

Critical Assessment of Arabic and Islamic Educational Curriculum Development in Indonesia and Southeast Asia

Dr Achara, I. Z.

Federal University Lokoja , PMB 1154 Kogi State Nigeria
Email: zubairu.achara@fulokoja.edu.ng
Phone: 08036480292

Abstract

The study focused on evaluation of Arabic and Islamic Education curriculum development in Indonesia. The article looked at vital issues that featured in the content of Arabic and Islamic Education curriculum development in Indonesia, most especially in the area of changes in Arabic and Islamic Education curriculum development in Indonesia. Curriculum development in Indonesia has passed through eleven developments, which actually includes different revisions since they have their independence in year 1945, but in 2013 the Arabic and Islamic Education curriculum has actually changed. In educational system, curriculum is a complete framework that direct and guide the entire aspect of learning, we cannot learn or teach without adhering to curriculum development in our various institutions.

Keywords: Activities, Curriculum, Content, Education and Islamic.

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INTRODUCTION

'Islamic education in Southeast Asia' refers to the different types of Islam being practised in the area. The nature of Islamic education in Southeast Asia involves political, religious and ideological contexts in which Islamic educational institutions are actually embedded. In the ancient period, the traditionalist Muslims that lived in Southeast Asia complied with the aspect of the Syaf'i (in Arabic, Shaf'i), which was based on the Mazhab (school of jurisprudence). So for that fact, the Indonesian traditionalists are highly represented and honoured by the Nahdlatul Ulama (Awakening of the Ulama-u). The most prominent and well-known society is called a 'social welfare organisation'. The organisation is well-known and popular in Southeast Asia, and it takes care of the welfare of the Muslim brothers and sisters; it plays a vital role in the aspect of assisting the Muslim Ummah.

The organisation came into existence in the year 1926 by some Muslim brothers and Kiai (traditional Islamic teachers), and those brothers were appointed by NU, which intends to assist the Japanese. The duty of the NU is to organise religious activities, social activities, and also economic activities in Southeast Asia, but the aim and objective of their duty is to promote and protect religious education. The role of the Ulama in the area is to organise an Arabic and Islamic education curriculum in line with Islamic aspects and to employ a qualified Islamic teacher who can handle Arabic and Islamic subjects in the area. NU leader, he adopted modern conditions under the

authority and leadership of a popular Ulama Abdurahman Walid during the 1980s and 1990s.

The Islamic education curriculum was totally changed by the NU, and secular subjects were taught in Southeast Asia in collaboration with traditional religious subjects. In most schools in Indonesia (Madrasat) they included secular subjects in the Arabic and Islamic education curriculum, and the school has a religious aim and objective to teach Islam. So, the school planned to teach students how to read the Holy Qur'an and how to read the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and scholars want to teach students how to read and write the Arabic language and Islamic studies without mistakes, but senior students in school were taught Islamic subjects like law, theology and ethics.

It has been insinuated that with all efforts that have been put in place by scholars and authorities, not very much is known or appreciated about the strides in Arabic and Islamic education curriculum development in Indonesia. This has resulted in so many ill feelings and doubts both from within and outside the hinterland about perceived stakeholders' indifference or non-performance on the issue of Arabic and Islamic education curriculum in Indonesia. This had brought the need for incisive creation of awareness on the informed efforts by the Ulama and academics as far as the Arabic and Islamic education curriculum in Indonesia is concerned, which is tenable through research and documentation.

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It is on this premise, which says that not much is known about Arabic and Islamic education curriculum development in Indonesia, that this study strived to explore efforts thus far made about Arabic and Islamic education curriculum development in Indonesia. Thus, the study 'Critical Assessment of Arabic and Islamic Educational Curriculum Development in Indonesia and Southeast Asia' attempted to bring into fore the strides that have been made thus far with respect to Arabic and Islamic education curriculum development in Indonesia. The study relied on documentary evidence to see how well Arabic and Islamic education curriculum efforts had been conceived or made. It is expected that this study will bring into what proponents and exponents of Arabic and Islamic education curriculum reforms have been able to do over the years.

What is the study intended to do?

1. Examine how Arabic and Islamic education curriculum development is perceived in Indonesia.
2. Find out if a legal framework prevails that guided Arabic and Islamic education curriculum development efforts.
3. Explore if that has been done with respect to Arabic and Islamic education curriculum development in Indonesia.

To accomplish this, the following research questions were put in place to guide the study:

1. How is Arabic and Islamic education curriculum development perceived in Indonesia?
2. What legal framework prevails that guided Arabic and Islamic education curriculum development efforts?
3. What is there that has been done with respect to Arabic and Islamic education curriculum development in Indonesia?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study used the Narrative Reviews style. The narrative review is the "traditional way of reviewing the extent of literature and is skewed towards a qualitative interpretation of prior knowledge. Putting simply, a narrative review that attempts to summarise or synthesise cumulative knowledge from what is reviewed" (Adam 2007, 44).

HISTORY OF INDONESIA

By looking at the history of Indonesia, it has been explained by its geographic positions, natural resources, a series of human migrations and contacts, and many wars that occurred in Indonesia and conquests, as well as by trade. The traders played their vital roles in aspects of economics and politics (Derks 2012).

Indonesia is an archipelagic country of 17,000 to 18,000 islands stretching along the equator in Southeast Asia and Oceania. The position fostered inter-island and

international trade. There is international trade between Indonesia and other countries in the world; they enjoyed business transactions. Indonesia is well populated by people of various migrations, creating a diversity of cultures and ethnicities (Andaya, 2001), so different people and different tribes migrated from their country to settle in Indonesia, and also many tribes also migrated to Indonesia; that is why they have so many ethnic groups in Indonesia. The archipelagos' landforms and climate are significantly based on agriculture and trade. Some of them are involved in agricultural development to enable them to survive in their lives. The boundaries of the state of Indonesia match with the 20th-century border of a popular place called the Dutch East.

Homo erectus, which is well known as Java man, and their tools made the Indonesian archipelago to be inhabited at least 1.5 million years back. Austronesians, their history or their backgrounds could be traced back to Taiwan (Rice 2018).

Ancient Indonesia

The first people that settled in Indonesia arrived at about 40,000 years ago when the sea level was lower and the sea was connected to Asia by a land bridge. By the end of the last ice age, about 10,000 BC, a new wave of people came or appeared at first. So in history Indonesia has existed for a long time (Brown 2003).

Indonesia: "Hinduism"

The arrival of the Hindu religious conception: The advent of Hinduism exchange with the West and especially Southern Asia is usually observed generally as "Hinduism", but later Hinduism was moved to a place called Indonesia, but their movement to Indonesia was not a trade matter; it was only Brahmans from India who actually taught, by a famous person, known as Shaivism with the personal trait of immortality. The Sanskrit inscriptions attributed to the 5th and 6th centuries (Melvin 2018).

Growth and Impact of the Dutch East India Company

Regardless of whether a European played a very vital role in 17th-century Indonesia, their presence undoubtedly initiated the changes that in the long run were to be of enormous, that is, very important, importance. During the 17th century the company in Indonesia was so far toward establishing commercial control in Indonesia by establishing a factory in Indonesia to reduce the trades and also some business transactions in Indonesia. The aim of establishing factories is to play a monopoly. In the 18th century the Dutch East India Company faced a financial problem. Companies' monopolies are held by those who are trying to smuggle

the government. Look at the corruption of the companies' civil servants. Later the company started having an issue and was no longer doing well again. (Hohne et al., 2012).

The Archipelago

The remains of *Homo erectus*, originally called *Pithecanthropus* or Java Man, explained that the ancestors of humans already inhabited the island of Java roughly 1.7 million years ago, when much of the western archipelago was still having a connection or linked with bridges. When we go back to the history of Indonesia, the issue of foreign trade started in the early centuries CE. In Indonesia in the 1st century CE, they were all involved in trading; they bought goods and sold them to make their money (Brown 2003).

The Religious Conceptions in Indonesia

Before Indonesia was known to be accustomed to constructing terraced temples symbolising holy mountains for honouring and burying the dead, it would not have been perplexed by the Brahmans' doctrine that Shiva. The advent of the Brahmans into the Indonesian religious framework was likely paved by earlier Buddhist missionaries to the archipelago who were the ones who introduced it in Indonesia (Melvin 2018).

The Anata Aris Crisis

The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) in Singapore was established as an autonomous organisation in 1968. It is a regional research centre for scholars and other specialists concerned with modern Southeast Asia, particularly the many-faceted problems of stability and security, economic development, and political and social change. The institutes' research programmes are Regional Economics Studies (RES), including ASEAN and APEC; Regional strategic and political studies (RSPS); and Regional social and cultural studies (RSCS). The institute is governed by twenty-two members (Anata 2003, 229).

Arabic Education in Indonesia

The realisation of an Arabic language education system programme that is very vital and meaningful. Arabic language education was introduced in Indonesia to help Muslims to know how to write and speak very well. Arabic language education was introduced to assist human resource development. The aim of Arabic language education is to collaborate with universities, educational institutions, communities and governments at local, national and international levels.

The study finds that in Arabic education in the education curriculum in Indonesia the main challenges in Islamic education curriculum development are very much integrating the national curriculum with local and global diversity between Islamic education patterns in madrasahs and public schools, which should also be addressed. But in Pakistan, the main challenges were the accessibility of education, especially in rural areas, and overcoming limited infrastructure and facilities that are the results of the government's low education budgets and complex challenges, such as gender inequality and ethnic discrimination (Abdulrahman, 2024:34).

By looking, Ulama in Indonesia and Southeast Asia has played a vital role in spreading Arabic education. In those areas, their aim and objective is to train Arabic teachers and students to know how to recite the Holy Qur'an and Hadith and also how they can write and speak the Arabic language accordingly. And they should also have enough knowledge in Islamic law, fiqh and tafsir. They established Arabic schools (al-madrasat) and adhere to the Arabic education and Islamic education curriculum, but the major problem in the curriculum is that it is not static; it is a dynamic curriculum. Challenges in Islamic education curriculum development in Indonesia and Southeast Asia are met by using a paradigmatic interpretive approach. Data were obtained from interviews; they obtained their data collection form from interviews or in different areas to form their curriculum. (Abdulrahman, 2024).

Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia and Southeast Asia are well known and understood as 'pesantren', which represent the oldest Islamic and Arabic education in the area that continues to evolve to meet and achieve the needs of modern society while preserving their correct and unique educational substance. This article is to look into the curriculum of Arabic education and Islamic education in Indonesia and Southeast Asia (Ahmad, 2023).

The changes in the curriculum involve social, economic and political changes that really occurred in Indonesia and the entire world, which affect the Islamic boarding schools as they struggle to accept and adapt to the needs of the period in Indonesia. The second Islamic boarding schools have been confronted with the actual need to elevate the religious curriculum of Arabic education and Islamic education in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

1. Azyumardi, Azra. 2006. Pendidikan Islamic: Tradisi dan Modernisasi. Di Tengah Tantasngan Millennium III Jakarta Lagos Wacana Ilmu.

Improving the quality of human resources that are needed to assist the global competition. But during the period, the knowledge and power to accept the changes in the period were very difficult; boarding schools actually developed some changes in the curriculum in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. The government has approved the

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right protection of the curriculum in Indonesia. By looking at the law of number 20 of 2003 on the aspect of the national education system, or the policy of the national education system (UUSPN), the law encourages Islamic boarding schools as an aspect of the national educational system. The government rules and regulations number 55 of 2007 on religious affairs.

2. Abbudin, Nata. 2014. Integrasi kurikulum Keagamaan Dan kurikulum. Umum Sehuah Tantangan Bagi Pondok Pesantren Bandung Pustaka Setia.

Arabic Teaching Curriculum for Indonesia General Educational System

The Arabic language is the way of understanding Islam; whoever understands the Arabic language will understand Islam very well. However, learning the Arabic language in Indonesia had not met the intention of mastering Arabic. The aims and objectives of this article are to encourage the students in Indonesia to put more effort into learning the Arabic language and to motivate the parents to send their children to learn the Arabic language. Curriculum development in Indonesia is the general educational system in the society era 5.0.

The development of Arabic teaching they use, a descriptive methodology, was actually implemented in the curriculum. The literature study was, in fact, used in the data collection technique with four steps by Zed, such as collecting the data (Hyeet et al., 2024). Conceptualising the data, analysing the data and interpreting the data. The source of data was the three books as the primary sources to construct theories in the field of education; they used the following books: Manahi al-lughah al-Arabiyyah Wa Tharaiq Tadrisiha al-lughah al-'arabiyyah liam-Nathinqin bi Ghairiha Dalil Tathbiqi and second language acquisition. Other related books were also used. So those books have been included in the curriculum development in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

The development of Arabic language teaching in Indonesia at the first stage was not a concern, but now it has been given full attention in Indonesia. (Ahmad et al. 2003). There are many mindsets that Arabic is not so very important, causing policies that lead to budgets for resource development. By looking into the history of Indonesia, the majority of religions practised in Indonesia and Southeast Asia are Islam and the Arabic language. For someone to understand religion, you must learn how to speak the Arabic language.

Basics of Islamic Education and its Implementation in Indonesia

The basics of Islamic education and its implementation in Indonesia gain an in-depth understanding of the philosophical foundations and the dynamics of the implementation of Islam, meaning the curriculum is not static; they change the curriculum from

time to time, the implementation of Islamic education in the context of this country.

This article shall explain the foundational principles and examine the implementation of Islamic education in Indonesia. (Rajaminsah et al., 2022).

Modernity And Tradition in Islamic Education in Indonesia

The classical Islamic community in Java, Indonesia, needs to negotiate the modernisation and globalisation through the interface of an Islamic boarding school (pesantren) and higher education in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, and the actual negotiation and dialogue need proper attention to enable people to enjoy the educational system in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. The negotiation needs quick imagining and (re)inventing both modernity and tradition. By looking and observing how the leadership and policy markers of a particular pesantren are for all universities in Indonesia and how the students will actually be involved in those processes in their curricular aims and objectives in their educational system in Indonesia. (Ronald 2001).

The Dynamics of Islamic Education in Indonesia: Negotiating Tradition, Modernity and Socio-political Transformation (1900-2000).

The history of Islamic education in Indonesia from 1900 to 2000 is a great event and testament to its resilience, which was actually marked by significant transformations intricately shaped by socio-political changes and the interplay.

By the early 20th century, some persons, like the Kacum Muda groups, played a vital role in the aspect of establishing a modern Islamic education, resulting in a very great distinctive blend of European and Islamic educational practices following Indonesia's independence (Rumi 2025).

Requirements, and embraced the digital era. This evolution fostered more informal and immediate interactions between the scholars and the surrounding communities. Additionally, this period witnessed the rise of ideological rivalries among various Islamic groups, which subsequently influenced the educational landscape and contributed to the development of a rich tapestry of diverse religious understandings among students.

Ultimately, the history of Islamic education in Indonesia and Southeast Asia during this century exemplifies a dynamic interplay between the tradition and the modernity. (Rami 2025, 34). Islamic education in Indonesia has experienced a significant transformation, evolving from traditional approaches, particularly concerning teacher education and curriculum development. The implementation of the Professional Teacher Education Program (PPG) has notably

enhanced teacher professionalism by prioritising outcomes-based teaching and evaluation.

These advancements, it is essential to note, the curriculum within Islamic higher education frequently remains rooted in classical Islamic traditions. This adherence may hinder the development of transformative solutions to contemporary challenges. While considerable progress has been made in the evolution of Islamic education in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, a notable

deficiency is a comprehensive study addressing the integration of teaching methodologies (Rumi 2025, 35).

The tables are based on the data provided by the Scopus database, which aggregates scholarly articles and research papers utilising the keywords, teaching methods, ideological issues raised, and the philosophy of implementing Islamic education in Indonesia from 1900 to 2000. A systematic analysis resulted in a comprehensive data representation in tabular form (Rumi 2005, 36).

Table 1: Islamic Education Methods in Indonesia Across Historical Periods (1900–2000)

Period	Education method	Description
1900 – 1947	Pesantren	Pesantren the cornerstone of Islamic education impact a diverse range of religious knowledge including teaching on hadith, and Fiqh Islamic jurisprudence and tasawwuf (Sufism) thereby enriching the understanding of the students and fostering a deeper connection with their faith
1947 – 2000	Islamic schools pesantren and pandok	The educational methodologies utilized in Islamic schools, pesantren and pandok encompass the holistic development of students. This includes nurturing religious cognitive, physical emotional and scientific aspect of students personalities

The table provides a conceptual overview of Islamic education in Indonesia across two distinct historical periods (Rumi 2025, 36).

Physical, emotional and scientific dimensions. The emotional dimension focuses on developing empathy, compassion and emotional intelligence, while the scientific dimension emphasises critical thinking, problem-solving and scientific literacy.

The content of the table is divided into two categories, including the aspect of religious activism, an element that occurred in the first stage, during the era when al-ulama served as spiritual leaders that guided the people into right paths. But the educational framework this attempt underscores a very big holistic understanding of Islamic education in Indonesia; they have different aspects of Islamic perspectives, and ideology has been transferred cohesively. But by looking at the curriculum aspect from 1947 to 2000. Rumi 2005). The adopted and accepted madrasat and pesantren in the contemporary period of the educational system of education. Islamic education in Indonesia and Southeast Asia adopted a very serious model of synthesis. They used traditional teaching methodology to teach the students in Indonesia and Southeast Asia; they introduced very good scientific subjects, and they also agreed with the national curricula, and its implementation is Islamic schools. The era witnessed Muhammadiyah educational modernism. There are different regions in Indonesia and Southeast Asia which have been granted the assessment of a long

period to implement digitalisation and globalisation in Islamic education in the 21st century. Their future Educational studies should be centred on technology, ideology, and also pedagogy within Islamic schools that have been established in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

Curriculum Development in Indonesia

Education is a very important aspect of humanity in the formation of quality individuals and communities behind the success of education (Bukhori 2024). A curriculum is a plan and arrangement of learning and teaching materials that aim to achieve predetermined educational goals. The curriculum is the “heart” of the educational system. It involves everything. Without a curriculum, teachers and lectures cannot know how to teach their students; therefore, a curriculum is a very vital aspect of the educational system. It involves how it will be taught and how students' progress will be measured. In formulating the curriculum, many factors need to be considered, like educational goals, community development, and students' needs and development (Nwakile 2014).

The era presented three (3) stages in the area of curriculum development. This stage includes the 2004 curriculum, the 2006 curriculum, the 2013 curriculum, and the independent curriculum. The following is a clear table of curriculum development shown below in Indonesia.

Table 2: Historical Development of Curriculum in Indonesia (1947–2022)

Year	Curriculum	Information
1947	Plan Lesson 1947	This curriculum is the first curriculum after independence. The term curriculum is still not used while the term used is the lesson plan.
1954	Plan Lesson 1954	This curriculum is still the same as previous curriculum, namely the 1947 lesson plan.
1968	1968 Curriculum	The 1968 curriculum is a concrete manifestation of the implementation of the 1945 constitution
1975	1975 Curriculum	This curriculum is structured with very detailed columns
1984	1984 Curriculum	This curriculum is a refinement of the 1975 curriculum
1994	1994 Curriculum	This curriculum is a refinement of the 1984 curriculum
2004	Based Curriculum Competency (CBC)	This curriculum has not been implemented in all schools in Indonesia. Several schools have been used as trials in the framework of this curriculum development process
2006	Education Unit level Curriculum (KTSP)	BK is often referred to as the soul of KTSP has actually adopted KBK. This curriculum was developed by BSNP National Education Standard Agency.
2022	Independent Curriculum	Develop the concept of core competencies as a horizontal integrator. A number of subjects reduced or integrated .

(Nuru and Muhammad 2013)

The term 'education' has been defined as a planned effort to establish a study environment and educational system or process so that the students may actively develop their own potential in a religious and spiritual level. When we are talking about education, it is the ability to train students to know how to write, read, and speak and to have moral character in the life of humanity.

Schools in Indonesia are run and controlled by the government (negeri) or private sectors, so it is not only the government that runs schools; they have private schools

that train students to become good ambassadors in the country. Some private schools refer to themselves as the 'national plus' schools, meaning their curriculum exceeds the government's own.

School Grades:

The school year in Indonesia has been categorised into two semesters. The first semester commences in every July and ends in December, while the latter commences in January and ends in June.

Table 3: Indonesian School System Structure and Grade Levels

Level/Grade	Typical age
Pre-school	
Pre-school play group	3-4
Kindergarten	4-6
Primary School	Compulsory Education
1 st Grade	6-7
2 nd Grade	7-8
3 rd Grade	8-9
4 th Grade	9-10
5 th Grade	10-11
6 th Grade	11-12

Middle school (Compulsory Education)

Table 4: Indonesian School System Structure and Grade Levels

7 th Grade	12-13
8 th Grade	13-14
9 th Grade	14-15

Table 5: Indonesian School System Structure and Grade Levels(High School (Compulsory Education)

10 th Grade	15-16
11 th Grade	16-17
12 th Grade	17-18

Table 6: Post Secondary Education

Tertiary Education	18+
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Table 7: Types of Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia

Institutions	Academic Education	Vocational Education
Universities	Comprehensive	Comprehensive
Institute	Multidisciplinary	Multidisciplinary
Sekola Tinggi	Multidisciplinary	Multidisciplinary
Polytechnic		Comprehensive

Since 2012, the Indonesian education system has been organised on the Indonesian National Qualification Framework (Indonesian): Kerangka Kerja Nasional Indonesia, KKNI.

The research used descriptive analysis research using a qualitative approach. The qualitative research method based on philosophy that is used to research scientific conditions (experiments where researchers have an instrument, data collection techniques, and qualitative analysis) puts more emphasis on meaning. The data collection techniques were carried out by means of a literature review. Researchers searched and analysed various relevant literature sources such as books, scientific journals, research reports, and educational policy. (Munadi et al. 2016) Education is one of the foundations for building a more advanced Indonesian nation as written in the preamble to the 1945 constitution. Education is very important; with education we can read and write. Education makes our lives meaningful. (Coyle 2017).

Curriculum changes aimed to promote the educational system to the high level of education in Indonesia. The curriculum that is updated periodically can be more responsive to development in science, technology, and social dynamics. (Andaya 2001). Curriculum changes in Indonesia from time to time. (Khan et al. 2012)

Student's Difficulties in Arabic: A study of the background of students' Arabic language education.

The difficulties facing students in learning Arabic are based on the students' backgrounds; this issue is a serious issue facing the students of Arabic education in Indonesia. Students find it very difficult to study Arabic education. The effectiveness of Arabic language (Ahmad et al 2025) education from students. This article will be based on a descriptive approach with a field study. It is a

simple quantitative and qualitative descriptive study; the data was actually collected through an interview with twenty-five Arabic programme (PBA) participants. Students of PBA lecturers in various universities in Indonesia, the Arabic language students' association was also consulted during the process of data collection. The data analysis model used in this research follows the model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana. The results indicate that each student in the PBA study programme faces difficulties in studying and learning Arabic education in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, which includes difficulties in Arabic language skills and components according to their educational background. All students that came from model pesantren backgrounds do not encounter many language difficulties. (Ahmad et al., 2025). Background is one of the factors that make students face difficulties in Arabic language education. This is included in non-linguistic factors, which can help and motivate the student to put more effort into Arabic education.

The details of the Arabic language and its different structures, in addition to having linguistic aspects like having the knowledge of phonology, syntax, morphology, Arabic grammar, and sarf, served as challenges to students of the Arabic language. Skills (Kalam), reading skills (Al-Qira), and writing skills (Al-Kitabah) (Munadi et al., 2016) These four skills are very vital for Arabic students, and Arabic students must know how to read, write and speak. The study by Murad and Hasbullah (2016) focused on the strategies and the steps being practised and used by students in the Arabic language education (PBA) programme to organise teaching the Arabic language. This research is a field of study used as a descriptive method; it can be quantitative or narrative. The study was conducted at the Arabic language education (PBA) programme, faculty of Tarbiyah, and teacher trainers (UIN) at Antasari Banjarmasin in 2024.

Table 8: Student Enrollment in Arabic Language Education Programme by Semester, Year, and Gender

S/N	Semester	Year Of Entry	Men	Women	Total
1	I	2024	26	31	57
2	III	2023	30	46	76
3	V	2022	28	69	97
	TOTAL		84	146	230

The data collection method used in this study includes interviews with students and lecturers in the Department of Arabic Education to explore the difficulties being faced by students of Arabic education and interviews with the management of the Arabic Education (PBA) programme regarding students' mastery in Arabic influencing some of the factors and the solutions to solve those problems facing Arabic students.

The description of students' difficulties in learning the Arabic language: some students also complained about listening (Istima), speaking (Kalam), reading (Al-Girah), and writing (Al-Kitaba) challenges faced by students in some subjects like rhetoric (Al-Balaqah), translation (Al-Tarjamas), grammar (Al-Nahw), and morphology (Al-Sarf), based on the results from the questionnaires and interviews, can be seen as follows in this

Table 9: Students' Difficulties in Arabic Language Learning by Skill Area

S/N	Aspect	Number Of Students	Percentage
1	Istima	24	42.10%
2	Qiraah	25	43.85%
3	Kalam	36	63.15%
4	Imla/Kitabah	34	59.64%
5	Nahwu	33	57.89%
6	Sarf	27	47.36%

In fact, speaking (Al-Kalam) is very important for every student learning the Arabic language, as it enables individuals to communicate fluently and accurately in Arabic to express their ideas or messages. The skill is the most challenging aspect for students, with 63.15%, 46.66% and 26.04%.

Speaking (al-kalam). It is very vital for Arabic students that they are learning the Arabic language, and knowledge of rhetoric is very good for Arabic students to have. Knowledge of Arabic grammar is very important for all students that are studying the Arabic language; without that knowledge, you are not a student of the Arabic language.

Curriculum Foundations for Arabic Language Education in the AI Era: Holistic, Juridical, and Technological Perspectives. The Arabic language (ALE) in Indonesia faces a persistent gap between curricular goals and actual learner proficiency, exacerbated by limited integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in instruction.

This study investigates how AI in transformation works in Indonesia (Norlaila et al., 2025). With cultural and spiritual values. Employing a qualitative exploratory analysis, a meta-synthesis, and comparative case studies from Malaysia, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia. Three nations are leading in (AI) adoption for Arabic instruction. It also draws empirical data from an AI-assisted pilot project at Fatima Al-Zaharahu Islamic Boarding School, West Java. The results reveal that intelligent tutoring. Arabic language education in Indonesia and Southeast Asia has faced a lot of persistent gaps that occurred between curricular motives, and indeed, the students' Arabic

language proficiency was actually exacerbated by the limited integration (Norlaila et al. 2025).

The Indonesian pilot recorded a 77% rise in student population; the actual increase was more than before in engagement and 67% in long-term retention, demonstrating the effectiveness of culturally responsive (AI) integration. Comparative insights highlight the need for a hybrid paradigm of comparative value-based education rooted in national ideology and Qur'anic ethics. The study explains the holistic (ALE) system that bridges philosophical ideas with scalable, technology-driven solutions.

The study adopts a qualitative exploratory approach, meaning the researcher applied that methodology in the process of his research. Meta-synthesis and comparative case studies to investigate the current status and transformation prospects of Arabic language education (ALE) in Indonesia. The data were obtained through triangulation of secondary sources. Actually, the Indonesian Government Law No. 20|2023, Government Regulation No. 57|2021 peer-reviewed academic publication curriculum reform report and international education database such as PIRLS, ACTEL, and UNESCO reports (Norlaila et al. 2025).

In the Holy Qur'an worldview, language is not merely a tool or an instrument for communication but a sacred trust bestowed upon humanity. "Allama-hulbayan" (AL-Rahma:4) explains the aspect of articulation, meaning it is a divine gift, distinguishing human beings from other creations.

The Holy Qur'an introduces the aspect of linguistics'

ideas that discuss ethical and pedagogical approaches to the aspect of language education. Terms such as 'al-lagw' (idle or vain speech) are totally condemned. Indonesia's Arabic language education (ALE) system must come from fragmented, short-term reform towards a foundation for the student in higher education (Rice 2018).

This can be obtained through logical education, which is a very crucial issue for the family members and environmental communities and family; they were very viral in the aspect of guiding and counselling students in the area of Islamic education. In this kind of study, the researcher adopted a qualitative research methodology, so Islamic education in Indonesia and Southeast Asia has played a significant role, where students learn different subjects in Arabic education and Islamic education. Arabic teachers and Islamic teachers taught them different subjects in Arabic and Islamic.

Impacts of Curriculum Planning

Curriculum planning has a lot of impacts in educational sectors; without curriculum planning, our educational system will have issues. We are talking about curriculum planning; it can be seen as the decision-making process that focuses on the determination of the nature, organisation, and good orientation. Curriculum planning has to be looking at the aims and objectives of the school and learning experience, which makes the curriculum meaningful. Curriculum planning in an educational system is a way of developing and designing a better programme of learning for all educational levels in the educational system.

Factors Affecting Curriculum Planning

When we are talking about some factors affecting curriculum planning, we are actually talking about some things which are actually affecting curriculum decision-making and planners. So factors affecting curriculum have been outlined as follows:

1. The Learner: A curriculum is a planner for learning, so what is known about the learner is very important. Such knowledge should determine which objectives are achievable under which conditions and what agitations and flexibilities in the content and its organisations are highly needed to grant for optimum. (Nwankile Sango 2014, 8)
2. Learning process: To have knowledge about the nature of the learning process is also a criterion for and limit on the structure of the curriculum; iff learning is served, it should not be piecemeal.
3. The society and its cultural demands: The curriculum is a method of preparing the students to serve as productive members of the society.

Categories of Curriculum Reason

We have a lot of categories of curriculum research in our education system, and these can be located within two broad categories, qualitative and quantitative.

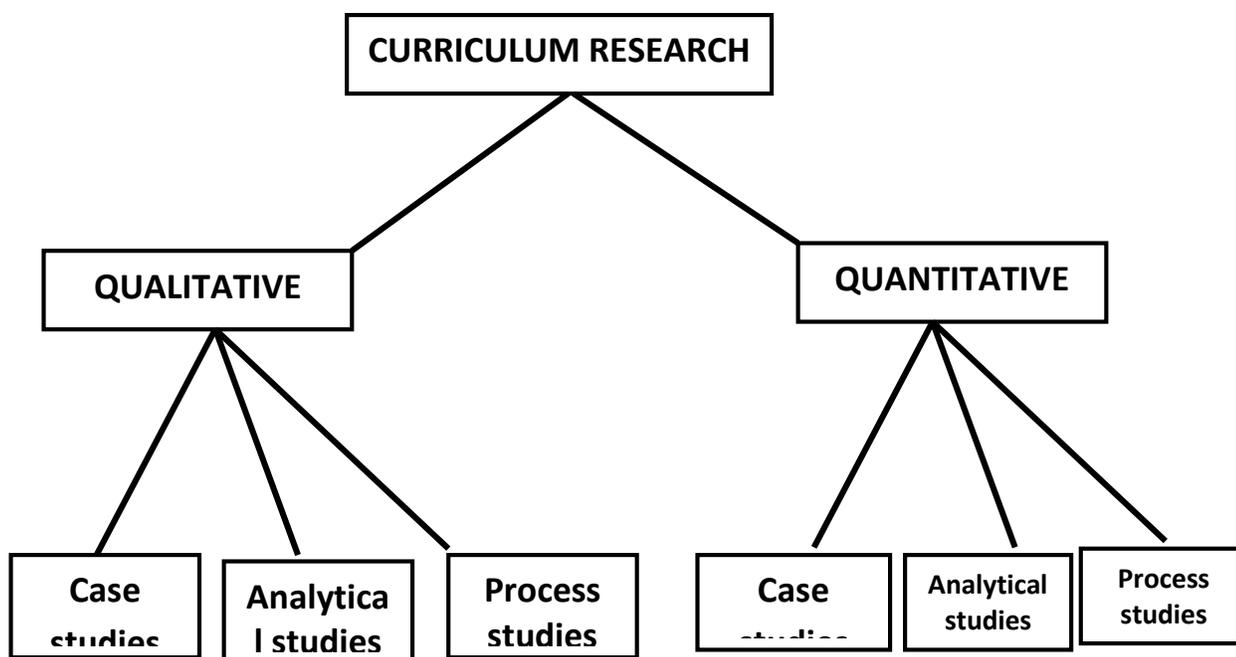


Figure 1: Categories of Curriculum Research Methods

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Curriculum is a very vital aspect. In our educational sector, it served as a key to the success in our education system; it helped the teacher, or it guided them to know what to teach their students in the classroom, it helped them to plan their lesson notes very well, and it also helped them to know the topic to be teaching in each semester and also the areas to be covered in each semester.

Objectives of curriculum planning and development

1. The first of objectives of curriculum planning is to fashion out a programme of education for our society to foster worthwhile ideology and values of the society in addition to enabling the society to progressively attain its social, economic, and political goals.
2. Because our society and educational system of education are dynamic and ever-changing in nature and our knowledge every year is expanding at a very tremendous rate, curriculum planning and development need to change so that they can go in line with our society.
3. The motive of curriculum development is to provide relevant information to society and also to education so that the teachers and students can benefit from it.
4. With the growing complexity and emphasis on the current advancement in science and technology, curriculum planning and development need to involve the type of curriculum that will meet up with the needs of the teachers and students in their various schools.
5. Every school now has many students with different backgrounds and interests because of diversity; we need input on the curriculum planning and development in our educational system in our various schools to enable us to meet our educational goals.

Historical Dimension of Curriculum

Indeed, the historical development of curriculum in Indonesia and Southeast Asia has passed through different dimensions in history; it passed through several reforms reflecting the political, social and cultural context of the period.

Since Indonesia got her independence in 1945, Indonesia has introduced different curricula.

1947. The first curricula focused on character building and nationalism after independence.

In 1968. More and more structured curriculum with emphasis on Pancasila and national identity

In 1975 and 1984. Efficiency and student-centred learning became priorities.

In 1994. Knowledge – a heavy curriculum criticised for burdening students

In 2004, the competency-based curriculum (KBK) was introduced to improve and elevate the actual skills and creativity.

In 2006, the school-based curriculum (KTSP) granted autonomy to schools. So that they can operate freely in the school.

In 2013, the national curriculum emphasised character in education, scientific approach and integration.

Philosophical and Cultural Dimension

The Indonesian curriculum development is guided and protected by philosophical methods which actually occurred in Pancasila, which contains five good values: belief in God; that God is one and doesn't have any partnership beside Him; He is alone; so Islamic education should know, or all Muslims should know, that God is one. Indonesia's rich diversity – with more than 300 ethnic groups and multiple religions – requires a better curriculum that they can use in their various schools.

Policy and Practical Dimension

In Indonesia, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemdikbudristek) played a vital role in development in Indonesia, some of which includes the following:

1. In 21st-century skills – critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration

2. Use of digital technology and innovative teaching methods. The minister of education introduced the use of digital to enable the teachers and students to have knowledge of computers in Indonesia.

- Flexibility for schools and teachers to adapt the curriculum to their local context. They make things very easy for teachers and students; they enjoy learning very well, and teaching became very easy.

- Emphasis on project-based learning under the Merdeka curriculum. All teachers and students were highly motivated and encouraged to design a meaningful learning experience that creates a love between teachers and students.

Curriculum Design

Curriculum design provides a framework for the organisation, implementation, and evaluation of a curriculum. It is a small-scale map for selecting, planning,

and implementing educational objectives in schools or related situations. Prah (1980) defined curriculum design as a deliberate process of devising (Nwankile Sango, 2014, 6), planning, and selecting the elements, techniques, and procedures that can constitute the curriculum endeavour. The curriculum stage in which some general principles or some guidelines need to be followed in its planning and implementation that are usually planned to be followed. Curriculum design can also be observed as the process in which various stakeholders converge to select and package valid, relevant, and significant implementations of some relevant materials in the schools.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Curriculum development in Indonesia is a continuous process that is already familiar with the changing aspect of society; it occurred based on the issue of globalisation and technological advancements, which need a strong collaboration with all the policymakers in the ministry of education.

This article intends to study dynamic curriculum development in Indonesia. Realising the curriculum in Indonesia is dynamic, the policymakers always change the curriculum development from time to time to file with the needs of teachers and students in Arabic education and Islamic education. Actually, the teachers and students enjoy the changing of the curriculum development because even our life is dynamic; nothing is static. Things change based on what is happening in the society or an environment. Human beings need change in their lives (Hyett et al. 2014).

Curriculum Evaluation

Evaluation of the curriculum is very critical for assessing its effectiveness in achieving the desired educational outcomes. This research confirmed that curriculum evaluation is a multifaceted process involving both formative evaluation and summative assessments. Formative assessments such as quizzes and feedback that help to monitor students' progress during the learning process enable educators to make real-time adjustments (Hohne et al. 2012), including summative assessments, including the final exam. That provides a comprehensive evaluation of students' achievements at the end of the learning period. (Muhammad 2025, 288).

Empirical Studies

A number of studies have been conducted on Arabic and Islamic education curricula, focusing on various aspects. Such studies included those of the following:

Abdulrahan (2004) "challenges in Islamic education curriculum education development". A comparative study of Indonesia, Pakistan and India: this article studied the challenges in Islamic education curriculum development in Indonesia, Pakistan and India, while my own article intends to study the assessment of Arabic and Islamic education curricula in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

Nur, Fadhila 2013. "Curriculum development in Indonesia" – the research discussed the results and discussion problems of curriculum development and freedom of curriculum development.

Table 7: Historical Development of Curriculum in Indonesia (1947–1975)

Year	Curriculum	Information
1947	Plan lesson 1947	This curriculum is the first curriculum after the independence. The term curriculum is still not used. While the term used is the lesson plan
1954	Plan lesson	This curriculum is still the same as the previous curriculum. Namely the 1947 lesson plan
1968	1968 curriculum	The 1968 curriculum is a concrete manifestation of implementation of the 1945 constitution
1975	1975 curriculum	This curriculum is structured with very detailed columns.

Muhammad, Fakhruddin. 2024. "Reconstructing the Islamic Education Paradigm in Indonesia". After the abstract and introduction, the researcher discussed the curriculum in Indonesia.

Muhammad, Kosim. 2023 "The dynamics of Islamic education policies in Indonesia" – the author explains the educational curriculum in Indonesia. After the abstract and introduction, the researcher discussed the literature review, educational policy, Islamic education, state

intervention, methodology findings, madrasa education, conclusion and references.

"Curriculum development in Indonesia: a historical study" (2)

The author discussed the issues of curriculum development in Indonesia.

Abdul, Mu'ti. 2023. "Pluralistic Islamic religious education: a vision for Indonesia." The researcher emphasised the Islamic aspect of education in Indonesia.

Rajaminsah, Ranjamisah. 2022. Basics of Islamic education and its implementation in Indonesia. Qalamuna Journal Pendidikan Sosial dan.

The author discussed in detail this journal, abstract, introduction, methodology, result and discussion. Basics of Islamic education and its implementation in Indonesia, basics of Islamic education, Hadith, Ijtihad and Qiyas Charlene, Tan. 2014. Islamic education and indoctrination. The case in Indonesia.

Farah, Purwaningrum. 2020. "Islamic education in Indonesia and Malaysia: shaping minds> saving souls in contemporary Southeast Asia."

Ronald A. Lukens. 2001. Two sides of the same coin: "modernity and tradition in Islamic education in Indonesia".

Taylor, Francis. 2023. Islam education and realism in Indonesia.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher attempted to carry out a systematic and structured approach, including four steps: identification of sources, data collection, thematic analysis and conclusion drawing. (Muhammad 2025, 289).

Identification of sources: the initial phase involves searching for relevant, up-to-date literature. This ensures that the analysis is based on valid, reliable information that is pertinent to the topic of curriculum management. The sources are selected based on their credibility and relevance to the research question.

Data collection: Data collection is systematically conducted by recording essential information from each identified source. This step is essential to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data gathered. The

sources included academic articles, books and research papers which are relevant to curriculum management and its development.

Thematic analysis: the collection of data undergoes thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes that emerge from the literature. This process requires precision and careful examination to ensure that each theme is adequately explored and explained. Thematic analysis helps me synthesising the findings from various sources into coherent patterns that inform the study.

Conclusion drawing: After the thematic analysis, conclusions are drawn by summarising the main findings. This final phase aims to consolidate the insights gained from the analysis, offering clear and actionable recommendations for the development of curriculum management. (Muhammad 2025, 290).

This methodology is based on the literature review model proposed by Shattock (2014), which emphasises the importance of a critical and systematic approach in literature research. Shattock argues for a rigorous, analytical review. (Muhammad 2025, 287).

RESULTS

Educational management is also pivotal in supporting curriculum implementation. The availability of research resources such as textbooks, teaching aids, and adequate learning facilities directly impacts the effectiveness of the curriculum. The study observed that schools with access to up-to-date teaching materials and digital tools are better equipped to implement the curriculum effectively.

Table 11: Roles and responsibilities in curriculum implementation

Stakeholder	Roles and responsibility	Key actions
Teacher	Facilitators	Deliver content assess
Principals	Supervisor and oversee	
Educational	Support and	Ensure availability of materials

DISCUSSION

A collaboration between Dinsight and PSKP (centre for education standards and policies,) which actually aimed to truly use the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum because the curriculum of Merdeka needs to be accessed by the policy maker in the educational system. The Merdeka curriculum was actually launched in 2022, and it was actually adopted as one of the national curricula through the Ministry of Education in Indonesia. The Ministry of Education has approved and accepted his curriculum because his curriculum intends to elevate the quality and standard of education in the learning process, and his curriculum serves to improve the competencies of

the students with a collaboration with learning through the Pancasila.

The review actually identified several strengths in the Merdeka curriculum implementation in the areas of continuous professional development. Since achieving independence, Indonesia's education curriculum has been regularly revised to adapt to changing national and global needs. The most current issue is reforming Merdeka Belajar, or free curriculum, implemented in 2022 which actually aimed at the student issues.

The curriculum development in Indonesia and Southeast Asia has been defined as a systematic, dynamic and

continuous process of designing, implementing, evaluating and improving educational content, strategies and learning experience to achieve the nations' educational aims and objectives. By looking at this definition, we understood that curriculum is a manual that guides and directs the teachers and lecturers to know what they are supposed to teach their students and the type of textbook they are supposed to use to teach their students. It does not merely involve selecting subjects or lessons, but it also encompasses the integration of values, culture, skills, norms, values and attitudes of students to become responsible someone in the society and in the environment and also to become good citizens and productive members of the society or an organisation in the country.

The Indonesian Constitution (UUD 1945) and the National Education System Law (Law No. 20/2003) provide the fundamentals for curriculum development, explaining education as a means to develop spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble characters, and skills needed by an individual, society and the state (Nasution 2019).

CONCLUSION

Islamic education can be implemented by using a different variety of techniques and teaching methodologies, like avoiding confrontational methods and emphasising thoughtful discussion fostering. Cultural and spiritual values, employing a qualitative exploratory analysis meta-synthesis and comparative case studies. The era presented three stages in the area of curriculum: the 2006 curriculum and the independent curriculum. The issue of curriculum is a plan and arrangement of learning and teaching materials that aim to achieve predetermined educational goals.

The basics of Islamic education and its implementation in Indonesia gain an in-depth understanding of the philosophical foundation and the dynamics of the implementation of Islamic meaning. The curriculum without curriculum development, we cannot teach our children in our various schools; therefore, curriculum is a great tool in the educational system. Curriculum development in Indonesia is a continuous process that is already familiar with the changes from time to time; the policymaker played a vital role in the aspect of curriculum implementation in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

In Indonesia, the Ministry of Education, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) played a significant role in the aspect of curriculum in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. In Indonesia curriculum development served as guidance in the educational system of education, with the arrival of Hinduism, religious conceptions exchanged with the West and most especially Southern Asia are usually observed generally as "Hinduisation", but later Hinduism has been moved to a place called Indonesia.

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CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

I declare that this paper has not been published in any place, and this paper has not been submitted anywhere else, and it is not under a review process. So the publisher should avoid any doubt regarding the publishing of this study.

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