

Research Article

Content Analysis of Essential Economic Values in the Vocational Textbook as Compared to the Saudi Arabian Education Policy Document

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This study explores the extent to which five essential economic values related to the themes of production, savings, moderation in expenditure, labor, and economic development were included in the Saudi Arabian Educational Policy Document and their reflection in a high school vocational textbook. A systematic quantitative descriptive approach was used to analyze the contents of the two documents. Results showed that the Education Policy Document only included the production domain value. The vocational textbook did not significantly include all economic values, except the theme related to respecting and the value of time. This means that the two documents should be revised to include these important economic values, as they are important for students' future.

1. Introduction

Educators regarded school textbooks as the main source for students' learning. In many countries including Saudi Arabia, text books play central roles in enriching students' literacy. We need to analyze these textbooks to explore their ability to develop student literacy in essential life aspects including economy and economic values. Haralambos and Holborn [1] defined value as "a value is a belief that something is good and desirable." In addition, Mukerjee [2], (p. 7) defined values as "values are socially approved desires and goals that are internalized through the process of conditioning, learning, or socialization and that become subjective preferences, standards, and aspirations." Similarly, values were defined by Zaleznik and David as "values are the ideas in the mind of men compared to norms in that they specify how people should behave. Values also attach degrees of goodness to activities and relationships." Finally,

value was defined by Ramji and Walia [3], who stated that "a value is what is desired or what is sought. Value may be operationally conceived as those guiding principles of life which are conducive to one's physical and mental health, as well as to social welfare and adjustment, and which are in tone with one's culture."

Studies [4–7] have described economic values as the economic thoughts and behaviors that an individual acquires through the positive or negative effects that are determined by their actions and attitudes. Alshammari defines economic values as "a set of indicators that make an individual have sound economic behavior" [8]. In addition, Robbins defined economics as "the science which studies human behavior as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses" ([9], p. 15). Moreover, economic effectiveness was defined as "the result of business activity determined by the ratio between the output obtained and the inputs" Słownik Języka Polskiego (Polish Language

Dictionary [10], p. 484). The General Household Encyclopedia offered an expanded definition of economic effectiveness which stated that “economic effectiveness is a means of measuring the efficacy and purposefulness of a given business activity given by the comparison (ratio) of the value of the obtained effects to the factors invested in order to achieve them” [1].

Wealth is not measured in terms of financial status, but in terms of a nation’s citizens being productive in labour and being capable of contributing toward life in society by being educating in economic literacy [11]. Through education, the goal is to realize these achievements by equipping citizens to be able to face the economic aspects of life and to be able to interact with economic events [12–16]. Thus, the economy represents the basis of life and a necessity. Economy is also essential for individuals, groups, the prosperity of societies, and for the development of civilizations [17–19]. The quality of the economy is based on the good use of resources, saving on expenses, moderation and mediation in spending, and the effective search for sources of income [20]. The challenges and problems facing economic developments in the world today stress the importance of having an appropriate level of knowledge, skill, and economic direction, as well as having an appropriate degree of economic awareness that enables individuals and groups to make rational decisions related to financial and economic activities [16, 21–24].

Content analysis was defined as “a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communications” [25]. On the other hand, Morgan [26] differentiated between qualitative and quantitative analysis by saying “at one extreme, quantitative content analysis begins with predetermined codes, locates these codes through mechanized search procedures, and treats the resulting counts as all that needs to be known about the data. At the other extreme, qualitative content analysis uses code categories that emerge from the data themselves, applies these codes through careful reading of the data, and treats counting as the detection of patterns to guide the further interpretation of the data.” Content analysis is a research device that is dedicated to investigate the actual content by trying to identify the inclusion of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences in the document of the text [27, 28]. In this paper, natural language processing statistics methods were used to identify the inclusion of the economic values in the vocational textbook. In other words, we assessed how economic values were treated in Saudi Arabian vocational textbooks as compared to the Educational Policy Document.

Researchers offered many classifications of the economic values. For example, Abdullah [29] classified economic values into six categories, which are respect for beneficial work, productive investment, rationalization of consumption, anti-trust, equal work for wages, and Arab economic solidarity. Riham ([30], p. 17) identified nine economic values of rationalization of consumption, spending, saving, respect for manual labor, love and appreciation of work, currency and banknote systems, trade exchange, preservation of public money, and interest in natural resources. Additionally, Alshammari [8] categorized economic values into five classes,

which are time estimation, respect for manual labor, rationalization of consumption, productivity, and responsibility. Finally, Al-dossari [20] classified economic values into property conservation, local product support, rationalization and consumption, respect for work, savings, profit and loss, and commercial dealings between individuals and groups.

Importance of teaching economic values is stressed by Abdulhamid (2007), who indicated that teaching economic values leads to positive impacts on the individual’s economic behavior. The more the economic values are entrenched in the individual’s mind, the more their economic behavior is in line with them. In addition, studying economic values will help individuals to deal well with everyday economic situations and face the difficulties of life, enhance time management, increase respect for beneficial work, have a sense of responsibility, have knowledge of saving and other economic values which are responsible for good money handling (which is an essential skill), and will help to avoid wasteful and irrational consumption.

1.1. Context of the Study. The KSA government recognized the importance of planning solid education by issuing the Education Policy Document in KSA as an outline of the process of education. It was adopted by the Council of Ministers, Resolution No. 779, on December 17, 1969 (Education Policy in Saudi Arabia, 1995, p. 5). However, none of these studies have addressed the economic dimension of the Educational Policy Document in KSA. Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap by examining economic values presented in this document in comparison to.

Al-dossari [20] stressed the necessity of integrating economic education within the education system, ensuring that the theory is linked to its practice by allowing students the opportunities to conduct economic activities inside and outside of school. In the context of educational policy, Shahwan, (2012) suggested the need to conduct research studies that targeted the analysis of the periodic content of the Education Policy Document in KSA, which aimed to identify goals and objectives related to its economy in the light of regional and global variations. In this context, this study aims to shed light on the degree to which the Education Policy Document in KSA included economic values.

This study is the first educational study to target the economic values in two documents: the vocational school textbook and the Education Policy Document in KSA. Therefore, it may enrich the knowledge of education and information related to economic values. It may also enable other researchers to conduct similar studies in other countries or to conduct studies on other education policy aspects. In addition, knowing the economic values included in the two documents may help educational planners and policy makers in planning future curricula for general education. Finally, this study’s result and other research efforts may lead to the positive modification of the Educational Policy Document, which may lead to the improvement and renovation of the whole educational system in KSA.

Vocational textbooks are supposed to offer a fertile source for concepts and values that should be offered to students. At the same time, the Educational Policy Document is supposed to serve as a guide for enriching such textbooks with those concepts and values. This study investigates the extent to which the economic values are included in the vocational textbooks, as well as the Educational Policy Document in Saudi Arabia.

2. Research Question

This study dealt with the inclusion of the economic values in the vocational textbook and the Education Policy Document in KSA. The values addressed in this study have not been previously studied. In short, this study attempts to discover the degree that economic values are included in the vocational textbook as well as the Education Policy Document in KSA.

The study's main question was as follows:

To what extent are the economic values related to the themes of savings, moderation, work, production, and development are included in the vocational textbook, as compared to the Educational Policy Document in KSA?

3. Methodology

This study used a descriptive analytical method through the content analysis of the two documents; the vocational textbook and the Saudi Arabian Education Policy Document in light of their inclusion of the economic values. The objective was to achieve a quantitative description of the content of the two educational documents in order to find their basic features and indicators that may help to provide answers to the question raised in the problem of the study.

3.1. Sample. The sample included the contents of the vocational textbook. Vocational textbooks are used in secondary schools. They are supposed to offer a fertile source for concepts and values that should be offered to students. The analyzed vocational textbook is required to be taught in the second year of the secondary school stage. It includes 138 pages and 15 lessons. All chapters and lessons were analyzed. It is a compulsory textbook for all secondary school students, which deals with vocational topics aiming at preparing the student professionally for the labor market. It addresses many topics, most notably, professional ethics, types of occupations, applying for a job, writing a CV, and job search methods and other topics. The vocational textbook also contains a set of theoretical and practical activities related to the profession. The student cannot pass the classroom unless he or she passes all courses including this course, as this course is compulsory for all students.

For comparative purposes, the sample also included the KSA Education Policy Document. The Educational Policy Document is supposed to serve as a guide for enriching such textbooks with those concepts and values. This document includes 46 pages, 18 chapters, and 236 general rules. The document was reprinted without any amendments in its fourth edition (1416H–1995 AD). All content of the

document were analyzed for the purpose of exploring the extent to which the essential economic values are included.

3.2. Units of Analysis. This study analyzed the two documents in light of their economic values. We conducted a content analysis on the 18 chapters of the Educational Policy Document and the 15 lessons from the vocational textbook. These units were selected according to the context of each of the documents to be analyzed and the nature of the economic values contained in these documents. For the vocational textbook, the unit of the analysis was the lessons, while the unit of the analysis for the educational policy document was the chapter.

3.3. Analysis Categories. Five economic values were chosen as the categories of analysis; savings, moderation in expenditure, labor, production, and economic development. Each value was represented in the analysis categories.

3.4. Analysis Tool. The study used a content analysis card, which was constructed with the aim of determining the economic values contained in the two documents after a careful review of the educational literature and studies related to the subject of this current study. Saving, moderation, work, production, and economic development were the themes of the content analysis card, each of these themes includes a number of values. Thus, the card included 37 values distributed on five themes as seen in Table 1.

The themes and their categories are described as follows:

The first theme is saving, which is defined as providing part of an income, spending plans, diversifying sources of income, reducing waste, contribute to charity (Zakat), good use of resources, and awareness of the value of money. This theme included seven items.

The second theme is having moderation in spending and means to avoid wasteful behavior, scarcity and stinginess, and harmful consumer habits. It also means to have good management of spending, efficiency in spending, and the rationalization of consumption. This theme included six items.

The third theme is work, meaning to take responsibility, respect the value of time, have mastery in your work, respect for all professions, to be fair, to raise the level of work culture, to have continuous professional growth, and to fight unemployment. This theme included eight items.

The fourth theme is production, meaning the development of human resources in education, development of human resources in training, provision of specialized education, support for national products, building of productive citizens, and productive investments. This theme included six items.

The fifth theme is economic development which is defined as having equal educational opportunities, the development of higher education, the promotion of scientific research, linkage between the theoretical side of education to the practical side, combating corruption, linkage of the outputs of education to the labor market, the benefits of

TABLE 1: Economic values and the number of values in each theme.

N	Theme	Number of values
1	Saving	7
2	Moderation	6
3	Work	8
4	Production	6
5	Economic development	10

global expertise, the preservation of public property, and financing education. This theme included 10 items.

3.5. Validity of the Tool. The analysis tool was initially given to a group of arbitrators specializing in education to ensure that the indicators and contents were closely associated with specific economic values. It also aimed at ensuring that the items to be analyzed and studied would measure what was intended. The tool was, then, adjusted in its final form according to the arbitrators' notes and feedback.

3.6. Reliability. To measure the stability of the tool, the reanalysis method of content analysis was used. The researcher analyzed the content of the study population twice, each separated by a period of one month. The value of the agreement for this study was 0.89. Studies indicated that if the stability factor was more than 0.80, the tool is reliable. Therefore, this value is reasonable, and as a result, the analysis instrument can be used for the analysis of similar documents.

4. Results and Discussion

We presented the results of the content analysis of the vocational textbook and the Education Policy Document in KSA in light of their inclusion of the economic values by presenting the results of each of the five themes as follows:

4.1. First: Results of the Inclusion of Economic Values of Saving Theme. To identify the extent to which economic values related to savings are included in the two documents, the frequencies and percentages of the analysis categories (content of the values) were calculated as follows and are presented in Table 2.

It is clear from Table 1 that the economic values related to the theme of savings include seven values. The items or values that "contribute to charity (Zakat)" and the "awareness of the value of money" came in first place in the Education Policy Document, while the other five items were not included. Similar results were obtained from the analysis of the vocational textbook in which only two of the economic values were included and the other five values were not found. The higher inclusion of the first two values may be because the document was prepared in light of Islamic principles. Zakat (charity) is the second pillar in Islam. Zakat is the second of the five fundamental concepts (also known as the 5 pillars) in Islam. It is compulsory for every Islam follower who possesses a minimum "Zakatable" amount of

wealth to be paid from wealthy Muslims to poor Muslims. In this regard, Almighty God said in Al-Quran [31]. The alms are only for the poor or needy; and the destitute; and those employed to collect Zakat; and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined towards Islam; and to free the captives; and for those in debt; and for Allah's Cause; and for the wayfarer, a traveler who is cut off from everything; a duty imposed by Allah. And Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise." (Al-Quran 9:60).

However, the absence of the other five values in the educational content might be an indication of the lack of the policymakers' interest in other aspects in the value of saving. The reduction of waste is a very important value and should be included in the two documents. The same can be said of the other values that were not included in any of the documents.

4.2. Second: Results of the Inclusion of Economic Values of Moderation Theme. To identify the extent to which economic values related to moderation are included in the expenditure in the two documents, the frequencies and percentages of the analysis of categories (content of values) were calculated, which can be seen in Table 3. Six values were related to moderation, all of which were not found in both the Educational Policy Document and the vocational textbook. The reason for the absence of these values may be because over the last five decades, KSA has become a very rich country from the oil revolution. However, this may change in the future from the increase of population or the decrease of oil prices. Therefore, educational policy makers and educators should attend to such values when establishing new educational policies or new curricula.

It is strange that the concept or values of moderation in spending is not included in the Educational Policy Document, although Islam considers moderation as a virtue and has been confirmed by the concepts of moderation in spending despite the fact that Islam instructs its followers to be moderate and balanced in all aspects of their life including the spending of money. In this aspect, Allah said in Al-Quran [31] "And thus we have made you a was at (moderate) community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you. And We did not make the qiblah which you used to face except that We might make evident who would follow the Messenger from who would turn back on his heels. And indeed, it is difficult except for those whom Allah has guided. And never would Allah have caused you to lose your faith. Indeed, Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful." (Al-Quran, 2: 143).

We can conclude that the six economic values and phrases that constitute the theme of moderation in spending were not found in the analyzed Education Policy Document or in the vocational textbook either explicitly or implicitly. This may mean that the values related to moderation in spending are not stressed in the Education Policy Document. Studies [32] have assured the importance of this economic value by closely relating them to the lives of individuals and showing their positive impact when applied in society.

TABLE 2: The descending order of the economic values related to savings contained in the provisions of the vocational book and the education policy document in Saudi Arabia.

N	Items	Policy document (18 chapters)			Vocational textbook (15 lessons)		
		f	%	Rank	f	%	Rank
1	Contributing to charity: Zakat, charity	1	5.6	1	1	6.7	1
2	Awareness of the value of money	1	5.6	1	1	6.7	1
3	Diversification of income sources	0	0	2	0	0	0
4	Reduce wastage	0	0	2	0	0	0
5	Preserve part of the intake	0	0	2	0	0	0
6	Good use of resources	0	0	2	0	0	2
7	Spending planning	0	0	2	0	0	2
Total		0.29	1.6		0.29	1.9	

TABLE 3: The descending order of the economic values related to the moderation in spending contained in the provisions of the Saudi Arabian vocational textbook (15 lessons) and the Educational Policy Document.

N	Items	Policy document (18)			Vocational textbook (15)		
		f	%	Rank	f	%	Rank
1	Avoid wastefulness and wastefulness	0	0		0	0	
2	Keep away from scarcity and stinginess	0	0		0	0	
3	Good measure of spending	0	0		0	0	
4	Avoid harmful consumer habits	0	0		0	0	
5	Efficient spending	0	0		0	0	
6	Decrease consumption	0	0		0	0	
Total		0	0		0	0	

4.3. *Third: Results of the Inclusion of Economic Values of Work Theme.* To identify this, the frequencies and percentages of the analysis for values related to this theme were calculated (see Table 4). The analysis card included eight values relating to work. Seven of these values were included in the Educational Policy Document, and all were found, to some degree, in the vocational textbook. However, most of the inclusions were not satisfactory because they resulted in less than the desired percentage. The most important result was for the absence of the honesty value which was not included in the Educational Policy Document. This value is an Islamic value and, therefore, must be included in all educational documents. It was insufficiently included in the vocational textbook and the Educational Policy Document.

The noble goal of the work is making individuals financially independent [33]. In this regard, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said “Nobody has ever eaten a better meal than that which one has earned by working with one’s own hands. The Prophet (PBUH) of Allah, David used to eat from the earnings of his manual labor.” (Sahih al-Bukhari 2072, Book 34, Hadith 25).

Thus, these values are regarded as traits that must be taught and acquired by young people in order to prepare them for the labor market, which is an important work value [20]. Therefore, schools should bear the responsibility of developing these values among their students especially the value of “taking responsibility in your work”, which is one of the values that student activities should focus on to be developed among students [8].

4.4. *Fourth: Results of the Inclusion of Economic Values of Production Theme.* To identify the results of this theme, the

frequencies and percentages of the analysis categories for this theme were calculated and are included as seen in Table 5. The first three values related to production, which are “ensuring specialized education,” “development of human resources in education,” and “developing human resources through training” were sufficiently included in the Educational Policy Document, but were not properly included in the vocational textbook. In Table 5 4, we see that values 4–6 were insufficiently included in both two analyzed documents. The reason behind this weak inclusion may be because the education policy is poorly focused on productive investment, because they might thought at that time that it is not the responsibility of the Education Policy Document to discuss investments as an economic issue. The value of “support for national products” ranked last with only 1.45% of inclusion. This contradicts the findings of Alamiri [24]; where the values of promoting local products came in first place. The reason may be attributed to the notion that national policy is linked more to education rather than to economy.

4.5. *Fifth: Results of the Inclusion of Economic Values of Development Theme.* The results of the analysis are shown in Table 6, which includes 10 values. Results indicated that the value of “planning for education” ranked first, which may confirm that the Education Policy Document contains values related to the principles of planning education, making plans, setting priorities, and discussing educational programs. These values should be placed at the heart of any educational policy. Meanwhile, “financing education” ranked second, which may indicate that the Education Policy Document was keen to address the financing of

TABLE 4: The descending order of the economic values related to the work contained in the provisions of the Saudi Arabian vocational textbook (15 lessons) and the Educational Policy Document (18 parts).

N	Items	Policy document (18)			Vocational textbook (15)		
		<i>f</i>	%	Rank	<i>f</i>	%	Rank
1	Continuous professional growth	5	25.0	1	5	33.3	2
2	Take work responsibility	4	22.2	2	6	40.0	1
3	Respect the value of time	4	22.2	2	2	13.3	5
4	Work mastery	2	11.1	3	5	20.0	4
5	Respect for all professions	2	11.1	3	7	20.0	4
6	Combating unemployment	2	22.2	3	5	20.0	4
7	Raising the level of work culture	1	5.6	4	17	26.7	3
8	Be honest	0	0	5	2	13.3	6
Total		2.5	13.9		6.1	40.7	

TABLE 5: The descending order of the economic values related to production contained in the provisions of the Saudi Arabian vocational textbook (15 lessons) and the Educational Policy Document (18 parts).

N	Items	Policy document (18)			Vocational textbook (15)		
		<i>f</i>	%	Rank	<i>f</i>	%	Rank
1	Ensuring specialized education	27	150	1	1	6.7	2
2	Development of human resources in education	24	133.3	2	1	6.7	2
3	Developing human resources through training	12	66.7	3	2	13.3	1
4	Building of a productive citizen	3	16.7	4	2	13.3	1
5	Productive investment	2	11.1	5	1	6.7	2
6	Support of national product	1	5.6	6	1	6.7	2
Total		11.5	63.9		1.3	8.7	

TABLE 6: The descending order of economic values related to economic development included in the Education Policy Document (18 chapters) and the vocational textbook in Saudi Arabia (15 lessons).

N	Items	Policy document (18)			Vocational textbook (15)		
		<i>f</i>	%	Rank	<i>f</i>	%	Rank
1	Educational planning	17	94.4	1	0	0	
2	Educational funding	16	88.9	2	0	0	
3	Equal educational opportunities	12	66.7	3	0	0	
4	Encouraging scientific research	10	55.6	4	0	0	
5	Linking education outputs to the labor market	8	44.4	5	2	13.3	
6	Linking the theoretical to the practical aspects of education	7	38.9	6	12	80	
7	Benefiting from global expertise	5	27.8	7	0	0	
8	Develop higher education	3	16.7	8	0	0	
9	Fighting corruption	1	5.6	9	0	0	
10	Preservation of public property	1	5.6	9	0	0	
Total		8	44.4		1.4	9.3	

education, identify aspects of spending, discuss the mechanisms of disbursement, and discuss the sources of funding because education cannot be achieved without funding. Meanwhile, the inclusion of the value “linking the theoretical aspects of education to the practical” was found to be very high in the vocational textbook. Regarding the other values, their inclusion in both the vocational was almost zero.

In conclusion, the inclusion rate of the first four of the 10 values related to economic development in the Educational Policy Document was very high; ranging from 94.4% to 55.6%. However, the inclusion percentage for values 5–10 ranged from 44.4% to 5.6%, which is considered as weak. This proved that the Education Policy Document focused on

the principle of equality in educational opportunities, as it is confirmed by Islam, and is an important principle and a social demand. Part of this result is consistent with the findings of Hawala [34], who asserted that the education policy in Saudi Arabia was embodied after equality, ranking first among all levels of education.

5. Conclusions and Implications

This paper analyzed the economic values portrayed in two documents: the Educational Policy Document and the vocational textbook in KSA. Results found that the Education Policy Document only included economic values related to

production and did not include the other four themes of economic values. The vocational textbook did not significantly include all economic values and only included one of the values of work theme, which is “to respect the value of time.” This might mean that they regarded that most of the economic values are not as important for our lives, despite the fact that Al-Quran stressed on those economic values [32]. In the current era, these values should be included in educational courses such as the vocational textbooks. Including these values in the vocational textbook is beneficial in helping organize the students’ and families lives. Educational policy should include these economic values, as all textbooks are prepared in consideration of the Education Policy Document. In light of these findings, the researcher recommends the following:

- (i) The Educational Policy Document in KSA should be revised according to the recent developments in the global and local economy and economic values
- (ii) There is a need for updating the concepts, principles, and economic values that come within the context of the Education Policy Document in KSA in light of new economic and societal variables put forward in this study
- (iii) The vocational textbook should be revised to include sufficient economic values as they are necessary for the future generation
- (iv) Further studies should be conducted to target the analysis of other school textbooks in light of the economic values suggested here so that they may be revised to include the most important economic values necessary for students’ lives.

Data Availability

The data used to support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon request.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest.

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