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"THE EDUCATIONAL RECRUITMENT OF AL-MUHKAM", AND "AL-MUTASHABIH IN THE HOLY QURAN WITHIN ISLAMIC EDUCATION CURRICULA"

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to clarify the meanings of "Al-Muhkam", and "Al-Mutashabih" in the Qur'an, examine the educational applications of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih, explore the mechanisms for implementing them in Islamic education curricula, identify the main challenges facing these applications, and propose solutions. The study relied on descriptive and inferential methodologies. The most prominent findings include: through the interpretation of Al-Muhkam verses, students learn fundamental beliefs, values, principles, and adherence to religious rituals, while Al-Mutashabih verses help enhance analytical thinking, scientific research, and the selection of educational activities and methods. These can be applied in educational curricula. The study recommended developing curricula to incorporate practical applications of the concepts of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih, both in content and teaching methods and activities, providing numerous opportunities to develop students' personalities and enhance their knowledge of religion and ethics.

KEYWORDS: Educational Recruitment, Al-Muhkam", and "Al-Mutashabih in the Holy Quran, Islamic Education Curriculum.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is among God's mercy to his servants that He created guidance for them, distinguishing right from wrong through His Book, which He revealed to His Prophet, making it a light to illuminate all their paths. Its verses are precise and well-detailed, which shows that all Qur'anic verses have clear and perfected meanings without ambiguity. The Qur'an is characterized by clear and eloquent Arabic, and the Sunnah of the Prophet further clarifies any unfamiliar or ambiguous aspects of the Qur'an.

Since the meanings of the Qur'anic verses are clear and free of ambiguity, how can one interpret what is stated in Surah Al-Imran (3:7): "It is He who has sent down to you the Book; in it are verses precise (Muhkam), they are the foundation of the Book, and others are ambiguous (Mutashabih)."

To answer this question and respond to those who raise doubts about the Qur'an contradicting itself — describing some parts as precise and others as ambiguous — this study addresses such issues. Some argue that while some verses are clear, others are ambiguous; in His verses, God warns against misinterpretation and following the ambiguous, yet He also taught the Prophet to convey their interpretation to certain companions. How, then, can God command worship through the Qur'an when some of its meanings may not be immediately clear? Many doubts are raised to incite confusion and misinterpretation. This study seeks to refute such doubts based on the works of specialists in Qur'anic sciences and exegesis.

Following this response, the study's purpose emerges: to benefit from the Qur'an's approach in dealing with Muhkam and Mutashabih verses and apply these concepts in Islamic education curricula.

Problem of the Study and Its Questions:

The problem of this study lies in the fact that the concepts of Al-Muhkam (clear) and Al-Mutashabih (ambiguous) in the Qur'an have only been studied by scholars of Qur'anic exegesis. No previous studies have explored how to benefit from the Qur'anic methodology in dealing with these concepts and employing them in curricula, particularly in Islamic education. This includes examining their educational applications, implementation mechanisms, challenges facing these applications, and proposing solutions. Since divine revelation is the primary source for Islamic education curricula, and one of its main characteristics is that it is divinely originated and guided, it is essential to benefit from the Qur'anic approach in teaching students within the curricula. The purpose is also to preserve the Islamic identity to which educational institutions belong.

The study problem can be formulated by answering the following main question: What is the educational utilization of the verses of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in Islamic education curricula?

From this main question, the following sub-questions arise:

1. What is meant by Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in the Qur'an?
2. What is the educational utilization of the concepts of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih and their significance in school education?
3. What are the educational applications of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih and the mechanisms for implementing them in Islamic education curricula?
4. What challenges face these educational applications, and what are the proposed solutions?

1.1. Objectives of the Study

The study aims to:

1. Examine the educational utilization of the verses of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in Islamic education curricula.
2. Clarify the meaning of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in the Qur'an.
3. Explore the educational utilization of these concepts and their significance in school education.
4. Extract the educational applications of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih and the mechanisms for implementing them in Islamic education curricula.
5. Identify the challenges facing educational applications and propose solutions.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study lies in that:

1. It constitutes an educational project focused on studying Qur'anic verses, which can benefit educational institutions. It enriches the educational and Qur'anic studies library by contributing studies that add a Qur'anic methodology to the educational literature, linking it with Qur'anic sciences and exegesis for practical educational purposes. This benefits specialists in Sharia and education and can support scientific seminars and conferences that connect Qur'anic studies with educational practice.
2. It provides practical methodological educational contributions for institutions that can benefit in guidance and instruction, such as schools, by utilizing them during curriculum preparation and lesson planning, and offering practical suggestions that help teachers utilize the

Qur'an as a primary source in educational curricula. It also benefits endowments and fatwa institutions by providing scientific material for their staff during guidance and da'wah activities.

Scope of the Study

The study is limited to the subject matter scope, which includes:

1. Studying the concepts of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in the Qur'an and scholars' interpretations,
2. Using Hadiths, particularly those narrated from Aisha, to define them terminologically,
3. Employing these concepts educationally, extracting applications and implementation mechanisms,
4. Identifying challenges facing them and proposing solutions from the researcher's perspective.

1.2. Operational Definitions

1. Al-Muhkam (Clear Verses): Qur'anic verses with a clear and explicit meaning.
2. Al-Mutashabihat (Ambiguous Verses): Qur'anic verses whose meanings become clear only after analytical reflection.
3. Islamic Education Curricula: The collection of experiences and knowledge provided by an Islamic educational institution to learners with the aim of achieving comprehensive and integrated development, and modifying their behavior in a way that enables them to develop and advance the earth according to God's methodology and Sharia (Maddok, 1997, p. 185).

1.3. Previous Studies

As far as the researcher's review, no direct study has been conducted on the specific topic of this research except from the perspective of Qur'anic sciences and exegesis, as follows:

1. Study by Abu Bakr (2024) (Abu Bakr Munjid, 2024): This study aimed to highlight the importance of studying Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in the Qur'an due to their profound impact on shaping understanding of Islamic references and examining mechanisms for dealing with them. It employed a descriptive methodology and concluded that: The Qur'anic verses include fixed, unchanging principles related to major fundamentals (Al-Muhkam), as well as flexible and adaptable texts concerning detailed legal rulings, which can adjust to changing circumstances and conditions (Al-Mutashabihat). These ambiguous verses allow flexibility, interaction, and adaptation, and are a subject of scholarly interpretation in each era, while not conflicting with

core principles and constants.

2. Study by Abu Bakr (2024) (Abu Bakr Munjid, 2024): This study analyzed the concept of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih according to Ibn Taymiyyah, clarifying his purpose in renewing it, his reasons for differing from the mainstream scholars, and the influence of Qur'anic sciences on Islamic studies fields such as theology (Ilm al-Kalam). Using a descriptive-analytical methodology, the study concluded that Ibn Taymiyyah differed from the majority in defining the term ta'wil (interpretation) in the Qur'an to exclude divine names and attributes from the ambiguous category. This strengthened his theological position on affirming divine realities and protected against misinterpretation or invalid reinterpretation of Sharia rulings under the pretext of renewal or changing times and places.

3. Study by Al-Sawafi (2016) (Al-Sawafi, 2016): This study aimed to explain the topic of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih from the perspective of Qur'anic sciences and analyze verse 7 of Surah Al-Imran, reviewing the interpretations of scholars. It used a descriptive methodology and concluded that Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih are types of Qur'anic discourse, demonstrating the richness and power of Qur'anic language in conveying objectives. Scholars differed mainly in the technical meaning, and attention must be paid to interpretative rules when analyzing ambiguous verses, with caution against deviant ideas.

Points of Agreement: The current study aligns with previous studies in examining the concepts of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in the Qur'an and the differences among scholars, relying on Qur'anic sciences and exegesis as a foundation for the educational study.

Points of Difference: The current study differs from previous research in that it focuses on the educational utilization of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in school education, including educational applications, implementation mechanisms in Islamic education curricula, challenges facing these applications, and proposing appropriate solutions.

Study Methodology

The study relied on a descriptive-analytical and inferential methodology by:

1. Reviewing and analyzing the interpretations of scholars regarding the concepts of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in the Qur'an,
2. Examining and analyzing the Hadith of Umm al-Mu'minin Aisha,
3. Inferring and extracting educational applications from Islamic education curricula, 4. 4.

Identifying challenges facing these applications and proposing appropriate solutions.

Chapter One: The Meaning of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in the Qur'an

Section One: The Linguistic Meaning of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih and Their Qur'anic Implication

1. Linguistic Meaning: The origin of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih is the root "ḥ-k-m" which means "to prevent" or "to make firm."

For example:

- Waḥakamtū wa aḥkamt means "I prevented and returned" or "I made firm,"
- Aḥkamt al-shay' means "I made the matter firm," resulting in muḥkam (firm, precise),
- Iḥtakama al-amr means "the matter became established and firm" (Ibn Manzur, n.d.).

Al-Muhkam is the passive participle of "aḥkama al-shay' iḥkaman", meaning "to perfect or make something precise" (Al-Razi, 1995). It refers to what is clear in meaning, free of ambiguity, and structurally precise (Al-Shawkani, 1414H).

- It is said: binā' muḥkam — a well-built, secure, and flawless construction (Al-Jurjani, 1983).
- Al-Muhkam is what is undisputed and unambiguous (Al-Razi, 1995).
- A surah muḥkamah is one that is not abrogated, and al-āyāt al-muḥkamat are verses whose meanings are clear and do not require interpretation to be understood (Fayruzabadi, 2006).

2. The Meaning of Al-Mutashabih: The term Al-Mutashabih is derived from sh-b-h (شبه), which means "similarity" or "resemblance."

- Shabah or shabih refers to likeness, and al-mutashabihān refers to two things that resemble each other (Al-Jurjani, 1983).

- Al-Mushtabihat refers to ambiguous or problematic matters.

Its meaning involves the similarity between two matters, implying that one cannot easily distinguish between them due to their resemblance. It is also said that they are alike in perfection and quality, and al-mutashabihat refer to matters that are difficult or complex (Ibn Manzur, n.d.).

2. The Qur'an as Both Muhkam and Mutashabih: The Qur'an is described as entirely Muhkam (clear), as indicated in the verse: "A Book whose verses have been made precise" (Hud, 1). It is also described as entirely Mutashabih (ambiguous), as in:

"Allah has sent down the best discourse, a Book consistent yet containing similarities" (Az-Zumar, 39).

Furthermore, the Qur'an is described as partly Muhkam and partly Mutashabih, as stated in: "It is

He who has sent down to you the Book; in it are verses precise (Muhkamāt), they are the foundation of the Book, and others are ambiguous (Mutashabihat)" (Al-Imran, 7) (Az-Zarqani, 1991).

There is no contradiction among these descriptions:

- Saying the Qur'an is entirely Muhkam means it is authoritative, well-structured, precise, and solid, free from any verbal or semantic flaw.
- Saying it is entirely Mutashabih means that its verses resemble one another in structure, beauty, and miraculous eloquence, making it impossible to compare their eloquence and precision.
- Saying some verses are Muhkam and some are Mutashabih means that some verses have clear meanings (Muhkam), while others are ambiguous (Mutashabih)

- Which is where scholarly differences arise. Nevertheless, scholars agree that there is no contradiction between the Qur'an being entirely Muhkam (unified) and entirely Mutashabih (interrelated in structure and beauty), or being divided into clear versus ambiguous verses (Az-Zarqani, 1983; Abbas, 1991).

Prophetic Hadith: Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported: "The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) recited this verse: 'It is He who has sent down to you the Book; in it are verses precise (Muhkamāt), they are the foundation of the Book, and others are ambiguous (Mutashabihat). As for those in whose hearts is deviation, they follow that which is ambiguous thereof, seeking discord and seeking its interpretation, but none knows its interpretation except Allah. And those firmly rooted in knowledge say, 'We believe in it; all of it is from our Lord.' And none will be reminded except those of understanding.' Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'When you see those who follow what is ambiguous, they are the ones Allah has warned you about—so beware of them.'" (Al-Bukhari, 1422H)

This Hadith emphasizes that while some verses may appear ambiguous, their interpretation belongs to Allah alone, and the knowledgeable remain firm in faith and understanding, highlighting the balance between clarity, ambiguity, and guidance in the Qur'an.

It becomes clear that Allah, the Exalted, revealed the Book with Muhkam verses, which are clear in meaning and unambiguous—no one doubts their comprehension or understanding (these are mostly followed by the People of the Book and the majority), and Mutashabih verses, which require reflection, contemplation, and reasoning to grasp.

Allah also described the different types of people in relation to this Book:

- People of desires (those driven by personal whims) take the ambiguous verses (Mutashabihah) while neglecting the Muhkam verses, which they cannot dispute or make others doubt. They focus on the ambiguous verses to incite discord and follow what suits their desires. They do not seek the interpretation (ta'wil) that removes the veil of ignorance and leads to truth, but rather seek what aligns with their whims, trying to distort the clear (Muhkam) verses by equating them with the ambiguous, thus casting doubt on the Qur'an for others (Abbas, 1991).

Regarding the verse: "And those firmly rooted in knowledge say, 'We believe in it; all is from our Lord'" (Al-Imran, 7),

There are two interpretations:

1. Ta'wil (interpretation/exegesis): As mentioned in "And none knows its interpretation except Allah", it may refer to the interpretation of the ambiguous verses, meaning "their true meaning and intended significance."

2. Waqf (understanding or conclusion): Another meaning of ta'wil is the outcome or result of something, i.e., the final consequence or implication of the verses (Rida, 2013).

This distinction highlights that the knowledgeable accept the Qur'an wholly as from Allah, whether in its clear or ambiguous parts, while recognizing that full comprehension of the ambiguous may be known only by Allah or approached through scholarly reasoning. And regarding the verse: "And none are reminded except those of understanding" (Al-Imran, 7). This is praise for those firmly rooted in knowledge, as they are the ones who reflect upon the Qur'an and interpret it correctly.

As for the Prophet's (peace be upon him) statement: "When you see those who follow that which is ambiguous, they are the ones Allah has warned you about – so beware of them" (Al-Bukhari, 1422 AH),

It clarifies that those who attempt to interpret and follow only the ambiguous verses while neglecting the clear ones, seeking interpretations that ignite discord and align with their desires, are driven by deviation in their hearts. Therefore, they should be cautiously avoided (Abbas, 1991).

Section Two: Scholars' Views on the Technical (Terminological) Meaning

The issue of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih, as mentioned in the Hadith, has long engaged Islamic thought, both classical and modern, with differing and varied opinions (Ibn Hejer, 1996). Among these,

two views are most widely accepted and form the core of scholarly debate:

1. **First View:** Al-Muhkam refers to verses whose meaning is clear, while Al-Mutashabih refers to verses whose meaning becomes clear only after reflection, analysis, and reasoning.

2. **Second View:** Al-Muhkam refers to verses whose meaning is known and within human capacity to comprehend, while Al-Mutashabih is known only to Allah (Abbas, 1991).

Ibn Hejer elaborated on this debate after reviewing earlier scholars' opinions, stating: "Others said: The Muhkam in the Qur'an is that whose meaning is clearly established, and the Mutashabih is its opposite. Muhkam is so named due to the clarity of its words and the precision of its composition, unlike the Mutashabih. It is also said that Muhkam is what is known in meaning, either by apparent understanding or by ta'wil, and Mutashabih is that which Allah has reserved in His knowledge... The study mentions the most famous and most accurate of these opinions" (Ibn Hejer, 1996).

Al-Nawawi commented on the verse regarding the "firmly rooted in knowledge": "Scholars differed regarding whether the firmly rooted in knowledge know the interpretation (ta'wil) of the Mutashabih verses, and whether the conjunction in 'wa al-rasikhuna' (and those firmly rooted in knowledge) is attributive or not. The stop could be at '...and none knows its interpretation except Allah,' and then it begins with 'and those firmly rooted in knowledge say...' Both opinions are possible, though many preferred the first: that the firmly rooted in knowledge do know it, because Allah would not address His servants with what none of creation could know. Our scholars and others agreed that Allah does not speak in a way that is meaningless or ineffective" (Al-Nawawi, 1998).

1.4. Scholarly Positions

- The first view was supported by most exegetes, including Ibn Qutaybah, Abu Ishaq Al-Shirazi, Ibn al-Hajib, Al-Qadi Shihab, Al-Ghazali, Al-Razi, Al-Nawawi, and Al-Raghib.

- The second view was adopted by the Hanafi school and Malik (Abbas, 1991).

Ibn Hejer noted: "This indicates that stopping at 'except Allah' is complete, meaning that the knowledge of some ambiguous verses is exclusively for Allah. Anyone attempting to grasp it is referenced in the Hadith: 'So beware of them'" (Ibn Hejer, 1996).

Al-Shatibi's View: Al-Shatibi reconciled the two views by dividing Mutashabih into two types:

1. True Mutashabih: Known only to Allah and

inaccessible to humans; very rare in Sharia.

2. Additional Mutashabih: Accessible through study and research, known to certain scholars but not the general public (Abbas, 1991; Az-Zarqani, 1991).

This distinction highlights that some ambiguous verses are inherently beyond human comprehension, while others can be understood through effort, study, and scholarly insight.

3. Evidence and Preference (Al-Tarjih)

First: The First School of Thought (Al-Madhab Al-Awwal)

This view relies on transmission (naql) and reason ('aql): Textual Evidence (Naql): Numerous Qur'anic verses indicate that all Qur'anic verses are clear, precise, and free of ambiguity: "And We have sent down to you the Book as an explanation for everything" (An-Nahl, 89). "A Book whose verses have been made precise, then explained, from One Wise and Knowing" (Hud, 1).

In a Qudsi Hadith: "I revealed to you a Book that water cannot erase; you recite it asleep and awake" (Muslim, n.d.). The Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed for Ibn Abbas: "O Allah, grant him understanding of religion and teach him its interpretation (ta'wil)" (Ahmad ibn Hanbal, 2001).

Rational Evidence (Aql): They argued that Allah only commands what people can bear. It is part of His wisdom that He would not command them regarding matters beyond human comprehension, as this would contradict the purpose of revelation (Abbas, 501).

Second: The Second School of Thought (Al-Madhab Al-Thani)

This view argues that the existence of Mutashabih verses, known only to Allah, serves as a test, distinguishing the sincere believers from those with deviation in their hearts. These verses include matters humans cannot fully understand or accept. Attempting to explore such unknowns tests the truth of faith and submission to Allah, even though Allah has granted humans reason and knowledge to investigate. Examples given by Ibn Hejer include: knowledge of the Hour, the Spirit, the emergence of the Dajjal, and the Beast (Ibn Hejer, 10/75).

2. DISCUSSION

The debate is not about specific knowledge such as the Hour or the Dajjal, as Allah says: "They ask you about the Hour, when will it be established? Say, 'Its knowledge is only with my Lord'" (Al-A'raf, 187).

Rather, the dispute concerns whether any verse of the Qur'an may exist that humans cannot understand at all (Abbas, 14/496). Regarding verses of divine

attributes, differences among scholars arise not from inability to understand, but from maintaining Allah's transcendence and avoiding anthropomorphism, based on the principle:

"There is nothing like unto Him" (Ash-Shura, 11).

Some scholars interpret the attributes literally without likening them to creation, while others approach them rationally to reconcile with divine transcendence; both approaches are done in good faith (Khalifa, 2002).

Preference (Al-Tarjih): It appears that the idea of verses being beyond human comprehension is inconsistent with the Qur'an's purpose as guidance and divine wisdom. Therefore, it is rejected that the Qur'an contains content completely inaccessible to understanding.

Evidence supporting this includes: The verse "And those firmly rooted in knowledge" indicates that the firmly rooted are those established, skilled, and confident in knowledge, with no doubts remaining. They have understood the proofs and evidence, including the interpretation of Mutashabih verses: "The firmly rooted in knowledge say, 'We believe in it; all is from our Lord'" This distinguishes them from those who follow ambiguous verses seeking discord. This is considered a mark of honor and distinction for the firmly rooted in knowledge (Rida, 3/187).

In summary, the Qur'an is fully accessible to human understanding, particularly to those deeply grounded in knowledge, while Mutashabih verses serve to refine comprehension and encourage reflection rather than being inherently unknowable.

Chapter Two: The Educational Utilization of the Concepts of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih and Their Importance in School Education

Section One: Utilizing the Concept in School Education

The Qur'an is the primary source of guidance and legislation for Muslims and forms the first domain of education. It is a scientific and moral resource containing treasures of principles, beliefs, ideas, and educational and ethical values that can be employed to enhance teaching and learning in educational institutions. Therefore, it is considered the primary source of educational content in Islamic education curricula, providing a sound behavioral methodology for students to follow. After the Qur'an, the sequence of guidance continues with the Sunnah, then consensus (ijma'), followed by scholarly reasoning (ijtihad) to select suitable content for all educational levels to achieve both general and specific educational objectives (Maddkour, 2010). Since the Qur'an categorizes its verses into Muhkam

(clear) and Mutashabih (ambiguous), combining both types:

Al-Muhkam: These are verses with clear meanings that do not require analytical interpretation to be understood. They serve as the foundation for legislation, beliefs, rulings, values, and behavioral guidance. In education, these verses can be presented directly and clearly, accessible to all cognitive levels. The teacher's role is primarily to reinforce the clear meaning for students, encourage self-directed learning, and ensure comprehension without requiring extensive explanation.

Al-Mutashabih: These verses carry meanings that are not immediately clear and require deep thought, interpretation, and analytical reasoning to reach their intended significance. In education, these verses can be employed to develop critical thinking and analytical skills. They present a pedagogical challenge, as students' intellectual abilities vary. Detailed explanations and guidance are required to ensure comprehension, often relying on interpretations by specialists or trusted exegeses.

2.1. Educational Implementation

Both concepts can be utilized in teaching by following core procedures in curriculum design and implementation:

1. **Content Analysis and Deconstruction:** Break down the material into its constituent concepts, principles, facts, and procedures.

2. **Logical Sequencing:** Organize these components progressively, from simple to complex and from familiar to unfamiliar, aligned with students' cognitive capacities (Mar'i, 2009).

3. **Integration with Educational Content:** Apply these concepts directly in lessons, ensuring that Muhkam verses provide clear foundational knowledge, while Mutashabih verses stimulate inquiry, discussion, and higher-order thinking.

This approach ensures that students grasp fundamental principles while engaging in interpretive and analytical learning, promoting a balanced and comprehensive educational experience.

1. Linking to Educational Principles

Educational principles represent a set of rules, foundations, and ideas derived primarily from the Qur'an and Sunnah, forming the basis of Islamic educational theory and methodology (Al-Anduni, 2009). In this framework:

Al-Muhkam in Education: Refers to fixed, stable principles upon which the educational process is built, shaping students' behaviors. These include general, timeless principles such as justice, honesty,

trustworthiness, and respect for human dignity. It also includes specific educational principles that guide curriculum design, implementation, and assessment, such as accounting for individual differences, abilities, and motivation.

Al-Mutashabih in Education: Represents flexible, variable, and context-dependent areas that require adaptation, deep understanding, and practical application of principles. For instance, the principle of justice is fixed, but its application in classroom management or student assessment (e.g., type of test or grading method) is flexible and subject to contextual judgment. Similarly, individual differences are fixed principles, but how they are accommodated in content, teaching methods, and evaluation tools is flexible, allowing teachers to adapt based on circumstances. This approach teaches students that education blends constants with variables, just as the Qur'an combines Muhkam and Mutashabih.

2. Linking to Educational Values

Values are defined as: "A set of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral beliefs rooted in Islam, forming a system of standards by which individuals judge actions as good or bad, accepted or rejected, resulting in consistent, repeated, and committed behavior" (Al-Jallad, 2010). Values can be absolute or relative:

- **Absolute values:** Fixed, derived from core sources (Qur'an and Sunnah), do not change with time or circumstances, and leave no room for personal discretion. These include beliefs, rulings, and ethics, representing Al-Muhkam.

- **Relative values:** Flexible, not explicitly legislated, and subject to collective reasoning without contradicting clear textual evidence. These correspond to Al-Mutashabih, which may vary according to context, culture, or public interest, including aesthetic, emotional, or material values.

In teaching, absolute values such as justice, respect for human dignity, and truthfulness are taught directly, while relative values, such as preferences or emotional responses, are applied flexibly in classroom activities. Understanding this distinction helps students differentiate between constants and variables, developing cognitive flexibility while adhering to core values, and fostering ethical decision-making that balances stable principles with adaptable practices (Ryan, 2002).

3. Linking to Facts, Beliefs, and Theories:

Content in Islamic education combines fixed and variable knowledge:

- **Facts and beliefs:** Fundamental knowledge tied to faith and essential principles is obligatory and

fixed (Al-Muhkam). Examples include belief in God, resurrection, and accountability, forming the "Mother of the Book" upon which all other knowledge is built. Other facts include: "God has no partner" or "Knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim".

- **Ideas, theories, and interpretive issues:** Represent knowledge requiring analysis, research, and contextual application (Al-Mutashabih). This applies to pedagogical, doctrinal, and theoretical matters discussed in curricula that evolve with human understanding. Incorporating this distinction teaches students to be reflective learners, understanding that faith does not conflict with inquiry and that interpretation and critical thinking are guided by principles (Maddkour, 2010).

4. Linking to Teaching Methods and Pedagogical Approaches: Islamic education has historically emphasized diverse teaching methods, as reflected in the Qur'an and Sunnah, tailored to different subjects and objectives (Rida, 332). The concepts of Muhkam and Mutashabih provide a methodological framework:

- **Fixed principles (Muhkam):** Provide the stable core of content and values that must be transmitted reliably.

- **Flexible methods (Mutashabih):** Can be diversified or developed based on the educational context, including:

- Group activities
- Cooperative learning
- Technology integration
- Practical projects

By combining stable content with adaptable methods, the school becomes a balanced educational environment, reflecting the Qur'anic approach: stable beliefs and values (Muhkam) paired with flexible application and pedagogy (Mutashabih). Teachers deliver clear foundational knowledge while providing space for creative thinking and contextual application, nurturing students with firm faith and adaptable skills.

This approach ensures that students internalize immutable truths while engaging critically with flexible, context-sensitive aspects of learning.

Section Two: The Importance of Studying Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in School Education

The importance of studying Al-Muhkam (clear-cut verses) and Al-Mutashabih (ambiguous verses) in school education becomes evident when linking curricula to educational, cognitive, emotional, and skill-based dimensions. This can be summarized as follows:

1. Developing a Scientific Approach to Reflection

and Sound Thinking: Understanding Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih helps students enhance critical and analytical thinking skills. The Qur'an emphasizes reflection on creation and God's greatness, repeatedly using verbal forms of "intellect" (e.g., ta'qilun, ya'qilun) to stress the importance of reasoning (Naufal, 2010). By distinguishing between definitive (Muhkam) texts, whose meaning is clear and singular, and speculative (Mutashabih) texts, which allow for multiple interpretations (Al-'Amri, 2001), students learn systematic analysis and evidence-based reasoning. The skill of Qur'anic contemplation (tadabbur) is defined as: "directing the heart's attention to the meanings, focusing the mind on reflection and comprehension" (Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya, 1996), emphasizing deep understanding rather than rote memorization (Al-Kina'i, 2025).

2. Reinforcing Stability, Flexibility, and Continuity: The Qur'an exemplifies the coexistence of stability and flexibility, providing timeless guidance (Madkour, p. 66).

Muhkam: Represents fixed doctrinal, ethical, and cognitive foundations upon which faith is built.

Mutashabih: Represents aspects open to reasoning and contextual interpretation, fostering adaptability without compromising core beliefs.

3. Developing Intellectual Balance: Studying Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih reinforces Islamic moderation, integrating revelation with rational thought. This prevents rigidity while ensuring adherence to essential knowledge (Rayan, p. 31). Students learn that ambiguous verses must be interpreted in light of clear-cut ones, cultivating balanced understanding and avoiding extremist interpretations.

4. Expanding Qur'anic Knowledge Horizons: Mutashabih verses highlight the Qur'an's eloquence, precision, and rhetorical mastery, encouraging students to explore, investigate, and critically analyze meanings rather than relying solely on memorization (Al-Nabhan, 2005). This approach strengthens understanding of linguistic structures and rhetorical styles while linking knowledge to practical life, transforming learning into a tool for positive behavioral change.

5. Enhancing Dialogue Skills and Respect for Opinions: Studying Mutashabih encourages students to present and discuss different viewpoints using reasoned arguments, thereby enhancing persuasive thinking and mutual respect (Al-'Ashush, 2022). Students learn the etiquette of debate and tolerance in interpreting Qur'anic texts, improving classroom dynamics and promoting effective

participation.

Section Three: Educational Applications of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in Islamic Education Curricula

First: Educational Applications of Al-Muhkam Verses

The clear-cut (Muhkam) verses of the Qur'an can be applied in education as follows:

1. **Encouraging Direct Understanding of the Qur'an:** Muhkam verses do not require extensive effort to analyze or interpret. Teachers can leverage this clarity to motivate students to read and understand the Qur'an, focusing on verses with explicit meanings. This facilitates positive engagement with the text, nurtures spiritual awareness, and accommodates students' varying cognitive abilities.

2. **Reinforcing Doctrinal Understanding:** Doctrinal understanding forms the foundation of the curriculum. It encompasses the core beliefs and principles upon which Islamic education is built, addressing both theoretical and practical dimensions. This is exemplified by the Six Pillars of Faith, including belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and divine decree, as reflected in the Hadith: "Faith is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His meeting, and His messengers, and to believe in the Resurrection." (Al-Bukhari, 1/19)

Teaching the Muhkam verses helps students grasp core beliefs correctly, without requiring complex reasoning, forming the basis for ethical behavior and personal development (Ryan, p. 68). For example, Surah Al-Ikhlās is effective in instilling the concept of Tawhid (monotheism) due to the clarity of its meaning.

3. **Adherence to Educational Principles:** Educational principles are defined as "the set of rules, foundations, and ideas derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah that underpin the Islamic educational curriculum" (Khayyat, 1996). These principles provide guidelines for student behavior and legitimacy of actions (Abdullah Soran, 2024). Muhkam verses represent fixed rules or principles that guide behavior and cultivate ethical and spiritual character.

A practical application of these principles is reflected in the verse: "It is He who has sent down to you the Book; among its verses are clear-cut ones – they are the foundation of the Book" [Al-Imran: 7]

This establishes the principle of clarity in education: begin with clear, fundamental concepts before introducing more complex ones. For example, in teaching Aqidah (Islamic creed), the teacher may

start with the clear principle of Tawhid before explaining more detailed doctrinal meanings.

Another principle is building intellectual and spiritual certainty by distinguishing between definitive knowledge (Muhkam) and speculative knowledge (Mutashabih), guiding students to trust foundational truths before engaging in complex debates. Teachers can facilitate discussions on misconceptions or ambiguous claims in a scientific and value-based manner to reinforce understanding rather than skepticism.

4. Teaching Clear Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence)

Rulings: Fiqh rulings form a legislative foundation in educational curricula, shaping both the identity and Islamic reference of the curriculum. They define practical actions, what is permissible and forbidden, and the associated spiritual and social outcomes (Al-Hasan Binat, 2010). Muhkam verses provide clear criteria for worship and daily conduct, establishing standards for ethical and religious behavior (Ryan, p. 223).

Second: Educational Applications of Al-Mutashabih Verses

The Mutashabih (ambiguous) verses can be applied in Islamic education using a pedagogical approach to enhance comprehensive Qur'anic understanding as follows:

1. **Developing Analytical and Deductive Thinking:** Studying Mutashabih verses gives students the opportunity to think deeply about the texts, exercise reason, and arrive at knowledge through evidence and logical proof. Rational deduction relies on experience, reflection, and abstract reasoning, producing sound or stronger logical conclusions (Al-Maydani, 1992). For example, explaining concepts such as divine attributes in the Qur'an strengthens students' ability to distinguish religious truths from various interpretations, encourages independent inquiry into the meanings of ambiguous verses, and addresses questions regarding names and attributes of Allah, divine decree, and predestination. This approach cultivates independent thinking, promotes research within permissible boundaries, and allows students to engage with rulings that vary depending on time and place, which may be subject to scholarly debate. Students learn to analyze, compare, and weigh arguments based on the strongest evidence.

2. Conducting Group Educational Discussions:

Teachers can introduce a topic for interactive discussion, guiding students to develop conclusions and suggestions. Discussion sessions, using open and closed questions, are vital for fostering self-directed learning, scientific thinking, evidence-based

reasoning, critical analysis, and social skills (Mahjoub, 2006). Mutashabih verses allow for constructive classroom debates on Qur'anic interpretations. Teachers organize discussion sessions, maintain order, prevent inappropriate behavior, and encourage students to express their intellectual views without fear of error, fostering confidence and critical engagement.

3. Encouraging Scientific Research: Educational research relies on primary and secondary sources that must be studied, analyzed, and evaluated. Students must develop discerning judgment regarding the quality and relevance of sources (Mahjoub, 2010).

The Qur'an is the primary source of Muhkam and Mutashabih verses, followed by the Sunnah and authoritative tafsir works. Students are guided to study verses through multiple sources of interpretation, enhancing their research skills, understanding of Islamic knowledge, and ability to reconcile traditional and contemporary perspectives. This enables them to compare opinions, analyze evidence, and propose well-supported ideas, under teacher supervision and guidance.

4. Enhancing Skills in Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation: Beyond research, students must develop observation, measurement, analysis, critical thinking, synthesis, and methodological reasoning. They are encouraged to analyze Mutashabih verses, synthesize ideas, and explore the scientific and moral implications of the Qur'an, linking knowledge and faith. For example, reflecting on verses that encourage deliberation on God's creation and wisdom cultivates higher-order cognitive skills.

Third: Proposed Mechanisms for Implementing Educational Applications

Integrating the concept of Muhkam and Mutashabih into curriculum design extends beyond Islamic education; it cultivates balanced learners who combine intellectual certainty with open-mindedness, between the fixed and the flexible, between memorization and reflection, forming faithful, critical, and objective thinkers.

The educational applications can be implemented through the following mechanisms:

1. Integrating Muhkam and Mutashabih Verses into the Curriculum: Curriculum content encompasses fixed divine truths, standards, and values, as well as human knowledge, skills, and experiences that vary with time, place, and human needs. Learners interact with this content to achieve educational objectives (Al-Hawari, 2016). Units should include Muhkam and Mutashabih verses, taught using methods appropriate to students'

cognitive levels and educational stages, fostering critical thinking skills.

2. Employing Varied Classroom Activities and Teaching Methods: No single method suffices; teaching methods must adapt to learning objectives, content, student abilities, and subject matter. Teaching strategies form an integrated educational approach, linking learners, objectives, and instructional activities (Mustafa, 2000). Activities should involve analysis and discussion of Qur'anic verses, individually or collaboratively, applied in the classroom to enhance long-term understanding.

3. Behavioral and Guidance Support by Teachers and Counselors: The highest goal of education is moral and ethical formation, since ethics originate from Allah, and Muslims are required to practice them sincerely and freely (Mahjoub, p. 172). After faith is established, virtuous character, adherence to moral conduct, and ethical behavior are its natural fruits (Hawsawi, 2025). Teachers can employ Muhkam verses on ethics and behavior, e.g.: "And speak to people kindly." [Al-Baqarah: 83]

"Indeed, prayer prevents immorality and wrongdoing." [Al-Ankabut: 45]. These guide students to ethical interaction and avoidance of improper behavior. Parents can also be directed in workshops and guidance sessions to reinforce these principles at home.

4. Organizing Qur'anic Competitions: Competitions for memorization and interpretation of Muhkam and Mutashabih verses encourage students to engage actively with the Qur'an, fostering research, critical thinking, and reasoning skills, while adhering to Shariah principles.

Third Section: Challenges Facing the Implementation of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in Islamic Education Curricula and Proposed Solutions

The application of the study of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih in educational curricula may face several challenges. It is essential to highlight the main obstacles and propose solutions, as follows:

1. Variations in Student Comprehension: Students differ in their ability to understand Mutashabih verses, which require deeper interpretation and precise explanation, making comprehension and application more difficult. As Al-Barbahari stated: "Every person is given the intellect that Allah willed; they vary in intellect like atoms in the heavens, and each is asked according to what he was given." (Al-Rajhi, 2025)

The curriculum must consider individual differences among learners, a fundamental principle of education. This principle serves as a quantitative

measure of differences among people in a shared attribute, as God created humans with different abilities and potentials (Al-Najlawi, 1416H).

To address this challenge:

- Employ gradual progression in teaching, beginning with Muhkam verses in early stages, then gradually introducing Mutashabih verses as students' intellectual maturity develops.
- Apply purposeful repetition to consolidate previously learned information while adding new concepts, values, or skills.

2. The Need for Qualified Teachers: Teaching Mutashabih verses requires high-level interpretive skills and extensive knowledge of Tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis). Schools must ensure the availability of a trained and experienced teaching staff knowledgeable in Qur'anic sciences.

The solution:

- Provide teachers with specialized training programs in Tafsir and scientific research methodology, both pre-service and in-service.
- Equip teachers with pedagogical tools to clarify meanings appropriately and adapt teaching methods to modern technological advancements.

3. Adherence to Authoritative Tafsir and Avoidance of Misinterpretations:

It is crucial to interpret Mutashabih verses according to established scholarly sources and avoid interpretations that may mislead students. Individualistic or unsanctioned interpretations could result in incorrect understanding.

The solution:

- Use simplified interpretations from reliable Tafsir sources, suitable for students' educational levels.
- Encourage guided *ijtihad* (interpretive reasoning) under teacher supervision, ensuring errors are corrected.
- Teachers must be fully competent in understanding and analyzing the verses they teach.

Additionally, teachers must be able to:

- Organize the classroom effectively.
- Adjust the level of knowledge and activities

according to students' abilities and lesson duration.

This approach reduces confusion, encourages responsibility among students, and provides the essential conditions for effective teaching (Mar'i & Al-Hayla, p. 433).

CONCLUSION

1. FINDINGS

1. The prevailing understanding of the technical terms is: Al-Muhkam refers to verses whose meaning is clear and unambiguous, while Al-Mutashabih refers to verses whose meaning becomes clear only after reflection and analysis.

2. Both concepts can be utilized in the educational process: teaching students Al-Muhkam verses to convey clear beliefs, values, and fundamental principles, and ensure adherence to religious practices, while Al-Mutashabih verses help develop analytical thinking, critical reasoning, scientific inquiry, and the selection of appropriate educational activities and methods.

3. Pedagogical applications of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih verses in curricula can be implemented through: integrating the verses into the study content, employing diverse classroom activities and teaching methods, providing behavioral and guidance-oriented instruction, and organizing Qur'anic competitions.

4. Challenges in applying these concepts in curricula can be addressed by: focusing on gradual progression in teaching, providing teachers with training programs and professional development courses, and preparing simplified interpretive materials from reliable sources suitable for different educational stages.

2. Recommendations: Develop curricula that emphasize practical applications of the concepts of Al-Muhkam and Al-Mutashabih—whether in content, teaching methods, or classroom activities within Islamic education. Such curricula provide multiple opportunities to enhance students' character, deepen their religious and ethical knowledge, and foster intellectual and moral growth.

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