of material, from specific facts to complete theories. However, all that is required is remembering the appropriate information. Knowledge represents the lowest level of learning outcomes in the cognitive domain.

Alaimam and Rahman (1983) defined knowledge as the level where the student remembers information either by retrieving or by highlighting the correct information from the wrong ones in textbooks. Lister (2006) defined knowledge as the level in which the student can regurgitate a fact when prompted without necessarily understanding its significance. This level of competence can simply be achieved via rote learning. This domain can be defined as "knowledge of previously learned material or retrieving, recognizing, and recalling relevant knowledge from long-term memory. This domain may involve the recall of a wide range of materials, from common terms to specific facts, methods, procedures, basic concepts, and principles"(Truschel & Deming, 2008).

2- Comprehension:

Bloom (1956) defined comprehension as the ability to grasp the meaning of materials. This may be demonstrated by translating materials from one form to

another (words to numbers), interpreting materials (explaining or summarizing), and estimating future trends (predicting consequences or effects). These learning outcomes move one step beyond the simple remembrance of materials, and represent the lowest level of understanding. Lister (2006) defined comprehension as the level in which the student understands the significance of a fact. A student, when prompted, manifests understanding by supplying knowledge, but which may be different from how the material was first taught. “This domain involves awareness of the literal message contained in communication and being able to grasp the relationships between each of these elements”(Truschel & Deming, 2008).

3- Application:

Bloom (1956) defined application as the ability to use learned material in new and concrete situations. This ability includes the application of rules, methods, concepts, principles, laws, and theories. The learning outcomes in this area require a higher level of understanding than those under comprehension. This domain refers to the ability to use learned material in a new or unprompted use of an abstraction. It also includes applying what was learned to a novel situation in another setting. This domain may involve applying rules, methods, concepts, principles, laws, and theories(Truschel & Deming, 2008).

4- Analysis:

Bloom (1956) defined analysis as the ability to break down materials into component parts to understand its organizational structure. This ability includes the identification of parts, analysis of the relationships between parts, and recognition of the organizational principles involved. Requiring an understanding of both the content and the structural form of the material, the learning outcomes of analysis represent a

higher intellectual level than those of comprehension and application. Analysis can be described as the ability to examine a problem area in a given subject and identify the various components [breaking the problem down] to focus more on each component. Analysis distinguishes between facts and inferences and determines how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure (Truschel & Deming, 2008). Lister (2006) defined application and analysis as intermediate levels of the taxonomy where students are expected to create and analyze artefacts, but within a well defined context.

5- Synthesis:

Bloom (1956) defined synthesis as the ability to fit parts together to form a new idea. This ability involves the production of a unique communication (theme or speech), operational plan (research proposal), or a set of abstract relations (scheme for classifying information). The learning outcomes in this area stress creative behaviours, with major emphasis on the formulation of new patterns or structures.

Truschel & Deming defined Synthesis is the fifth domain and refers to the ability to make judgments based on criteria or standards or to combine parts to form a new concept or idea (Truschel & Deming, 2008). Alaimam and Rahman (1983) defined synthesis as the level where the student could assemble the parts to form an integrated idea. This level includes the production of new ideas.

6- Evaluation:

Bloom (1956) defined evaluation as the ability to judge the value of materials (statement, novel, poem, and research report) for a given purpose. The judgments are based on definite criteria, which could be internal (organization) or external

(relevance to the purpose). Furthermore, the criteria can be determined by or given to the student. The learning outcomes in this area are the highest in the cognitive hierarchy because they contain elements of all the other categories, as well as conscious value judgments based on clearly defined criteria.

Truschel & Deming defined the evaluation as the highest in the cognitive hierarchy because it contains elements of all the other categories as well as conscious value judgments based on clearly defined criteria (Truschel & Deming, 2008).Lister (2006) defined this level of taxonomy as that where students are expected to demonstrate considerable skill in setting and achieving their own goals as well as in analyzing artefacts with minimal assistance from the teacher. According to Pappas, Pierrakos and Nagel (2013) each level of the hierarchy is characterized by the following descriptors which identify the thinking processes included at each level:

1. Knowledge: identify, recognize, describe, record.
2. Comprehension: explain, discuss, summarize.
3. Application: choose, apply, change, assess.
4. Analysis: analyze, classify, research, compare.
5. Synthesis: create, design, integrate, construct.
6. Evaluation: predict, prioritize, choose, evaluate, assess, justify.

Krathwohl (2002) stated that Bloom considered his taxonomy as more than a measurement tool. He also reported that Bloom believed his taxonomy could serve as a common language about learning goals to facilitate communication across persons, subject matters, and grade levels; as well as a basis for determining the specific meaning of broad educational goals for particular courses or curriculum, such as those in the currently prevalent national, state, and local standards. Krathwohl stated

that Bloom's taxonomy aims to determine the congruence of educational objectives, activities, and assessments in a unit, course, and a curriculum. Krathwohl considered Bloom's taxonomy as a view of the range of educational possibilities against which the limited breadth and depth of any particular educational course or curriculum can be consider (Krathwohl, 2002).

Bloom's Taxonomy consists of six hierarchical levels. Figure 2.1 is about Bloom's Taxonomy complexity. Each category represents an increasingly complex type of cognition that is sometimes referred to as lower and higher levels of learning. Each taxonomy component builds on the successful completion of the previous levels (Granello, 2001).

Figure 2.1 Design of Bloom's Taxonomy(Barakat & Sabah, 2007).

Each classification within the hierarchy demanded the mastery of skills and abilities that were lower in the classification order. Progressing from lower-level skills (knowledge) to higher-level skills (evaluation), Bloom's taxonomy presents cognitive development as the achievement of higher order abilities as the learner moves from knowledge to evaluation (Christi, 2012).

In the educational process, future teachers trained usually by referring to Bloom's taxonomy during each aspect of the educational instructional cycle, from planning to assessing instruction. Bloom and his colleagues developed an integrated system to help all teachers to select the types of learning expected from students. The significance of applying Bloom's taxonomy in the development of educational process outcomes represents a planning, implementing, and assessing tool for instruction. Bloom's taxonomy provides educators with a common reference frame that explain various types of learning outcomes.In addition, this taxonomy clarify the wide array of education outcomes that can be included in any given instructional area(Almerico & Baker, 2004).

To learn critical higher-level thinking skills, Bloom's Taxonomy can be a very powerful tool. This taxonomy entails a minimum amount of time for the teacher to prepare the phrasing of higher-level questions. However, this taxonomy is easy to integrate with the content of the lesson (Truschel & Deming, 2008).Booker (2007) reported that basic skill of education has been devalued by using Bloom's Taxonomy but has promoted "higher-order thinking" at its expense.

Algobory and Alajrash (2008) reported that Bloom's Taxonomy is an extensive range of behavioural styles to be achieved by a learner. AndBloom's Taxonomy is the most commonly used classification in selecting the educational objectives of

behavioural styles.As students become adept at analyzing sustainability case studies, developing and building sustainable designs, and assessing products and processes for sustainability at the first two levels (knowledge and comprehension), they move on to the next Bloom stages (Pappas et al., 2013).

Each cognition level in Bloom's Taxonomy offers a precise characterization of the learning goals. Cognition levels can assist teachers explain their intended learning outcomes, explains a planning basis, and set the stage for both assessment and teaching(Almerico & Baker, 2004). Successive levels of Bloom's Taxonomy can be classified into two groups (lower and higher) which have different values. The "synthesis, evaluation, and analysis" level in Bloom's Taxonomy can be classified as higher-order thinking, whereas "knowledge and comprehension" can be classified as lower-order thinking. The application level can be included in both groups of Bloom's Taxonomy. At this level of taxonomy (application), students are expected to demonstrate their ability in the "knowledge and comprehension" levels. (Junoh et al., 2012)

2.2.2 Lorin W. Anderson taxonomy

Lorin W. Anderson is a distinguished professor emeritus at the University of South Carolina, where he served as a member of the faculty from August, 1973 to August, 2006. He holds a B.A. in Mathematics from Macalester College, an M.A. in Educational Psychology from the University of Minnesota, and a Ph.D. in Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistical Analysis from the University of Chicago. He was also a student of Benjamin S. Bloom at the University of South Carolina ("The university of western Australia," 2013).