## 1999-2017 Arasındaki Ortadoğu Resimli Çocuk Kitaplarının Nicel Kesişim Teorisi ile Analizi

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*Özet*

*Bu çalışma, odak konuları hakkında sayısal veriler sağlamak üzere içerik analizi yoluyla Ortadoğu Sosyal Yardım Konseyi-Ortadoğu Kitap Ödülü (ME0C-MEBAW) resimli çocuk kitaplarındaki kesişen kimlikleri araştırmıştır. Ödüllü kitaplar sınıfa girmek için büyük bir şansa sahiptir). Bu araştırmada bir enstrüman geliştiren araşıırmacı ve hangi kimliklerin sayılarda temsil edildiğini ve çocuklar için hangi Orta Doğu kesişimsel kimliklerinin mevcut olduğunu anlamak için bir kesişim objektifinden toplam 36 resimli çocuk kitabıyla 92 odak konuyu araştırdı. Tüm çocukların kesişimsel kimlikleri göz önünde bulundurarak kendilerini kitaplara yansımalarına hakkı olmasına rağmen, bu mümkün değildir. Bulgular, bazı kesişimsel kimliklere (örneğin, Orta Doğu erkek fokal deneklerine) odaklanma eğilimi olduğunu ve bazı kesişimsel kimliklere asla referans yapılmadığını (örneğin, engelli Orta Doğu fokal denekleri) göstermektedir. Tek bir kimliğe odaklanmak yerine, kesişimsel kimliklerin Ortadoğu karakterlerini tam olarak temsil etmesi elzemdir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler***: Ortadoğu Kimliği, Kesişim Teorisi, Nicel Kesişim Teorisi Analizi, Ödüllü Çocuk Kitapları.*

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**A Quantitative Intersectional Analysis of Middle East Book Award Picturebooks from 1999 to 2017**

*Abstract*

*This study investigated the intersectional identities in the Middle East Outreach Council-Middle East Book Award (ME0C-MEBAW) picturebooks through content analysis to provide numeric data for the focal subjects. Awarded books have a great chance to enter the classroom. An instrument was developed to survey with 92 focal subjects in 36 picturebooks from an intersectional lens to understand which identities are represented in numbers and which Middle Eastern intersectional identities are available for children. Despite the fact that all children have the right to see themselves reflected in the books, considering the intersectional identities, this is not possible. The findings suggest a tendency to focus on certain intersectional identities (e.g., Middle Eastern male focal subjects), and some intersectional identities were never referenced (e.g., disabled Middle Eastern focal subjects). Rather than focusing on a one-single identity, intersectional identities should be considered to represent the Middle Eastern characters fully.*

**Key Words:** Middle Eastern Identity, Intersectionality, Quantitative Intersectional Analysis, Award-Winning Picturebooks

## Introduction

Award-winning books have been analyzed in a variety of ways. Researchers often conduct their studies by focusing on one or the combination of reader, text, and context. Based on these three elements, studies include examinations of how readers respond to award-winning books (e.g., Beach, 1993; Hermann-Wilmarth & Ryan, 2014), the authenticity of the books in terms of insider and outsider perspectives (e.g., Reese 2000; Fox & Short, 2003), the politics and conflicts of the awarding process (e. g., Kidd, 2009; Yokoto, 2011), and the economics of the award-winning books (e.g., Taxel, 2010). Across focus areas within research on children's literature, the study of award-winning books are well established. Much of this research examines representation (e.g., Altieri, 2008; Crisp & Hiller, 2011; Nodelmam, 1992; Naidoo, 1992). Scholars have also examined award-winning books through critical lenses to investigate marginalization, inequality, and diversity issues. These studies have often examined gender (Clark, Lennon, & Morris, 1993; Crisp & Hiller, 2011; Liang, Watkins, & Williams, 2013), and sexual orientation (Crisp & Hiller 2011; Kidd, 2007; Rawson, 2011). Overwhelmingly, studies analyzing award-winning books signify the need for more inclusive children's literature (Koss, 2015). Yet limited studies took a quantitative approach to examine awarded books (see Crisp, 2015), and the number is even lesser considering an award given to people of the Middle East. The number of researches examining the representation of Middle Eastern groups, both qualitatively and quantitatively, is limited.

Echoing to the Middle Eastern communities and their representations in children's literature, limited studies examine this group. Despite the growing number of students with

Middle Eastern heritage in public schools, there is hardly ever an increase in picturebooks featuring Middle Eastern characters. Further, in many studies, the Middle East is often categorized under White (see Cooperative Children's Books Center). Thus, a clear Middle Eastern definition is not available too. For a long time, Middle Easterners exist in the U.S., yet categorizing the Middle East as White is a longstanding deficit ideology. Classifying Middle Eastern characters as White does not give equal access to their representation, visibility, and existence. This longstanding problem is also followed by the Cooperative Children's Books Center (CCBC). While quantifying the protagonists in children's literature published in English, CCBC categorized the Middle East under White. This organization started to keep a separate category for Middle Eastern characters for the last couple of years, yet they still do not officially have Middle East as a separate category (K. Horning, personal communication, January 1, 2018).

Despite this controversy, Middle Eastern students should have the opportunity to see themselves reflected in children's literature. The existing books about Middle Eastern characters, particularly Middle Eastern Muslims, often serve as blind spots and funhouse mirrors that portray the community in an unauthentic way (Gultekin, & May 2019). The books should also reflect the great diversity of the Middle East from an intersectional lens to fully mirror the Middle Eastern identity.

In this study, the researcher explored the educational significance of delegated examination of Middle East Outreach Council-Middle East Book Award (MEOC-MEBAW) picturebooks written for children through content analysis. MEOC-MEBAW has been announcing awarded and honor books featuring Middle Eastern characters since 1999 and given in three categories: picturebooks, youth literature, and youth non-fiction (See *table 1* below for the award list). The purpose of this study is not the close examination of the books but instead to accentuate the significance of the depiction of Middle Eastern identity and the intersection with other identities (e.g., gender, religion, country of origin, etc.). The researcher answered the following question: What identities intersect with Middle Eastern identity in the MEOC-MEBAW picturebook list? To answer this question, quantitative intersectional research is conducted with content analysis to examine the picturebooks' focal subjects.

*>Insert Table 1 here<*

## Prizing in Children's Literature

Studying children's literature has a long history, yet deciding which books to study is not an easy task. Award-winning books have been a useful resource for researchers to limit their data set. Nobel Literature Prize (first given in 1901) has opened a new door for recognizing other genres, including children's literature (Kidd, 2007). In 1922, one of the first awards given for children's literature in the U.S was named The Newbery Award (Valadez, Sutterby, & Donaldson, 2013). After that, more awards were given to specific children's literature. The awards given for children's literature has developed and aimed various criteria with some honoring the writing (e.g., Newbery), others the illustrations (e.g., Caldecott), others the representations of a particular content area (e.g., National Science Teacher's Association of Outstanding Science Trade Books), in addition to varied other foci (e.g., religious books, (dis)ability, translated books, international books). The medal or label on the books tends to make the awarded book more popular and thus more appealing to an increased number of readers. Thus, these books are more likely to be purchased by teachers and parents, making them more likely to be read by children (Crisp, 2015).

For the book awards to highlight authentic multicultural books, children's book audiences can benefit from the high-quality books depicting minority communities selected by award committees, typically made up of experts in the field who have devoted considerable time to read the books in-depth (Yokota, 2011). Because few teachers or librarians have time in their schedules to read and evaluate all of the books published each year, and because they frequently lack large budgets, award lists assist with book selection (Crisp, 2015). Awards given to specific groups also increase teachers' and students' consciousness about the identified groups due to the books' high recognizability and availability (Mendoza & Reese, 2001).

It is also important to recognize the limitations of the award lists. The committee members' subjectivity that determines the awarded books is an important issue too often left unexamined (Mendoza & Reese, 2001). Careful consideration of who the committee members are, their expertise, and their relationship to children's literature can help readers better understand how much credibility to give the awards. Moreover, the awarded books' popularity is problematic when considering how few are given to books authored or illustrated by people from marginalized communities (Kidd, 2007; Rawson, 2011). However, it is also important to note that an increasing number of awards have been created to counteract this problem (Miller, 1998).

**Redefining the Middle East and Middle Eastern Identity**

The Middle East consists of many countries and ethnic groups, and defining these countries is essential for the award committee members. For the Middle East Outreach Council (MEOC), Middle Eastern countries include "the Arab World, Iran, Israel, Turkey, and Afghanistan" (Middle East Outreach Council, n. d., 2017). Later, they clarified the Arab world and announced a list of Middle Eastern countries "Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, the Palestinian Territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen" (Middle East Outreach Council, n. d., 2019). This ranking is problematic as the Middle East consists of more countries and territories. Further, before announcing the list, they should have informed the colonists' approach towards the Middle East, and how the colonizer divided the Middle East based on their own benefit rather than the benefit of the people living in the geography (Lewis, 1992). Thus, the term the Middle East originally comes from a colonialist approach. After emphasizing this, they can list the countries, but their list is still problematic. For example, one may argue if Palestine should be considered as a part of the Arab world as an independent country. Middle East Outreach Council (MEOC) did not specifically identify Palestine as a separate country but classified it as a territory.

Additionally, the committee does not include some other countries. A similar situation is at the heart of the matter for North Cyprus because it is still not accepted as an independent country; only Turkey accepts its independence (BBC Monitoring, November 12, 2018). Thus, the countries listed by MEOC are not purely accurate. The Council clarified that the Arab World includes the countries that use Arabic as preliminary language. Also, they indicated that Cyprus is included in the Middle East, Afghanistan is excluded, and Palestine is considered a territory rather than an independent country (L. Adeli, personal communication, August 9, 2017). The socio-political issues should be considered while defining this geography too. Further, all these countries on the list, except for Israel, are mostly Muslim populated. Turkey does not include any specific religion in its main rule. It is a democratic, laist, and social country (BBC, Monitoring, March 7, 2017). Israel is the only mostly Jewish populated country in geography (BBC Monitoring, July 27, 2017). The majority of the people in these countries are Muslims that a connection could be made with religion in the Middle East.

As far as race, U.S Census Bureau does not include Middle Easterners as a separate race category. For them, it falls under White for decades (Krogstad, March 24, 2014). Despite some actions taken by the Middle East or North American (NEMA), U.S. Census Burau decided not to have a separate category for the Middle East in the 2020 Census (Wang, March 26, 2018). Thus, defining the Middle East is not easy but needed to accurately examine the books and their representation.

**Establishing Categories**

This study is informed by intersectionality, a term first introduced by Black woman scholar Cooper (1892) and coined by Crenshaw in 1989 and developed and reference by many scholars. Collins and Chepp (2013) defined intersectionality as

> an assemblage of ideas and practices that maintain that gender, race, class, sexuality, age, ethnicity, ability, and similar phenomena cannot be analytically understood in isolation from one another; instead, these constructs signal an intersecting constellation of power relationships that produce unequal material realities and distinctive social experiences for individuals and groups positioned within them (p. 59-60).

Their definition emphasizes how power relationships work within interconnected identities and how they lead to distinctive experiences and inequalities. Further, it illustrates how individuals position themselves within the power relationship exposed by intersecting identities. To understand the complexity of individuals' experiences, intersectional analysis helps emphasize the intersecting nature of identities such as race, class, gender, ethnicity, nation, religion, (dis)ability, and more (Collins, 2015; Hancock, 2013).

Middle Easterners are othered in multidimensional ways based on their religion, class, gender, ethnicity, and nationality. Illustrating intersectionality has the potential to both exemplify the inequalities and struggles Middle Eastern faces and characterize how they are portrayed as this study also aims to portray the intersection of Middle Eastern identity with other identities through content analysis.

Content analysis is used as a method to analyze books (Krippendorff, 1989; 2004). Krippendorff (1989) defines content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context" (p. 403). In addition to replicability and valid inferences, he added context as an essential part of content analysis. The context is a construction; researchers must examine the texts' content (Krippendorff, 2004). Though valid and replicable inferences, it provides numerical data. To do so, the researcher focused on focal subjects as adapted from Crisp's (2015) definition "the person or people a book is about or through whom a text is presented for readers" (p. 244).

To explain the process and procedures in context, Krippendorff (2004) illustrates six content analysis steps. In this study, six steps of content analysis were considered in the same order to analyze the books. First, *unitizing;* to identify some books related to the Middle East (only MEOC-MEBAW awards was found). *Sampling*; relevance/purposeful sampling was used to answer the research question. *Recording/ coding* was used to analyze the focal subjects. *Reducing* was used to only focus on the picturebooks. Then, *inferring,* a connection was made between Middle Eastern identity and other identities. Finally, *narrating* was used to explain the findings and their relation to the audience.

An instrument was developed to guide the researcher to analyze the books' focal subjects with an intersectional lens. Notes were taken for each identity. The final sample includes 36

picturebooks with 92 focal subjects. An associate professor helped with inter-rater reliability and analyzed the focal subjects with the researcher. Further, a pilot study was conducted with 2017 awarded picturebooks (a total of 3 books) for reliability. The pilot study was conducted with one research assistant and one associate professor. After inter-rater reliability, the replicable instrument was used for each focal subject in the data set.

**Findings**

Of the 36 picturebooks and 92 focal subjects, two books have no characters. In *Count Your Way Through Iran* by Jim Haskins and Kathleen Benson (2006), a concept book about Iran/Persia (both names used in the book) designed to teach counting, each number is elucidated through a feature or historical event with accompanying print that includes, "Iran's flag has three colors. White is for peace. Red stands for courage. Green is the color of Islam." In the other book with no characters, *Kings, and Carpenters: One Hundred Bible Land Jobs You might have Praised or Panned* by Laurie Coulter (2010), various jobs are described from "the Bible Land, from 1200 to 586 BCE (Before the Common Era, or year 1)" (p. 6).  In each of the 11 categories, different jobs are represented from the Christian Bible's Old Testament period, including village elders, senior homemakers, plowmen, and others. No main characters were referenced in the job descriptions. Though people are represented in these books, they are not consistent across either book or considered focal subjects according to the literary definition. Thus, these two books were not included in the analysis. A total of 34 books were examined with 92 focal subjects.

***Examining Characters (human, animal, plant, material)***. The characters in the books can be humans, animals, plants, or materials. The books' characters affect the story since intersectionality often could not be found in the stories with animals, plants, or materials unless used as metaphors. Yet, none of the focal subjects in the books were used as metaphors. Both human and animal characters are prevalent in the books, with four featuring animal characters alongside human characters (e.g., a cat interacting with human characters). None of the MEOC-MEBAW picture books had an only animal, plant, or material character. *Folktales from Turkey: From Agri to Zelve* by Serpil Ural (2012) has multiple, mainly human characters, as the book is an anthology with 26 short chapters and 37 focal subjects, each containing its own folktale. See *Pie-Chart 1* for the characters.

*>Insert Pie Chart 1 here<*

The majority of the focal subjects are human, with 96% (88) and 4% (4) are animals. None of the books have plants or materials as focal subjects.

***Examining nationalities.*** Nationality is mostly defined based on birthright, but due to immigrants and refugees, the definition of nationality has changed. Pew Research Center explained the birthright nationality (Stokes, February 2017), considering the immigrant, in this study, everybody who is a citizen of a country was assigned to that nationality. That is if a person was born in Syria, and now legally an American citizen, he/she is classified as Syrian American; the same process was done for other nationalities too.

The characters' nationalities are not fully representative of Middle Eastern Muslims. As stated earlier, MEOC considers that "the Middle East consists of Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, the Palestinian Territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen" (http://www.meoc.us/book-awards/winners-of-the-2017-middle-east-book-award). However, most of these countries cannot be found in a single award-winning picturebook. In some cases, the

inability to identify them is due to the multiple books with no national background clearly indicated. For example, both *Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns* (2012) by Hena Khan and *The Best Eid Ever* (2007) by Asma Mobin-Uddin are set in unnamed Western countries with no information provided about the ethnic or national background of the Muslim families. Paralleling these two books, *Time to Pray* (2010) by Maha Addasi does not specify where the focal subject is traveling. The main character's grandmother lives in a Muslim country, but the country's name is not stated.

On the other hand, some books (the remaining 30 books) clearly state both the Western country and Middle Eastern country either in the same book such as *Mirror* (2010) by Jeannie Baker in which both Australia and Morocco are named; or in a separate book such as *When the Animals Saved the Earth: An Eco Fable* (2015) by Alexis York Lumbard, set on Emerald Isle (i.e., Ireland).

Though the MEOC-MEBAW lists present-day countries, another complicating issue is that one book is about a civilization no longer in existence, *Lugalbanda: The Boy who Got Caught up in a War* (2006) by Kathy Henderson. This book exemplifies a Sumerian character who lived around "four and a half thousand years ago" (unpaginated). Sumer, now considered Iraq, is no longer recognized as a nation. An additional book, *One City, Two Brothers: A Story from Jerusalem* (2007) by Chris Smith, is set in a city that has been important to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam at a time well before the city was considered a part of Israel. Though the story in the book is represented as being told by King Soloman, a figure important to all three religions, the following is explicitly communicated about the story, "It is not part of the holy books of Jews, Muslims or Christians; rather, it is a simple folk tale, passed from storyteller to storyteller for hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years, and kept alive by the power of its message" (unpaginated). The nationalities of focal subjects can be found in *Table-1* below.

*>Insert Table 1 here<*

As far as focal subjects in the Middle East, there is a tendency to focus on particular countries. The number of Turkish focal subjects is slightly lesser than the half of the total focal subjects due to the *Folktales from Turkey: From Agri to Zelve* by Serpil Ural (2012) with multiple stories with multiple characters. Following with unnamed Western country (6) and Afghanistan (5), some Western countries are also named to indicate focal subjects' nationality. Interestingly, many nations in the Middle East in the MEOC-MEBAW list have never been mentioned, and none of the focal subjects are from these countries. Briefly, 12 countries listed by MEOC-MEBAW are never referenced.

I included Jerusalem as a separate nation. Recently, the U.S. announced Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and some countries disagreed with this decision (Lardieri, December 6, 2017). In this study, Jerusalem is considered a self-governing (autonomous) geography rather than belonging to a certain country since it contains Muslim, Jewish, and more groups.

***Examining Gender.*** In children's literature, the definition of gender has often limited the binary of male-female and stereotypical feminine behaviors for females, and masculine behaviors for males. West and Zimmerman's (1987) ideas have influenced the children's literature scholars that, in recent studies, they framed gender as a social construction. For West and Zimmerman (1987), people do gender; hence it is learned. That is, people are born with a sex, but do gender based on their sex, that the community expects. Consequently, gender is "socially organized achievement" (West & Zimmerman, 197, p.129). A more recent study about the social construction of gender drawing from West and Zimmerman, Lorber (1994) emphasized that people learn doing gender based on their sex. In today's world, the feminine and masculine

behaviors alter that a male can engage in a feminine task such as taking care of a kid; or a female can engage in masculine tasks such as working in construction. These boundaries are challenged; the distinct line between femininity and masculinity was collapsed. This phenomenon has also affected the children's literature researchers, and while examining gender, they did not rely upon visual clues to investigate the gender roles. While investigating gender roles in Caldecott Medal-Winning picturebooks from 1938 to 2011, Crisp and Hiller (2011) conceptualized the study by adding a new category, "ungendered," to analyze the books. Besides, the social construction of gender, paralleling Crisp and Hiller's (2012) three categories, female, male, and undetermined gender guided me through analyzing the gender of the books' focal subjects. To be more transparent, in written text, the pronoun "he" was categorized as male, "she" was categorized as females, and if other characters were not referenced with these pronouns, they were categorized as undetermined gender. *Pie Chart 2* illustrates the gender distribution of focal subjects.

*>Insert Pie Chart 2 here<*

The pie chart above shows that the majority of 62% of focal subjects are male (57), and 28% are female. 10% (9) of the focal subjects fell under undetermined gender since nothing clear was written about them in the books.

***Examining Age.*** It is a longstanding idea that books written for children should feature children's character as focal subjects (Nodelman & Reimer, 2002), yet this study's findings disprove this common belief. The age of focal subjects in this study favors the adult characters. Of 92 focal subjects, around half of them include adult characters (n:57), followed by 33 children's character, and two are undetermined. The pie chart below shows the percentages of this distribution.

*>Insert Pie Chart 3 here<*

***Examining Religion.*** Religion has always been considered taboo in children's literature, and often it is left out of analyzes (Campbell & Crowe, 2015), yet it is an important part of culture and identity (Dallavis, 2011). Following some other children's literature scholars (Trousdale, 2005), I used Tobin's definition of religion and spirituality since it draws a distinct line between these two and frame each in a certain way. According to Tobin (2003), "religion is an institutionalized approach to spiritual growth formed around doctrines and standards of behavior. Spirituality is the very personal and intimate expression of our relationship with the Divine" (p. 173). Specifically, religion has a clear structure, including defined behaviors, unless spirituality is related to individuals, it is broader, including religion. The institutionalization and social behaviors accentuate the intersection of various categories, including gender, race, class, and ethnicity.

Religion's intersection with Middle Eastern identity is more appealing since many religions exist in geography. Further, the only Jewish country and most of the Muslim countries are in the Middle East. The number of religions of focal subjects parallel with these, and the majority of the focal subjects practice Islam and are classified as Muslims (59).

*>Insert Pie Chart 4 here<*

Interestingly, the religion in the MEOC-MEBAW picturebook list is not a taboo since most of them reference religion and assigned the focal subjects with a religion. A total of 29 focal subjects' religion could not be determined, and only 1 focal subject was not assigned to a religion. Christianity is the second religion in the geography with %6 (4), followed by Judaism, %5 (3), and non-existent religion %3 (2).

***Examining Socioeconomic Status (Social Class).*** Pew Research Center conceptualized social class based on family members and annual salary (Koshhar, September 2016). Even though many variables can affect the social class division, such as the countries and states people live, or the urban vs suburban areas, in this study, social class was defined based on the living conditions of the focal subjects.

Direct research emphasizing Middle Easterners' social statues in children's literature is not conducted yet, but some studies provide information related to Middle Easterners by intersecting other identities such as religion. According to Pew Research, Middle Eastern Muslims living in the U.S. are generally belong to the Middle or Upper-Middle class (https://www.pewforum.org/essay/muslims-in-america-immigrants-and-those-born-in-u-s-see-life-differently-in-many-ways/, 2018). Knowing that most focal subjects in this study are Muslim, this trend should be accurate for this study. Similar to this trend, the majority of the focal subjects in this study comes from the middle class (46), closely followed by the working class (42), and a drastic change is visible with the upper class (only 4).

*>Insert Pie Chart 5 here<*

Surely, the books do not indicate the socio-economic status of the characters, yet some hints such as a refugee family left all their wealth in their home country, gave strong suggestions to determine their socio-economic status.

***Examining Sexual Identity, Dis/Abilities, Developmental Difference.*** These categories have been combined for investigation since none of the books depicts the intersection of Middle Eastern identity with sexual identity, dis(abilities), and developmental differences. It is problematic that the representation of Middle Easterners is only limited to straight and abled bodies. Despite LGBTQ?, dis(abled) and developmentally different people live in the Middle East, none of the focal subjects portrays them. A primary purpose of intersectionality is to make people visible who are otherwise unseen (May, 2015). Since these intersectional identities do not appear, people with these intersectional identities, unfortunately, have not been visible too.

## Conclusion, Discussion, and Further Research

In this study, the researcher focused on the intersectionality in MEOC-MEBAW awarded picturebooks from 1999 to 2007 to systematically analyze which identities intersect with the Middle Eastern identity. After analyzing 92 focal subjects in 36 picturebooks, the researcher has created codes and categories to represent the data through content analysis (Krippendorff, 1989, 2004). The researcher has found that some particular identities intersect with Middle Eastern Muslim identity; some identities have never stated.

Children's literature should serve as mirrors and windows for all students (Bishop, 1990), yet all children cannot see themselves reflected authentically. Especially based on the intersecting identities, finding authentic mirrors and windows becomes more complicated. This study shed light on the complicatedness and scarcity of the intersectionality of Middle Eastern identity with other identities. Middle Eastern identity intersects with some certain identities while some intersecting identities have never stated or limitedly referenced such as the lack of references to some nationalities and countries, the high number of male characters and adults, the dominance of Islam and Muslim focal subjects, limited upper-class Middle Easterner's representation, and lack of LGBTQQ?, (dis)abled and developmentally different focal subjects. Thus, Middle Easterners see only several intersectional identities represented in MEOC-MEBAW award-winning books.

Further, the world of award-winning book is another issue since their popularity and their chance to enter a classroom is more likely higher than any other books. To be able to decide which awarded books to purchase is up to readers' preference, as they should be more informed about the awards and the politics of it. No single book, including awarded books, is perfect (May, Bingham, & Pendergast, 2014). Even though no single book is perfect, award-winning books are still valuable as they are analyzed by a committee and worth to bring to the classroom. As these books portray some intersectional identities with Middle Eastern identities, it is better than the non-existence of any intersectional identities (Crisp, 2015). As a result, award-winning books are good resources for teachers and students to find more authentic (but not the most authentic) books.

The researcher provided a quantitative overview of MEOC-MEBAW picturebooks and the intersectionality of Middle Eastern identities with other identities. My purpose was not to conduct a detailed analysis of the books since the researcher provided numerical data. Further research is needed to investigate the detailed analysis of these books and to investigate the other two categories, youth literature and youth nonfiction of MEOC-MEBAW.

Defining the Middle East is problematic, and teachers should be informed about the colonist approach to the Middle East, whereas, teachers could take the colonist approach while studying the Middle East. Thus, the emic perspective of the researcher in this study informed his understanding of the Middle East. The intersectional lens the researcher took in the study approved that limited identities intersect with Middle Eastern identity, and much more resources are needed to make other intersectional identities visible.

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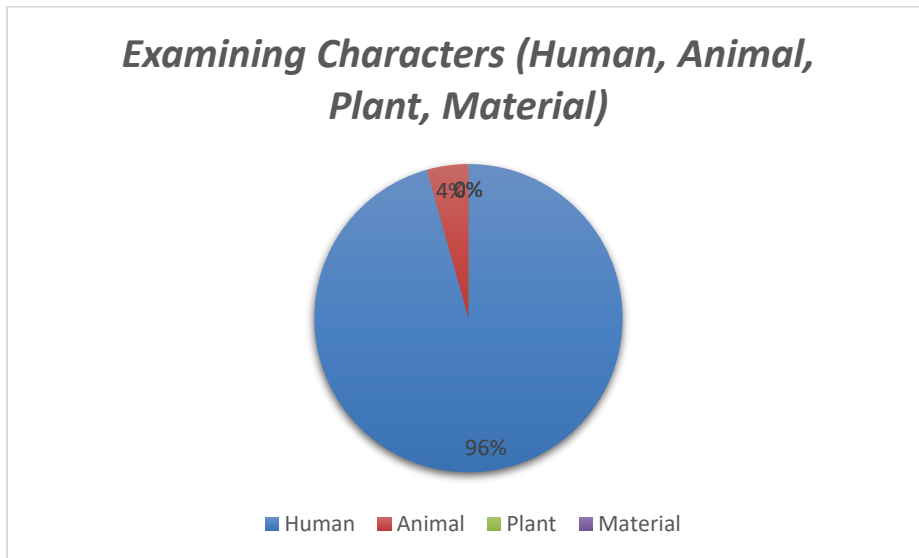
**APPENDIX**

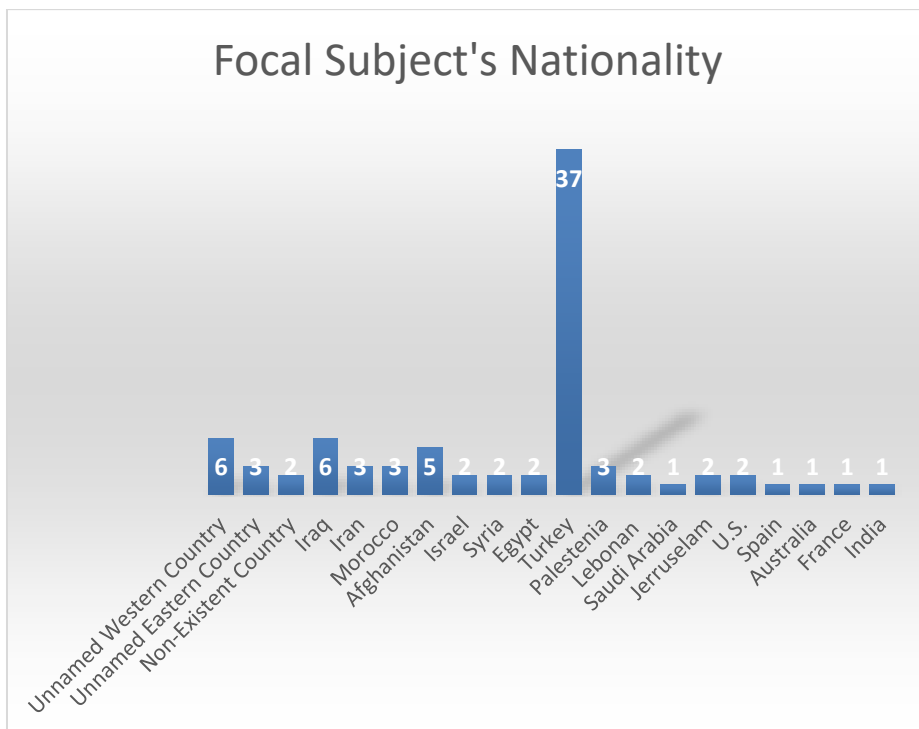**Appendix 1.** *Table 1:* MEOC-MEBAW Picturebook List

| Book's Name | Author/ Illustrator | Year | Type of Award |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Lost and Found Cat: The True Story of Kunkush's Incredible Journey* | Doug Kuntz & Amy Shrodes, illustrated by Sue Conelison | 2017 | Award Winner |
| *My Beautiful Birds* | Suzanne Del Rizzo, illustrated by Suzanne Del Rizzo | 2017 | Honorable Mention |
| *Stepping Stones* | Margriet Ruurs, translated by Falah Raheem, illustrated by Nizar Ali Badr | 2017 Z | Honorable Mention |
| *When the Animals Saved Earth: An Eco-fable* | Alexis York Lumbard, illustrated by Demi | 2015 | Award Winner |
| *New Month/ New Moon* | Allison Ofanansky, photographs by Eliyahu Alpern | 2015 | Honorable Mention |
| *The Olive Tree* | Elsa Marston, illustrated by Claire Ewart | 2015 | Honorable Mention |
| *The Story of Hurry* | Emma Williams, illustrated by Ibrahim Quraishi | 2015 | Honorable Mention |
| *Razia's Ray of Hope* | Elizabeth Suneby, illustrated by Suana Verelst | 2014 | Award Winner |
| *Hands Around the Library: Protecting Egypt's Treasured Books* | Karen Leggett Abouraya, illustrated by Susan L. Roth | 2013 | Award Winner |
| *Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns: A Muslim Book of Colors* | by Hena Khan, illustrated by Mehrdokht Amini | 2013 | Honorable Mention |
| *Folktales from Turkey: From Agri to Zelve* | Serpil Ural, translated by Ginger Saçlıoğlu, illustrated by Dilara Arin | 2012 | Award Winner |
| *The Wooden Sword: A Jewish Folktale from Afghanistan* | Ann Redisch Stampler, illustrated by Carol Liddiment | 2012 | Award Winner |
| *What's the Buzz: Honey for a Sweet New Year.* | Allison Ofanansky, photographs by Eliyahu Alpern | 2012 | Honorable Mention |
| *Mirror* | Jeannie Baker, an unknown translator, illustrated by Jeannie Baker | 2011 | Award Winner |
| *The Secret Message* | Mina Javaherbin, illustrated by Bruce Whatley | 2011 | Honorable Mention |
| *Time to Pray* | Maha Addasi, illustrated by Ned Gannon | 2011 | Honorable Mention |
| *How Many Donkeys: An Arabic Counting Tale* | Margaret Read MacDonald, and Nadia Jameel Taibah, illustrated by Carol Liddiment | 2010 | Award Winner |

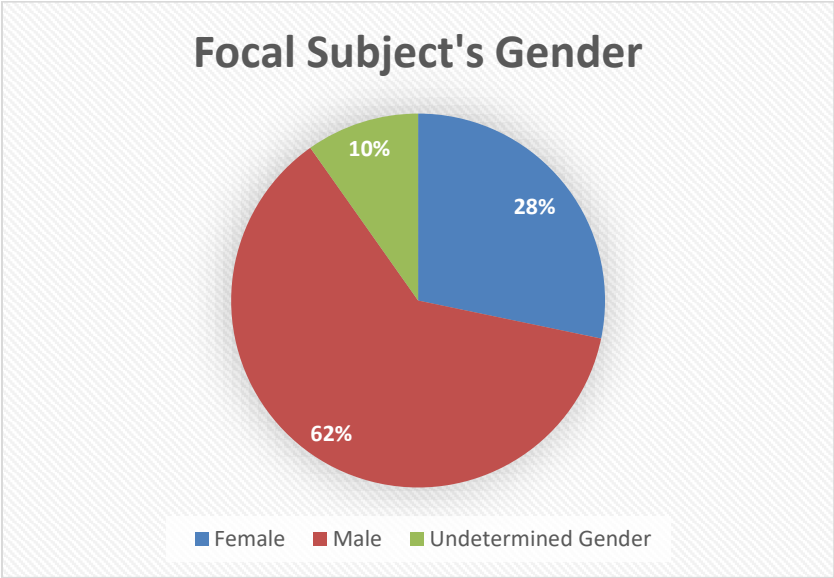| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Kings and Carpenters: One Hundred Bible Land Jobs You Might Have Praised or Panned.* | Laurie Coulter, illustrated by Martha Newbigging | 2010 | Honorable Mention |
| *The Butter Man* | Elizabeth Alalou and Ali Alalou, illustrated by Julie Klear Essakalli | 2009 | Award Winner |
| *The Grand Mosque of Paris: A Story of How Muslims Rescued Jews During the Holocaust* | Karen Gray Ruelle and Deborah Durland DeSaix, illustrated by Karen Gray Ruelle and Deborah Durland DeSaix | 2009 | Honorable Mention |
| *Silent Music: A Story of Baghdad* | James Rumford, illustrated by James Rumford | 2008 | Award Winner |
| *Four Feet, Two Sandals* | Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed, illustrated by Doug Chayka | 2008 | Honorable Mention |
| *The Best Eid Ever* | Asma Mobin-Uddin, illustrated by Laura Jacobsen | 2008 | Honorable Mention |
| *One City, Two Brothers* | Chris Smith, illustrated by Aurélia Fronty | 2007 | Award Winner |
| *Count Your Way Through Iran* | Jim Haskins and Kathleen Benson, illustrated by Farida Zaman | 2007 | Honorable Mention |
| *The Rich Man and The Parrot* | Suzan Nadimi, illustrated by Ande Cook | 2007 | Honorable Mention |
| *Lugalbanda: The Boy who Got Caught Up in a War* | Kathy Henderson, illustrated by Jane Ray | 2006 | Award Winner |
| *Mystery Bottle* | Kristen Balouch, illustrated by Kristen Balouch | 2006 | Honorable Mention |
| *Alia's Mission: Saving the Books of Iraq* | by Mark Alan Stamaty, illustrated by Mark Alan Stamaty | 2005 | Award Winner |
| *The Librarian of Basra* | Jeanette Winter, illustrated by Jeanette Winter | 2005 | Honorable Mention |
| *The Travels of Benjamin of Tudela* | by Uri Shulevitz, illustrated by Uri Shulevitz | 2005 | Honorable Mention |
| *Muhammad* | Demi, illustrated by Demi | 2004 | Award Winner |
| *Celebrating Ramadan* | Diane Hoyt Goldsmith, photographs by Lawrence Migdale | 2002 | Award Winner |
| *Travelling Man: The Journey of Ibn Battuta, 1325-1354* | James Rumford, illustrated by James Rumford | 2001 | Award Winner |
| *The House of Wisdom* | Florence Parry Heide and Judith Heide Gilliland, illustrated by Mary GrandPré | 2000 | Award Winner |
| *The Storytellers* | Ted Lewin, illustrated by Ted Lewin | 2000 | Honorable Mention |

**Appendix 2.** *Pie Chart 1: Examining Characters*

**Examining Characters (Human, Animal, Plant, Material)**

4% 0%

96%

■ Human  ■ Animal  ■ Plant  ■ Material

**Appendix 3.** *Table 1: Focal Subjects' Nationality*

**Focal Subject's Nationality**

| | | | | | | | | | | 37 | | | | | | | | | |

6  3  2  6  3  3  5  2  2  2      3  2  1  2  2  1  1  1  1

Unnamed Western Country · Unnamed Eastern Country · Non-Existent Country · Iraq · Iran · Morocco · Afghanistan · Israel · Syria · Egypt · Turkey · Palestenia · Lebonan · Saudi Arabia · Jerruselam · U.S. · Spain · Australia · France · India

**Appendix 4**. *Pie Chart 2: Focal Subjects' Gender*.



**Focal Subject's Gender**

10%

28%

62%

■ Female  ■ Male  ■ Undetermined Gender

**Appendix 5.** *Pie Chart 3: Focal Subjects' Age*



**Focal Subjects' Age**

- Adult: 62%
- Children: 36%
- Undetermined Age: 2%
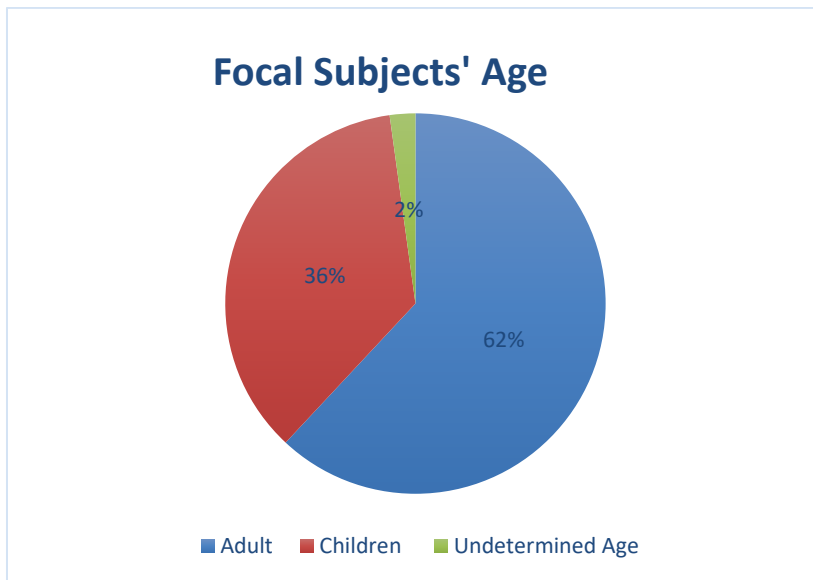
**Appendix 6.** *Pie Chart 4: Focal Subjects' Religion*



**Focal Subject's Religion**

- Jewish: 5%
- Christian: 6%
- Muslim: 84%
- Undetermined Religion: 2%
- Non-Existent Religion: 3%
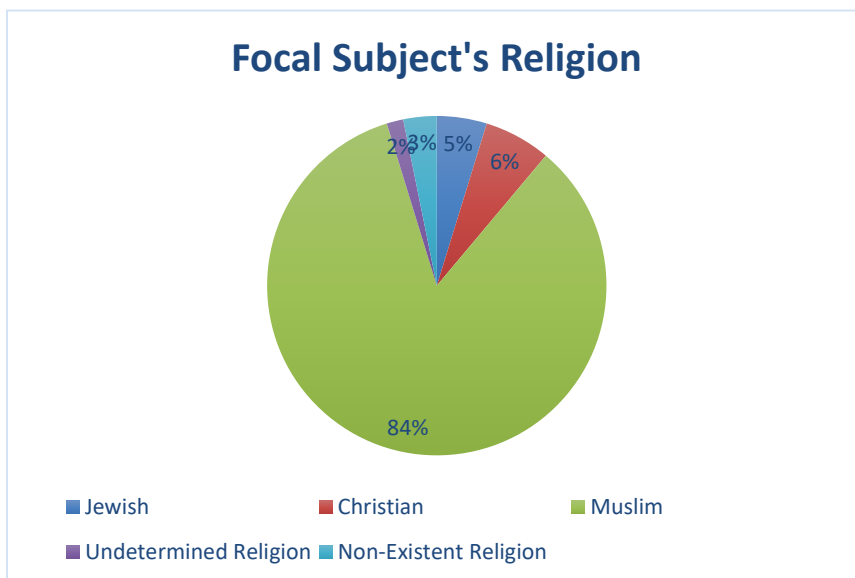
**Appendix 6**. *Pie Chart 5: Focal Subjects' Socio-Economic*



**Focal Subject's Socio-Economic Statues**

47%

49%

4%

■ Working Class  ■ Middle Class  ■ Upper Class