

Review of Curriculum Renewal for Islamic Education: Critical Perspectives on Teaching Islam in Primary and Secondary Schools

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Review of *Curriculum Renewal for Islamic Education: Critical Perspectives on Teaching Islam in Primary and Secondary Schools* by Nadeem A. Memon (Ed), Mohamad Abdalla, Mariam Alhasymi, 2021

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Curriculum renewal for Islamic education: critical perspective on teaching Islam in primary and secondary schools depicts Islamic Education curriculum reforms from the perspectives of its scholars and stakeholders. Contributors are prominent Islamic Education scholars, researchers, and educators. It is intended to respond to the curriculum renewal aspirations of educators worldwide in Islamic schools, especially those in Muslim minority contexts. The contributors present opportunities for researchers and educators to think about teaching Islam differently by providing insights on key concepts, case studies of curriculum successes and pitfalls, and suggested processes and pillars for curriculum development.

The editors, Memon and Abdalla begin by emphasizing the differences in learning contexts where Islam is taught. This is followed by 15 chapters, which discuss current Islamic education curricula and consider new areas for inclusion as part of a larger renewal effort that includes developing curricula from an Islamic worldview as well as the current global aspirations of Islamic education. The book is divided into three parts. Part 1, entitled ‘Islamic Studies Curriculum’ covers a wide range of topics related to faith formation that will be of particular interest to madrasa educators as well as those who teach in Islamic schools. Part 2, ‘Islamic Worldview Shaping Curriculum’ will be of interest to those seeking to integrate Islam across the curriculum, including both public school educators and those working in Islamic schools. Part 3, ‘Islam Inspired Curriculum Renewal’, is the final section, and it is aspirational in nature. It addresses fundamental topics such as human development, teaching and learning, and curriculum planning in the context of Islamic education, with the goal of inspiring innovation in all settings where Islam is taught.

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One limitation of this work is the surprising lack of chapters on Arabic language education, which is a feature of both formal and informal Islamic education. The second limitation is a lack of assessment guidance, which is essential in any educational system. The third limitation is that the contributors to this paper are all Sunni affiliated. It would be even more interesting if it was combined with Shia affiliated writers for comparison.

Overall, this book is an excellent resource that highlights current research in the field while also suggesting new directions for future research. The majority of contributions provide useful guidance for primary and secondary school teachers and curriculum developers. While some are less practical, they do provide introductory explorations that could serve as the basis of discussion for curriculum renewal teams. This text will be useful to secondary education, Islamic education, and curriculum studies researchers, doctoral students, and academics. Those interested in religious education will also find this book useful.

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