



Narrating American Muslim Reversion: Islamic Ethics in Nadine Jolie Courtney's *All-American Muslim Girl*

Hassan Majid Ahmed
College of Arts, Department of English,
University of Basrah. 61004 Basrah, Iraq
hassan.majid@uobasrah.edu.iq
<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-8349-0319>

Shawkat Ahmed Azeez
College of Arts, Department of English,
University of Basrah. 61004 Basrah, Iraq
shawkat.azeez@uobasrah.edu.iq

Abstract

Although representation and Islamophobia have been widely examined in studies of American Muslim Young Adult (YA) fiction, the formal ethics of reversion and the use of Islamic concepts as analytic tools remain underexplored. This study seeks to investigate Nadine Jolie Courtney's *All-American Muslim Girl* (2019) as a convert/revert *bildungsroman* in which Islamic virtues operate as structuring narrative principles. The aim is to develop a transferable ethics-of-form protocol and to provide a teachable vocabulary for analysing religion-in-form within American classrooms. Methodologically, this research employs a stringent close textual methodology, informed by the principles of Islamic virtue ethics, and incorporates a dual frame of analysis that includes Genette's narratological constructs as well as Boulton's anatomical model of the novel. To do so, classical Islamic virtues and narratological categories are exploited to scenes of interior reflection, ritual learning, public disclosure, and school-based interaction. The that first-person internal focalization renders *niyyah* (intention) legible as practice; *taqwā* (God-conscious restraint) functioning as micro-corrections in speech, dress, and social relations; *ihsān* (excellence/beauty in conduct) reframes “doing it well” as beauty-inflected care for self and others; and *adab* (ethical comportment) structures respectful dissent and communal belonging. It is shown how risk, mediated through whiteness and passing, modulates ethical practice without disrupting the grammar of attention, self-address, and act. In conclusion, the study contributes to both literary criticism and pedagogy by highlighting the ethical operations of form in American Muslim YA fiction and by proposing a replicable model for integrating Islamic narrative ethics into classroom practice.

Keywords: American Muslim YA; conversion/reversion; focalization; Islamic virtue ethics; narrative voice.

سردُ اعتناق الإسلام لدى المسلمين الأمريكيين: الأخلاق الإسلامية في رواية "فتاة مسلمة أمريكية"

لنادين جولي كورتي

الملخص

م. د. حسن ماجد احمد (المؤلف المراسل) م. شوكت احمد عزيز
كلية الآداب، قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، جامعة البصرة
كلية الآداب، قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، جامعة البصرة
الرغم من أن

مسألتي التمثيل والإسلاموفوبيا قد حظيتا باهتمام واسع في دراسات أدب اليافعين لدى المسلمين الأمريكيين، فإن أخلاقيات العودة إلى الإسلام على مستوى البنية الشكلية، وكذلك توظيف المفاهيم الإسلامية بوصفها أدوات تحليلية، لا تزالان غير مستكشفتين بما يكفي. تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى قراءة رواية الفتاة المسلمة الأمريكية بالكامل الصادرة سنة ألفين وتسعة عشر للكاتبة نادين جولي كورتي بوصفها رواية تكوّن تجسّد مسار اعتناق أو عودة إلى الإسلام، حيث تعمل الفضائل الإسلامية فيها مبادئ سردية مُنظمة للبناء الروائي. وتهدف الدراسة إلى تطوير بروتوكول منهجي قابل للتطبيق يُعرف بـ«أخلاقيات الشكل»، وتقديم معجم تحليلي تعليمي لدراسة تمثّل الدين في البنية السردية داخل الصفوف الدراسية الأمريكية. وتعتمد منهجياً على التحليل النصي الدقيق في ضوء أخلاقيات الفضيلة الإسلامية، مقرونًا بنظرية السرد لدى جيرار جنيت، وبمقاربة «تشریح الرواية» كما صاغها بولتون، من خلال استثمار الفضائل الإسلامية الكلاسيكية والفئات السردية في تحليل مشاهد التأمل الداخلي، وتعلّم الشعائر، والإفصاح العلني عن الهوية، والتفاعل في الفضاء المدرسي. وتُظهر الدراسة أن التبئير الداخلي بضمير المتكلم يجعل «النية» ممارسة قابلة للقراءة بوصفها فعلاً أخلاقياً واعياً، وأن «التقوى» تعمل بوصفها تصحيحات دقيقة في القول واللباس والعلاقات الاجتماعية، فيما تعيد «الإحسان» تعريف الإلتقان بوصفه عناية جمالية أخلاقية بالذات والآخر، ويؤطر «الأدب» مساحات الاختلاف المحترم والانتماء الجماعي. كما يتضح أن مفهوم المخاطرة، في سياق الامتياز العرقي وإمكان التمويه الهوياتي، يُعدّل ممارسة الفعل الأخلاقي دون أن يُخلّ بقواعد الانتباه ومخاطبة الذات وبنية الفعل. وتخلص الدراسة إلى الإسهام في كلّ من النقد الأدبي والتربوية الأدبية، من خلال إبراز العمليات الأخلاقية للشكل في أدب اليافعين لدى المسلمين الأمريكيين، واقتراح نموذج قابل للتكرار لدمج أخلاقيات السرد الإسلامية في الممارسة الصفية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أدب اليافعين لدى المسلمين الأمريكيين؛ الاعتناق/العودة إلى الإسلام؛ التبئير؛ أخلاقيات الفضيلة الإسلامية؛ الصوت السردية.



I. Introduction

For over two decades, research on American Muslim young adult (YA) literature has extensively analysed representation, identity, and Islamophobia in an effort to prove the influence of media, policy, and schooling in shaping the Muslim youth experience. However, two interrelated questions persist. Firstly, there is an under-exploration of how form, i.e., voice, focalization, dialogue, scene and background narrates conversion/reversion as an ethical process instead of a static label as (Rana, 2011, p. 9) tells: “Despite this ambiguity, the racialized Muslim is mobilized as a unitary figure.” Secondly, Islamic concepts have persistently been ignored as analytic categories for literary interpretation; instead of serving as tools for reading how novels render meaning, they are often reduced to mere cultural backgrounds. Recent events in the present country have demanded for a formal-ethical account: reports spanning 2022–2024 have documented continuous discrimination against Muslim students and civic pressures on Muslim belonging, demanding for criticism to go beyond what is depicted and to focus on how narrative techniques contribute to ethical attention, restraint, and comportment in classroom and civic spaces.

Nadine Jolie Courtney’s *All-American Muslim Girl* (2019) is examined in this study as a convert/revert *bildungsroman* where narrative voice and focalization depict reversion as iterative ethical labour based on the four Islamic concepts of *niyyah* (intention), *taqwā* (God-conscious restraint), *ihsān* (excellence/beauty in conduct), and *adab* (ethical comportment). Employing Genette’s distinctions between voice and focalization “most of the theoretical works on this subject ... suffer from a regrettable confusion between what I call here mood and voice ... the question who sees? and the question who speaks?” (Genette, 1980, p. 186), the novel’s first-person internal lens is used as an ethics of attention. Form is operationalized by adopting Boulton’s pragmatic taxonomy from *The Anatomy of the Novel*, i.e., “point of view, character, conversation,



and scene and background” (Boulton, 1975, pp. 29, 71, 102, 125) as organizational headings in the analysis” While newer works on the same novel show “sarcasm is a useful technique for expressing opposition and resisting prejudice.” (Salsabila & Djohar, 2024, p. 231), the ethics-of-form remains largely under-examined, a gap that this current study sets out to fill.

In analysing the novel, narratology is paired with Islamic virtue ethics, enabling classical categories as critical lenses for literary form. The framing of *niyyah* is that “Verily, deeds are [performed] with intentions. To every man his intention.” (al-Ghazālī, 2014, p. 6), the *adab-akhlāq* tradition “as a stable state that produces action without deliberation” (Miskawayh, 1968, p. 15) or “the exercise of movements and the perseverance in disciplines, to bring what is in the area of potency out to the limit of the act ” (Ṭūsī, 2011 ed., trans. Wickens, p. 26) ; *ihsān* as per the *ḥadīth of Jibrīl* “It is to worship Allāh as though you see him. If you cannot do this, then know that he sees you.” (Madeenah.com, 2025, p. 10) or “directs worship and social conduct toward people who wrong you” (Ibn al-Qayyim, 2019, p. 94); while *adab* organizes conduct in speech “And tell My servants to say that which is best.” (Qur’an 17:53), in greeting “When you are greeted with a greeting, greet with one better than it, or return it.” (Qur’an 4:86), and in disagreement “And argue with them in a way that is best.” (Qur’an 16:125). By framing reversion as the return to *fiṭra*, the discussion moves to identity-centric frames whilst maintaining US racial and secular regimes which mediate visibility and risk for a white-passing protagonist.

1.2 Research Objectives

1. Investigate how internal focalization represents and transforms *niyyah* (intention) into visible practice in Nadine Jolie Courtney’s *All-American Muslim Girl*.
2. Examine the distribution of *niyyah*, *taqwā*, *ihsān*, and *adab* across different narrative dimensions and spaces in *All-American Muslim Girl*.



3. Analyse how social norms such as whiteness/passing and secular schooling mediate the risks and reception of visible piety in *All-American Muslim Girl*.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How does internal focalization transform *niyyah* into visible practice across narrative episodes of prayer, naming, and disclosure in Courtney's *All-American Muslim Girl*?
2. How are *niyyah*, *taqwā*, *ihsān*, and *adab* distributed across formal dimensions, plot, dialogue, and spatial settings such as home, school, and mosque, and what narrative cues mark their presence in *All-American Muslim Girl*?
3. How do whiteness/passing and secular school norms mediate the risks and reception of visible piety, and in what ways do these mediations complicate respectability politics and surveillance logics within *All-American Muslim Girl*?

2. Literature Review

This literature review examines critically the body of scholarship related to Islamophobia, youth culture, media portrayal, and narrative ethics, and places Nadine Jolie-Courtney's novel, *All-American Muslim Girl*, squarely in the middle of on-going discourse debates that intersect with law, culture, and racialization. It distinguishes the intellectual dynamics, draws the lines of convergence and deviation within the field, and brings to the foreground the absence of this particular focus that this study aims to attempt namely: the ethical work of narrative form as articulated through Islamic virtue ethics. Legal and policy analyses to chart the coming of age of American-Muslim youth. Aziz (2022, p. 22) conceptualises the "racial Muslim" as a product of the co-construction of race and religion in U.S. law and policy, to thereby regulate visibility, belief and civic participation, and as Hilal (2022, p. 45) aptly puts it "Rethinking post-9/11 security as harm regime of everyday life" a pre-criminalisation of Muslim subjects through surveillance, entrapment, and carceral logics. Meanwhile, Beydoun's (2018, p. 45) legal



critical account defines "Islamophobia" as being inter section in the linking of law, media and political economy and, as such, that the phenomenon of anti-Muslim governance becomes perceived as structural, in that it is not episodic. Bayoumi's (2008) narrative journalism exposes the corporeal formations of youth in mundane school, home and work contexts, while Uddin's (2019) analysis about religious liberty reveals the clash between discourses of public expressions of religion, e.g., the way one dresses, when one prays, with whom one associates-and of culture war adjudications.

Collectively, these studies attest to the fact of law and culture mediating Muslim presence. But a gap persists: despite the diagnoses of conditions and consequences, the studies did not consider narrative form, voice, focalization, dialogue, scene design, as the tools for staging ethics in fiction. By continuously focusing on content (themes of Islamophobia or belonging), the manner in which a novel's formal choices distribute knowledge and misreading, or convert interior motive into public act, or model ethical conduct under constraint may be overlooked. This gap is addressed in this study by integrating Islamic virtue ethics with narratology to elucidate the ethical work of form.

The assembly of religious, cultural, and sonic counter-publics by youths is demonstrated by the ethnographic and historical works of American Muslim scholars. Abdul Khabeer's *Muslim Cool* conceives how Muslim youths negotiate race, piety, and citizenship by drawing on Black expressive cultures; here, ethical practice equates to cultural style (Abdul Khabeer, 2016). Another study demonstrates how space is transformed into a moral claim via embodied practices, such as prayer in protest and ritual listening, thus revealing the public grammar of piety (Auston, 2017). Meanwhile, the authentication of knowledge and practice among youths is revealed by Grewal (2013) who tracked the circulations of religious authority such as study travel and local pedagogy. Blackamerican Islam's intellectual distinctiveness has also been articulated, highlighting dignity and civic agency (Jackson, 2005). Other studies show how Muslim



youth subjectivities are shaped by gender, racialization, and institutions (Chan-Malik, 2018; Bilici, 2012; Mir, 2014; Jamal & Naber, 2008).

These studies collectively underscore youth agency as ethical practice grounded in publics, spaces, and styles. This analysis illuminates the intersection of Islamophobia and the institutionalization of racial scripts in which young people form networks of belonging in terms of Muslim Student Associations, halaqas and online communities. Nevertheless, different strategies can be seen as diverging in which some groups focus on visibility through public prayer, wearing of hijab, and demonstrative protests, while others seek a more opaque or privatized form of participation. These observations help refine our analytical agenda; a formal literary critique can help us see the performative elements of hesitation, misrecognition, and self-correction (*taqwa*) through the use of first-person focalization, respectful disagreement (*adab*) through dialogue turn-taking, and the refractive quality of excellence (*ihsan*) in the context of descriptive dwelling. Beyond the thematic issues, however, these are virtues working in an instrumental way to influence perception and reader judgment. Anchored in these depictions of youth publics, the representation and reception of media is another factor in structuring Muslim narratives. Media discourse is of key importance in facilitating the struggle against the downgrading of emotional improvement to structural change by critics. Post-9/11 “sympathetic” tropes humanizing Muslim characters are catalogued by Alsultany (2012) whilst maintaining state narratives, cautioning against the analysis of representational progress as political solution. Ahmed’s (2011, p. 18) “quiet revolution” demonstrates how modesty encompasses both private conviction and public debates, revealing YA scenes where dress codes, family expectations, and school policy intersect. GhaneaBassiri (2010) and Curtis (2022) reframes American Islam as a long durée presence, dispelling confusions about newcomers and expanding the collection of belonging. Meanwhile, Islamophobia’s political economy and the security state’s



cultural apparatus are mapped by Kumar (2012) and Kundnani (2014), whilst labour and migration racialization contextualizing the intersection between policing, work, and mobility in YA plots is traced by Rana (2011).

All these enhance our reception of how readers, gatekeepers, and markets analyse Muslim narratives. However, internal reception is also shaped by novels. By determining the ‘what’ and ‘when’, readers are trained to assess motives, practices, and speech acts via voice and focalization, enabling an ethics-of-form reading to complement media analysis. Extending beyond media analysis, the ensuing debate ponders how narrative form itself performs ethical work.

The ethical work of form can be demonstrated via narratology. Gérard Genette extricates voice (who speaks) from focalization (who sees/knows), enabling first-person internal lenses to stage ethical attention, i.e., what the narrator notices, suppresses, or revises (Genette, 1980). The rhetorical theory of narrative developed by Booth (1983) and Phelan (2007) is focused on judgment, reliability, and audience address, clarifying how narration drives or hinders alignment between readers and ethical stances. Trites (2000) analyses how youths negotiate institutional power (family, school, law), whilst Nikolajeva (2005) provides character, time, space, and voice frameworks.

This study broadens the corpus by framing Islamic virtues as form-driving categories. *Niyyah* (intention) is linked to pre-act framing and interior monologue; *taqwā* (God-conscious restraint) to hesitation markers, self-repair, and narrated micro-choices; *ihsān* (excellence/beauty) to stylistic dwelling on care, recitation, and “doing it well”; and *adab* (ethical comportment) to the pragmatics of dialogue, greeting, turn-taking, boundaries, respectful disagreement. As such, virtue shifts from topic to technique, governing entry to knowledge (focalization), textures of speech (voice), and the ethical pacing of scenes (scene and background in Boulton’s taxonomy). Rather than importing



doctrine into criticism, it operationalizes Islamic moral vocabularies as analytic lenses to disclose the formalization of ethical labour in the novel.

By delineating convergence, divergence, and the remaining scholarly gap, this section positions the present study as a necessary intervention into the ethics of form in *All-American Muslim Girl*. This leads to three conclusions. The first is convergence. The literature depicts how Muslim youths negotiate racialized governance and culture-war adjudications in schools and public places (Aziz, 2022; Hilal, 2022; Beydoun, 2018; Bayoumi, 2008; Uddin, 2019; Curtis, 2022). Ethnographic and historical works (Abdul Khabeer, 2016; Auston, 2017; Grewal, 2013; Jackson, 2005; Chan-Malik, 2018; Bilici, 2012; Mir, 2014; Jamal & Naber, 2008) demonstrate how youths form counter-publics and ethical repertoires, sonic, sartorial, pedagogical, to develop their belonging.

The second conclusion relates to divergence. Scholars advocate varying visibility strategies from public claims (prayer in protest, hijab in school) to stress privacy, strategic opacity, or “quiet” practices (Ahmed, 2011; Alsultany, 2012; Grewal, 2013). Arguments also arise regarding respectability (using “good Muslim” scripts to reduce risk) and resistance (rejection of majoritarian comfort). Instead of adjudicating tactics, the literary issue entails the encoding of these choices in novels. The first-person internal focalization in *All-American Muslim Girl* frames caution and courage as perceptual labour (*taqwā*), dialogue as *adab* in disagreement, and descriptive dwelling as the refraction of *ihsān* via careful speech and recitation, performed with narratological accuracy.

The final conclusion relates to the gap and contribution. Partially excluding the article on sarcasm as resistance (Salsabila & Djohar 2024), the other studies did not treat *All-American Muslim Girl* as a convert *bildungsroman* of which ethics are underpinned by form. The framework is formalized in Islamic virtue ethics vis-à-vis narratology, explicating the method for the close narrative analysis of *niyyah*, *taqwā*, *ihsān*, and *adab*.



There are hence three linked contributions made by this review: a portable ethics-of-form protocol; a bridge between American-Muslim studies (racialization, counter-publics, public religion) and narrative technique; and a comparative template for similar American-Muslim YA (e.g., Tahereh Mafi, Samira Ahmed, S. K. Ali, Sabaa Tahir) that evaluates representation based on the morality of form rather than just content. Taken together, these conclusions establish the pressing need for a conceptual framework that integrates Islamic virtue ethics with narratology to guide the analysis.

4. Conceptual Framework

4.1 Islamic Virtue Ethics

The four Islamic virtues are used as analytic not devotional lenses for close analysis: *niyyah* (intention), *taqwā* (God-conscious restraint), *ihsān* (excellence/beauty in conduct), and *adab* (ethical comportment). The traditional moral archive presents *niyyah* as the axis upon which acts attain value, “actions are by intentions”, a principle that al-Ghazālī developed for the ethics of worship and daily interactions (al-Ghazālī, 1989). Character is conceived as habituation in the *akhlāq* tradition (Miskawayh, 1968; Ṭūsī, 1964), whereby virtue is the result of repeated practice rather than abrupt conversion, rendering *taqwā* a disciplined vigilance in the micro-choices of speech, dress, and association. *Ihsān*, expressed canonically in Jibrīl’s ḥadīth, is the limit of “doing beautifully”, associating ritual craft with social care (Ibn al-Qayyim, 2010). Lastly, *adab* specifies conduct in speech, disagreement, hospitality, and boundaries; *adab* is emphasized by contemporary Muslim feminist hermeneutics as a social ethic as opposed to mere politeness (Wadud, 1999; Barlas, 2002).

To ensure the replicability of the analysis, each virtue is operationalized via traceable textual cues integrated into the narration: *niyyah* manifests in interior motive-setting, pre-act self-address and evaluative self-talk prior to disclosure or prayer; *taqwā* is measured by hesitation markers and self-correction, what is narrated and what is



withheld, and the calibrated responses to risk; *ihsān* relates to descriptive dwelling on doing things well, i.e., careful recitation, restrained speech, and small acts of kindness, along with aestheticized focus on tone and craft; whilst *adab* entails the pragmatics of dialogue including greeting, turn-taking, listening before speaking, rules of disagreement, and correcting without humiliating.

This is aligned with American-Muslim scholarship which frames US Muslim life at the juncture of racialization, secular governance, and public religion (Aziz, 2022; Beydoun, 2018; Hilal, 2022); cultural/anthropological research on embodied and sonic piety (Auston, 2017; Hirschkind, 2006), authority and pedagogy (Grewal, 2013), and gendered visibility (Chan-Malik, 2018); as well as legal-ethical studies foregrounding *fiqh* as moral reasoning and *adab* as its enactment in public spaces (Abou El Fadl, 2004; Uddin, 2019). In response to the call for analysing Islam as a vast conceptual space of meaning-making, as opposed to “a single doctrinal script” (Ahmed, 2016, p. 36), this study uses these virtues as interpretive lenses to elucidate the formalisation of ethical labour in *All-American Muslim Girl*.

Islamic key concepts are oftentimes placed in the context of YA criticism as a marker of culture and/or identity, rather than as a central focus of analysis. Here, they are treated as devices shaping perception, pacing, and reader judgment. This change is significant as it allows the testing of claims about “becoming Muslim” at both theme and narrative mechanics levels, i.e., the voicing of intention, the pacing of restraint, the texturization of excellence/care, and the dialogical staging of comportment. Having outlined Islamic virtue ethics as analytic lenses, the study now turns to Genettean narratology to specify the formal tools of voice and focalization.

4.2 Genettean Narratology: Form Tools – Voice and Focalization

The form-driving nature of virtues is shown using Genette’s distinction of voice (who speaks) from focalization (who sees/knows) (Genette, 1980). *All-American*



Muslim Girl mainly employs first-person, internally focalized narration, rendering ethical life a perceptual labour. Here, the reader shares the narrator's awareness, fears, misreadings, restraints, and re-perceptions. The benefits of virtue-based reading are straightforward:

This framework efficiently maps the main formal coordinates onto the four virtues. Voice renders the audibility of *niyyah*: interior monologue enables motive-setting prior to action such as the decision to pray, to reveal, or to wear (or remove) a discernible sign of being a Muslim. Focalization renders the real-time calibration of *taqwā*, describing restraint via pauses, softened tone, and careful word selection under pressure. Modulated by focalization, style and pace renders the texturization of *ihsān*, i.e., doing well in terms of recitation, kindness, and poise. Lastly, dialogic design or the interaction between voice and scene construction describes *adab* across interactional pragmatics: turn-taking, listening before speaking, and correcting without humiliating.

The ethical work of narration is further elucidated by rhetorical narratology: the focus on judgment, reliability, and audience address explains how a first-person teen voice enables both alignment and self-revision (Booth, 1983; Phelan, 2007). YA theory adds institutional pressure, school, family, law, where voice negotiates power (Trites, 2000; Nikolajeva, 2005). Along with American-Muslim studies, the formal model explicates the ethically-charged feel of school corridors, chorus rooms, and dinner tables: beyond Islamophobia, the narration stages the ethics of attention, restraint, excellence, and comportment under its pressure.

Legaland or cultural analyses map Muslim visibility; narratology elucidates the staging of perception via texts. The only aspect lacking is the method showing how Islamic virtues structure the said staging sentence by sentence. This section addresses that gap by integrating Genettean tools into virtue-based codebooks. With Genettean narratology explicating the mechanics of voice and focalization, the following section

employs Boulton's taxonomy to systematically align these virtues with narrative structure.

4.3 Boulton's Anatomy: Organisational Headings Mapped to Virtues

The transparency and teachability of the analysis are ensured by employing Boulton's pragmatic taxonomy, i.e., point of view, character, conversation, scene, and background, as headings for evidence (Boulton, 1975). Each heading reflects the virtue it most effectively highlights.

The point of view is like an embodiment of *niyyah* (intention) as a kind of like a performative hinge; that is to say, it allows the very rehearsal of motive even before the execution of practise. Intention in *All-American Muslim Girl* emerges as self-address and attention to ritual timing. The pre-act frame is analytically tracked, i.e., the interior arguments preceding disclosure or prayer, and the voicing of intention as purpose instead of impulse. Analysing *niyyah* via POV prevents the reduction of conversion/reversion to an identity "switch" and instead to a temporally extended craft of orientation (al-Ghazālī, 1989; Ahmed, 2016).

Character corresponds to *taqwā* (vigilant restraint) as micro-correction. Using Boulton's "character", the study records micro-decisions such as speech/not-speech, degrees of forthrightness, and dress/routine choices that enable the protagonist to regulate exposure. Here, *taqwā* is attentive calibration in risky situations. The risk-map is provided by American-Muslim legal and cultural studies (Aziz, 2022; Beydoun, 2018; Hilal, 2022), whilst narratology elucidates the risks as hesitation, repair, and resolve. The aim is to make constraint tangible through narrative decisions.

Conversation corresponds to *adab* (ethical comportment) in dialogic design. Turn-taking, address, and repair are highlighted in Boulton's "conversation". *Adab* is read as greeting, volunteering, disagreement, and correcting without humiliating, particularly in public (MSA tables, classrooms, family dinners). *Adab* is rendered as a social ethic by



feminist exegetes (Wadud, 1999; Barlas, 2002), and reinforced by public-religion analysis (Uddin, 2019). Readers are taught about ethical disagreement via punctuations, pacing, and turn design.

Scene and background correspond to *iḥsān* (excellence/beauty) as ethical topography. “Scene and background” allow for the pedagogical operationalization of space. Virtue is taught in corridors, rehearsal rooms, and mosque courtyards where poise, clarity, and care are practiced. Studies on embodied/sonic piety (Auston, 2017; Hirschkind, 2006) theorize the creation of ethical weight via sound, gesture, and movement. These spaces are later reframed as a part of the long American-Muslim history (GhaneaBassiri, 2010; Curtis, 2022).

Using Boulton’s grid, the novel accurately depicts the distribution of the virtues: POV provides voice to *niyyah*; character enables the enactment of *taqwā*; conversation is the externalization of *adab*; scene and background render the visibility of *iḥsān*. These virtues become techniques that form a portable ethics-of-form protocol to be tested or contested.

4.4 Reading Reversion as Craft: The Comparative Stakes

Framework transforms analysis from theme to technique, rendering the legibility of reversion as *craft*, consistently coordinating *niyyah*, *taqwā*, *iḥsān*, and *adab* with voice, focalization, and Boulton’s grid. It enables cross-text comparison in American-Muslim YA: (i) the density of interior motive-setting (*niyyah*) and how it is staged by point of view; (ii) the granularity of restraint (*taqwā*) as narrated calibration under risk; (iii) the aesthetic register of excellence (*iḥsān*) in style, pacing, and spatial poise; and (iv) the pragmatics of disagreement (*adab*) in dialogue design. Accordingly, similar works by Tahereh Mafi, Samira Ahmed, SK Ali, and Sabaa Tahir can be analysed for what they represent and how their forms distribute perception, judgment, and power. This hence presents comparative and curricular stakes: the framework enables the



textual demonstrability and teachability of the novel's ethical life whilst providing a replicable template for reading American-Muslim YA beyond content. Having established the conceptual and comparative framework, the next section details the methodology that operationalises these tools for close analysis.

5. Methodology

5.1 Design

This review performs a close reading using ethics-of-form. The analytic idea is that the ethical work of form, i.e., voice, focalization, conversation, and scene/background, can be observed, coded, and argued. As such, the study integrates (i) the Genettean distinctions between voice (who speaks) and focalization (who sees/knows) to trace perception; (ii) Boulton's taxonomy (point of view, character, conversation, scene/background) to organize evidence; and (iii) four Islamic virtues, i.e., *niyyah* (intention), *taqwā* (God-conscious restraint), *ihsān* (excellence/beauty), and *adab* (ethical comportment) as analytic categories instead of devotional claims. Consistent with American-Muslim studies which frame youth within racialized and secular publics (Aziz, 2022; Beydoun, 2018; Hilal, 2022; Chan-Malik, 2018), this study analyses school, home, and mosque scenes as sites for testing ethical perception.

Two coding passes constitute the analysis. Pass 1 (a priori) entails the application of a codebook in line with the four virtues and form. The study marks intention verbs and pre-act frames (*niyyah*), hesitation/repair (*taqwā*), descriptive dwelling and lexis of doing-well (*ihsān*), and dialogic pragmatics (*adab*). Changes in voice/focalization, epistemic markers, pacing, and orchestration of scenes are captured by form codes. Pass 2 (axial) relates virtue-codes to form-codes whereby motive-rehearsing interior monologue maps *niyyah*; pauses or softeners map *taqwā*; sustained attention to craft maps *ihsān*; turn-taking and correction map *adab*. Analytic memos track interpretive decisions, negative cases, and emergent sub-codes.



There are varying units of analysis: the clause for micro-calibration, the turn for dialogic ethics, and the scene where ethical effect relies on pacing or background. In academic writing, quotes are used sparingly, and are reserved for “critical or significant information” (Smith, 2022, p. 134) while paraphrased information is cited with just an “author date citation” (Smith, 2022, p. 41).

5.2 Data Selection

Four groups of scenes are used as textual exemplars to help explain the novel's recurrent ethical tensions, as well as to correlate each virtue with its principal formal location. The first cluster, that of interior prayer or *niyyah* episodes, describes the narrator engaging in intentional inquiry before engaging in the act of worship or revelation (e.g., setting an intention before prayer or deciding to disclose a name). This construction makes it easier to carry out a point of view analysis, in which *niyyah* is formulated as a purpose rather than an impulse. The second cluster involves confession or *taqwa*, correction scenes which are about hesitation, remediation, calibrated speech under scrutiny, such as explicating an audible adhan or whether to confront or protest. In these particular texts, the focalization and stylistic choices actually make *taqwa* nothing but a real-time ethical calibration. The third cluster is centred around recitation or *ihsan* passages which put particular emphasis on meticulous recitation, tone, measured and small acts of kindness that transform context, and in which *ihsan* is cast as a textural point of view, beauty in conduct, following the guidance of rhythmic pacing, lexical choice, and sensorials. The final cluster, MSA/classroom dialogue i.e., *adab* relates to fundraising tables, study circles, classroom debates, and family dinners, where *adab* is rendered as a social ethic via the acts of greeting, turn-taking, correcting, and disagreeing.

The selected scenes are those with visible motive-to-practice arc and dialogue based on etiquette and disagreement. The criteria are: (1) access to interiority (*niyyah*),



(2) distinct pressure or risk (*taqwā*), (3) stylistic focus on doing-well (*ihsān*), or (4) pragmatic markers of interaction (*adab*). In instances with multiple virtues, all four clusters are coded; however, a key virtue is assigned based on what is primarily highlighted by the form.

The clusters entail home, school, and mosque, navigating private/public spaces significant to American-Muslim life (Curtis, 2022; Grewal, 2013). Additionally, they reflect spaces where ethical risk is framed by law and culture (Aziz, 2022; Uddin, 2019) and where counter-publics are crafted by youths (Abdul Khabeer, 2016; Auston, 2017). The novel's first-person and internally focalized nature render these sites appropriate to show how the training and revision of perception, i.e., the aim for an ethics-of-form reading.

6. Analysis

6.1 *Niyyah*: Intention as Performative Hinge

Niyyah in the novel is not a static motive behind action, but rather a performative hinge: a felt, expressed pivot wherein internal consent becomes external and manifests as action. Courtney formally scripts this hinge via first-person, internally focalized self-address, brief pulses of ethical resolve, and immediate motor repercussions. Using Genette's separation of voice (who speaks) from focalization (who perceives/knows) (Genette, 1980), *niyyah* is a textual event rather than pre-text; a micro-sequence carrying the plot from privacy to practice, enabling readers to experience ethical labour in "real-time and not in retrospect" (Phelan, 2007. p, 34).

The bookstore scene is the first anchor. Hovering over a Qur'ān, the narrator addresses herself: "It's the perfect opportunity. What are you waiting for, Allie? ... I can't. I'm not ready. ... I race back to the Qur'an, take it ... and quickly pay in cash" (Courtney, 2019, p. 92). The two italicized sentences depict on-the-page struggle for intention. The addressee moves from "you" to the self ("Allie"), and later to action,



compressing motive and motion into one beat. In this vein, narratology renders the legibility of ethics: the internally focalized scene allows readers to inhabit the exact temporal arc from interior speech to embodied motion. Rather than merely “inform” the plot, the ethics move it.

The next anchor relates to the family prayer. With the grandmother on the lead, the narrator makes intent explicit in the narration: "While we pray, I focus my intentions on gratitude." Gratitude for my life. Gratitude for my Teta. And, yes, thankfulness for my dad" (Courtney, 2019, p. 256). Niyyah works as a state of mind and at the same time it works as a state of concentration. The very ethical stake is in fact found in the narrator's choice of what to name and to notice, building the process of focalization quite visible. This formal presentation is in tune with Jackson's interpretation of moral becoming as “ethical labour, repetitive, situated and often delicate” (Jackson, 2005, p. 56). The same is true with Grewal’s mapping of authority and learning in American Muslim life: practice arises from micro-pedagogies like family rituals, informal instruction, and *halaqāt* instead of from a dramatic conversion (Grewal, 2013). Courtney’s method is in line with both: the scene’s pedagogy (wudu’, rug, imitation) supports the hinge from intention to performance.

The third hinge is the dramatization of interior assent shifting to public voice. In a prominent scene, the prayer app goes off in the school chorus room. Allie opts for disclosure and prior to ritual, narrates: “I put my hands up near my ears, setting my intention. Please, God, let Teta live. ... Please, God, let Dad understand” (Courtney, 2019, p. 400). The structure recurs: self-address, petition, and embodied act. The earlier hinges result in secret or private devotion; here, intention is laid out in speech within a secular institution, along with social risks. The three examples are held together by the same formal grammar, attention, self-address, act, which is presented in the first-person lens as a “felt present” of decision (Genette, 1980).



Courtney's method elucidates the operationalization of *niyyah* as craft via two features.

First, *niyyah* as focalized self-address. At the bookstore, the vocative "Allie" is depicted as both pep-talk and rebuke; in prayer, address turns vertical ("Please, God..."). This switch of addressee, self, then God, moves the hinge from motive to action. With the narration of these addresses inside the moment of choice, readers are not given a summary ("she decided to be better") but experience decision as a method of attention and will. This is the exact procedural work highlighted by Jackson (2005), i.e., sentence-level choreography.

Second, scaling from private to public. The hinge is repeated across settings in the novel, bookstore, home, hospital/school, rendering conversion/reversion an iterative ethical labour dispersed across ordinary scenes as opposed to a single switch. Grewal's emphasis on situated learning elucidates the infrastructure supporting these turns (2013): aunts, cousins, a grandmother, an app, an MSA table. Courtney expands this by having form, instead of commentary, carry the ethics. The hinge is narratological: the text links motive to motion via interior monologue, micro-pacing, and gestural choreography.

As opposed to YA faith-plots where intention is delivered via exposition or grand set pieces, *All-American Muslim Girl* portrays it in little turns, a book purchase, whispering a petition, saying "Dhuhr" aloud. The repeated signature (self-address and motion) normalizes Muslim practice as everyday micro-craft and denaturalizes Islamophobia as the craft's social interruption. The hinge also clarifies the novel's "coming-out" moments of belief. There is a recurrent pattern to Allie's disclosures: interior assent, self-address, speech act. Tremor is narratively acknowledged, "my heart jackhammers", but courage is framed as a repeatable technique of attention rather than a personality essence. This is where *niyyah* prevails.



Niyyah in this novel is hence performative and procedural. The aforementioned scenes demonstrate the legibility of interior intention as action via focalized self-address and paced embodiment: sprinting to the cashier (Courtney, 2019, 92), a prayer on named gratitude (Courtney, 2019, 256), and a public disclosure tied to petition (Courtney, 2019, 400). Analysed using Jackson's ethics of labour (2005) and Grewal's pedagogy of authority (2013), the novel's form and themes perform the ethical work, rendering conversion/reversion as a crafted, teachable hinge from intention to act. Having directly seen that the concept of *niyyah* is only a performative hinge, the analysis of the following section revolves around the Islamic concept of *taqwa*, distinguishing it as the principled restraint that regulates subtle layers of actions and narrations.

6.2 *Taqwā*: Vigilant Restraint

Taqwa, in the context of *All-American Muslim Girl*, may be better understood not as some devotional posture but rest entirely as a practise of minute-by-minute calibration that comprises deciding what to say, how to say it, when to say it and when not to say it, or when to say it and how do it forward. These purported acts of vigilance are formally expressed in a series of micro-corrections that are triggered over and over again by first-person internal focalisation, whereby readers see Allie monitoring her own behaviour - changing her personal tone, revising several lexical choices, and readjusting her various posture in real time. Importantly, such interior surveillance, however, gets fully explicated line-by-line, so as to offer thus a model of pragmatic self-governance imposed by external risk.

The chorus room disclosure serves as the first anchor of the narrative. When the *adhan* is triggered in Allie's prayer application, she does not react in terms of apology and defiance, but rather elucidates, "It tells me when to pray . . . Right now is Dhuhr. It goes out five times per day (Courtney, 2019, p. 220). This moment keeps a fine balance of restraint and observes as the whispered confession "my heart jackhammers" thus



making *taqwa* the practise of truthful speaking. The virtue is couched in terms of technique involving risk assessment, careful word choice and steadfastness in a commitment to maintain personal integrity. Afterwards, the theme of restraint is portrayed as first crumbling and then becoming adult. While her classmates practise "radical Islamic terrorism" in the cafeteria, Allie freezes and thinks about what to say: "I should say something." I have to. But what? ... I hate conflict ... I'll say anything, be anybody, just to make that awful, panicky feeling go away" (Courtney, 2019, p. 56). Later she merely concedes, "Yeah, I guess so," thereby, narratively, registering self-disgust. The very taunting in the middle of the hallway "Allahu akbar" is hugely faced with a steadier mark: "No, Mikey. It means 'God is great.' It means you love God ... I can get you into the mosque with me if you want to convert" (Courtney, 2019, p. 261). In this vein, restraint is not a silence or a sarcasm but a firm correction without any humiliation combined with the invitation of ethics. Together, these certain scenes determine the evolution of *taqwa* from avoidance to a reality that is best described with noble confrontation, depicting a situation of refinement of the same virtue.

The third register emerges in the airplane incident (narrated without didacticism): when a suspicious passenger approached her, Allie uses her honed gentleness, smiles, softens, deferential address, to protect her father. Rather than servile, the sequence is clearly tactical; the cost is shown by the narrative interiority. In the overall (plane, chorus, cafeteria/hall), *taqwā* serves as a cross-context portable choreography of restraint enabled by internal focalization (Genette, 1980).

Along with other American-Muslim scholarship, these scenes depict the arc from internalised vigilance to practiced vigilance. The post-9/11 security state is described by Hilal as a domestic regime embedding suspicion into everyday spaces, classrooms, airplanes, corridors, forcing Muslims to continuously manage their legibility (Hilal, 2022). The "racial Muslim" account explains the triggering of regulation and discipline



by neutral acts (a foreign word, a prayer sound) (Aziz, 2022). Courtney contributes formally, showing the transformation of political pressure into focalized attention, word-by-word calibration discernible by the reader. Devoid of the first-person lens, restraint in this novel would be taken as personality, an explicit ethical craft.

This craft is made legible by two stylistic details. First, the lexicon of hesitation, “um”, “maybe”, “I guess”, and metacommentary like “my heart jackhammers”, anchoring vigilance in the body with *taqwā* serving as cardio-somatic. Secondly, restraint is externalized via the choreography of dialogue: Allie restores floor rights by letting others finish, correcting without shaming, and at times using beguiling humour (“Would you like to convert?”). These micro-moves are significant in public micro-arenas scrutinizing Muslim belonging, auditoriums, lunch lines, hallways, aisles. They are the spaces drenched in embodied and sonic cues of piety (Auston, 2017).

The difference is that *taqwā* in Courtney’s novel rejects the dualism of “quietist passing” and “loud resistance”. In the chorus room, calculated truth-telling is the right restraint; in the hallway, restraint is submitting to firm correction; on the plane, restraint is protective tactics preserving dignity and safety. The variations are linked by a persistent attention to consequences, i.e., to the ethics of speech and the risks accepted by the self and others. Such attention is formalised in the novel by letting readers feel the moments of indecision, the stuttered starts, the recalibration yielding a better line.

These collectively show the novel’s central claim: *taqwā* is moment-to-moment practice, a series of micro-corrections in speech, dress, and relations enabled by internal focalization in real time. Where the pressure of surveillance on Muslim life is theorised by Hilal (2022) and Aziz (2022), Courtney’s fiction formally accounts how a young Muslim navigates such pressure, i.e., by not submitting to silence or pandering in spectacle, but rather by cultivating timed truth-telling and measured poise which maintains dignity. Having discovered how *taqwā* operates as vigilant restraint through



micro-corrections, the analysis now turns to *ihsān* as the narrative performance of excellence and care.

6.3 *Ihsān*: Excellence as Care

In *All-American Muslim Girl*, *ihsān*, i.e., doing things well and beautifully, serves more as care than perfectionism: care for God via focused ritual, care for self via calmness and clarity, and care for others via careful and generous speech. The novel makes ethical beauty available in textured prose and considered timing; in descriptive dwellings, mellifluous cadences, and careful pacing, beyond the reach of the plot itself. Measured disclosure makes up the first register. When her prayer app goes off, Allie doesn't apologise and show defiance, but instead says with ease: "It tells me when to pray . . . Right now is Dhuhr." It goes off five times a day" (Courtney, 2019, p.220). The sentence is a calculated choice, using a minimum of words to express the truth, delivered at a pace which precludes the spectacular. This effect can be explained in terms of Genette's distinction between voice and focalization: the jitteriness of the body "my heart jackhammers" and the instant replay frame emphasise poise rather than bravado (Genette, 1980, p. 89). In a rhetorical, narratological sense, the scene leaves open room for reader judgement through the narrative style over the explicit declaration.

Petition as care consists of the second register. In the scene in the hospital prayer is translated as a choreographed sequence, aimed in its direction: "I put my hands up near my ears, setting my intention." Please, God, let Teta live" "Please, God, let Dad understand" (Courtney, 2019, p. 400). The shift from intention to embodied action (hands, petition, prostration) makes *ihsan* an address, the best example of the worship of excellence combined with a tender familial moment. This is in line with studies on embodied and sonic piety, where an ethical soundscape in public life is created through poise, resonance and gesture.





The third register is epitomised by kind correction where beauty is manifested in generosity. A taunt from one of her classmates using "Allahu akbar" receives a cool response from Allie: "No, Mikey." It means 'God is great.' It means you love god I can take you to the mosque with me if u want to convert (courtney, 2019, p. 261). The taunt is metamorphosed into instruction by micro movement from definition to invitation. This is the example of *ihsan*, to make the words of good yielding. The statement maintains truth and upholds the dignity of the counterpart by diverting attention to the offender and not basking in the victory.

Ethics has become visible through two crafts. First, descriptive dwelling: the description of ritual, ablution, and the hands, at - ears posture is always followed by a slowdown of prose to allow the readers to live in the rhythm of the deliberate practice. Rather than ornamental the languid tempo is communicating ethical intensity. Second, the so-called economy of tone in different public situations: chorus, corridors, and lunch lines are exclusively narrated merely when required. The editorial economy removes unnecessary components in order to conserve care.

Against the argument that visibility and public religion are mutually exclusive, the novel directs attention away from what is displayed, and emphasises how faith is experienced. The danger of disclosure is explained in "racial Muslim" cultural analyses and constant securitization. Courtney illustrates the gentleness and exactness of disclosure. Media scholarship warns against the dangers of "sympathetic" representation (Alsultany, 2012, p. 57). Rather than an aesthetic sense, *ihsan* here is acting at the same time with ambient hostility while maintaining beauty. Young-teen storeys very often celebrate greatness in redemptive climaxes or triumphant end points. *Ihsan* in Courtney's novel exists in small details: that well-timed line, slowing tempo, slow wudu. The analysis of *ihsan* by means of narrative ethics uncovers craft and character, beauty of execution turns out to be beauty of disposition. Methodologically speaking, the concept



of *ihsan* is in fact a tractable, category of form, which considerably turns on the deceleration and acceleration of pace, explanation as invitation, and modulation of tone, hence measuring representation not simply by its contents, but by means of the ethic of labour of form. Having unpicked *ihsan* as the narrative practise of excellence and care, the analysis now moves on to *adab* as the ethic of dialogue, comportment and belongingness.

6.4 *Adab*: Comportment, Disagreement, Belonging

While *ihsān* entails excellence of tone, *adab* entails ethics of interaction, the consistent ways in which individuals welcome, disagree, invite, and establish limits. Courtney's novel presents *adab* as the engine of a youth counter-public, shifting MSA tables, study circles, classrooms, and hallways into spaces where speech acts negotiate belonging. For Boulton, this is the domain of conversation, whereas Genette renders it a voice performing social ethics (Boulton, 1975; Genette, 1980).

Hospitality and porousness. Notwithstanding the briefness of formulaic greetings, they are choreographed, purpose, invitation, gratitude, converting a fundraising table into a moral common. It is aligned with Abdul Khabeer's *Muslim Cool* ethical style—convivial, hybrid, public, where youths render the liveability of space (Abdul Khabeer, 2016) and with Auston's embodied piety which reframes public space (Auston, 2017).

Correction without humiliation. Calm correction that gives the interlocutor a way back is the novel's hallmark of *adab*. This is exemplified by Allie's response to Mikey's taunting: "No, Mikey. It means 'God is great' ... I can take you by the mosque ... if you want to convert" (Courtney, 2019, p. 261). The sequence, definition, refusal of insult, invitation, renders disagreement as careful pedagogy. It serves as a disciplined substitute for the two prevailing narratives that young Muslims frequently encounter: defensive surrender or hostile retaliation. The third method, in which *adab* upholds both truth and the dignity of the other, is insisted upon in the text.



Tactical politeness under risk. The airplane scene frames *adab* as protective comportment: “Please, sir ... After you” and the tactical dictum “Smiling is key. It confuses them. Anger ... indignation ... that’s a luxury we don’t have” (Courtney, 2019, pp. 21, 20). Such lines may appear respectable when read hastily. When read narratively with internal focalization, they appear as harm-reduction strategies selected under asymmetric power. Minimizing harm while maintaining dignity is the ethical goal, rather than appeasing the aggressor, i.e., the double labour outlined by Abdul Khabeer (2016) and Auston (2017).

Firmness is also a component of *adab*. The novel paces breath before speech and the clarity of phrasing when a line needs to be drawn. By stepping closer, maintaining eye contact, and refusing to escalate, Allie transforms dissent into a lesson rather than a spectacle as exemplified in the hallway scene. A bystander’s fleeting approval indicates that *adab* has gathered witnesses into a micro-counter-public, rendering a public effect. The text demonstrates how visibility is carried, through time, listening, dignity-saving correction, and distinct boundaries, instead of discussing if visibility is “good” or “bad” (Ahmed, 2011; Uddin, 2019).

“Sympathetic Muslim” images can conceal long-term harm, cautions Alsultany (2012, p. 22). By portraying *adab* as labour rather than image-management, Courtney’s scenes prevent those pitfalls. The goal of the plane-aisle behaviour and chorus revelation is to communicate the truth in a sustainable manner, rather than to win praise. The narrative’s skilful use of turns and tones enables readerly judgment (Booth, 1983; Phelan, 2007).

Most American-Muslim YA analyse representation (Islamophobia, identity, solidarity) disregarding the mechanism of belonging-making. Courtney frames *adab* as a structure of belonging, i.e., repetitive dialogic moves (greet, clarify, invite, correct, thank, draw a line) that Muslim youths use to build counter-public life in mixed



institutions. Being teachable and transferable, critics and instructors can utilize this rubric across YA texts to assess what is said about Muslims and how ethical life is presented in speech. The next subsection addresses how whiteness and passing complicate the risks of pious visibility.

6.5 Interlude: Whiteness/Passing and Risk

The novel accurately presents how whiteness and passing modulate exposure and shape how pious practice is received. Allie is initially sheltered by passing, she does not “trigger people’s radar”. However, danger is recalculated by disclosure; a hijab day alters the social climate among classmates, and a taunt ensues in the hallway. These modulations are, of course, deliberate, sentence-level rhetorical decisions, whether to expound on the times of prayer, how to interpret “Allahu akbar”, when to take a softened posture, and when to take a firm one. The scene of the aeroplane is a picture of the use of politeness and a trained smile as strategic shields, as evidently observed in the exhortations, "Please, sir . . . after you", and the statement that "Smiling is key . . . anger . . . is a luxury we do not possess", (Courtney, 2019, pp. 21,20). The chorus and corridor scenes portray gentle but exact disclosure (“It tells me when to pray . . . Right now is Dhuhr,” Courtney, 2019, p. 220). These scenes differentiate between a white-passing convert’s risk calculus from that of visibly racialized peers: episodic suspicion prevails until visibility is chosen, followed by constant vigilance. The “good Muslim” notion by Evelyn Alsultany (2012) is also applicable here: the plane scene depicts the demand for goodness as proof of safety, which is tactically met but at a cost. The literary contribution is to render the formal legibility of these pressures: rather than slogans, whiteness and risk are negotiated via timed truth-telling and measured poise, *ihsān* in tone, *adab* in turn. These findings on whiteness and risk lead into the broader discussion of implications.

7. Discussion



Rather than thematic labels, the four Islamic virtues serve as formal motors as identified in the close analysis. When a point of view allows internal self-address to come before action, *niyyah* arises; this is the performative hinge that turns consent into action. *Taqwā* is focalized calibration, the narrated “how” of restraint in speech, dress, and relations, as seen in hesitation, repair, and revised choices with peers and parents. *Ihsān* is exemplified via style and pace, descriptive dwelling, softened cadence, and brief disclosures, rendering “doing it well” as beauty-inflected care for self and others. *Adab* appears in conversation design, greeting, turn-taking, gentle correction, and boundary-setting, leading to the construction of counter-public belonging. Sequentially, *niyyah*, *taqwā*, *ihsān* and *adab* maps a youth ethics in motion: reversion is a craft of attention, learned scene by scene, sentence by sentence, not via a single identity switch. Although the method is still formal, the interlude on whiteness/passing demonstrates how risk affects that craft: the novel instructs readers to view ethical labour as a discipline of noticing, pacing, and addressing. The following section concludes by outlining the study’s key contributions and implications.

8. Conclusion

Nadine Jolie Courtney’s *All-American Muslim Girl* is a convert/revert *bildungsroman*, operationalising Islamic virtues, *niyyah*, *taqwā*, *ihsān*, and *adab*, as formal motors rather than peripheral themes. Using the combination of Genettean’s voice/focalization and Boulton’s anatomy, intention is framed as action (*niyyah* via point of view), restraint as real-time calibration (*taqwā*), excellence as stylistic texture (*ihsān*), and belonging as dialogic ethics (*adab*). Here, reversion is the craft of attention, i.e., choreographed noticing, timing, address, and repair.



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