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Managing Arabic Language Curricula in Islamic Higher Education: Alignment, Evaluation, and Digital Transformation

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Abstract

Arabic language curriculum management in Islamic higher education remains a critical issue because Arabic functions not only as a communicative language but also as a medium of Islamic scholarship, academic literacy, and professional competence. However, existing curriculum practices are often fragmented, with planning, implementation, assessment, evaluation, and digital innovation treated as separate institutional activities. This study aims to examine how Arabic language curricula are planned, aligned, implemented, evaluated, and digitally transformed in Islamic higher education. Using a qualitative case study design, data were collected through curriculum documents, course syllabi, classroom observations, LMS activity records, field notes, and semi-structured interviews with Arabic lecturers, curriculum managers, students, and digital learning administrators at an Indonesian Islamic higher education institution. The findings reveal six interrelated themes: curriculum planning based on needs analysis and institutional vision; constructive alignment among outcomes, materials, pedagogy, and assessment; CEFR-informed adaptation for Islamic and Arabic academic literacy; lecturer competence and TPACK; CIPP-based curriculum evaluation; and digital transformation in curriculum management. The study shows that Arabic curriculum quality depends on transforming curriculum management from a document-based administrative routine into a cyclical, evidence-informed, and digitally responsive quality assurance process. Theoretically, this study proposes the Integrated Arabic Curriculum Management Framework (IACMF), which connects language curriculum theory, Islamic academic literacy, constructive alignment, CIPP evaluation, lecturer competence, and digital pedagogy within Islamic higher education.

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INTRODUCTION

Arabic language education has long been central to Islamic higher education because Arabic functions simultaneously as a language of revelation, scholarship, academic communication, religious interpretation, and intercultural engagement. In Islamic universities, Arabic is not merely a foreign language subject; it is a gateway to Qur'anic studies, hadith, classical Islamic texts, Islamic jurisprudence, philosophy, theology, and contemporary Muslim intellectual traditions. This

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multidimensional role makes Arabic language curriculum management a strategic issue for institutional quality, graduate competence, and academic relevance. Yet, despite its importance, Arabic language curricula are often managed through administrative routines that emphasize course distribution, credit allocation, and syllabus compliance rather than systematic alignment among learner needs, institutional vision, learning outcomes, pedagogy, assessment, evaluation, and digital innovation (Widodo & Setiyawan, 2021; Richards, 2021; Nation & Macalister, 2010).

The contemporary context of Islamic higher education demands a broader understanding of Arabic language competence. Students are expected not only to master grammar, vocabulary, reading, speaking, listening, and writing, but also to use Arabic for academic reading, Islamic text interpretation, scholarly presentation, digital communication, translation, intercultural dialogue, and professional purposes. This expectation requires curriculum designs that integrate linguistic proficiency, Islamic academic literacy, digital literacy, and quality assurance. Recent studies have shown growing interest in CEFR-based Arabic curriculum design, Arabic proficiency assessment, online Arabic learning, and digital platforms for Arabic instruction (Mohamed, 2023; Musthofa, 2022; Gazali & Saefuloh, 2023; Mahmudah & Musthofa, 2023; Ritonga et al., 2024). However, these discussions are often conducted separately rather than situated within a comprehensive curriculum management framework.

The central problem addressed in this article is the fragmentation of Arabic language curriculum management. In many institutional settings, curriculum planning is conducted at the policy level, teaching implementation is handled individually by lecturers, assessment is shaped by course-level preferences, curriculum evaluation is conducted at the end of semesters, and digital platforms are used primarily as repositories for learning materials. Such fragmentation can weaken the relationship between intended learning outcomes, classroom practices, student needs, assessment evidence, and institutional improvement. In the language curriculum literature, needs analysis, situation analysis, syllabus design, teacher support, materials development, and evaluation should function as connected components of curriculum development (Long, 2005; Jasso-Aguilar, 1999; Richards, 2021). Similarly, constructive alignment requires coherence among learning outcomes, learning activities, and assessment tasks (Biggs, 1996; Loughlin et al., 2021; Roßnagel et al., 2021).

The research gap lies in the limited integration of curriculum management, CEFR adaptation, CIPP evaluation, constructive alignment, lecturer competence, TPACK, and digital transformation in Arabic language education, particularly in Islamic higher education. Previous studies have contributed substantially to Arabic curriculum management (Widodo & Setiyawan, 2021), CEFR-based Arabic curriculum development (Mohamed, 2023), CEFR policy in Indonesian Islamic higher education (Musthofa, 2022), Arabic proficiency testing (Gazali & Saefuloh, 2023), and the use of e-campus platforms for Arabic learning (Ritonga et al., 2024). However, fewer studies have synthesized these strands into an integrated framework that explains how Arabic language curricula are planned, organized, implemented, evaluated, and digitally transformed as a single quality-oriented cycle.

The context of Indonesian Islamic higher education is particularly significant. Indonesia has a large network of Islamic universities, institutes, and colleges in which Arabic language learning supports both religious scholarship and modern academic competence. Students in these institutions often come from diverse educational backgrounds, including pesantren, madrasah, public schools, and international Islamic programs. As a result, their Arabic proficiency, academic literacy, digital

readiness, and professional aspirations vary considerably. Curriculum management must therefore be sensitive to learner diversity, institutional mission, Islamic knowledge traditions, international standards, and rapidly changing digital environments. This complexity requires an approach that combines global language education frameworks with local religious and academic purposes (Alhawary, 2018; Piccardo & North, 2019; Abdullah et al., 2023).

The state of the art suggests several theoretical resources for strengthening Arabic language curriculum management. Curriculum development theory emphasizes needs analysis, environmental analysis, goal setting, content sequencing, teaching format, monitoring, and evaluation (Nation & Macalister, 2010; Richards, 2021). Constructive alignment provides a framework for ensuring coherence between outcomes, pedagogy, and assessment (Biggs, 1996; Loughlin et al., 2021). CEFR offers proficiency descriptors and action-oriented language learning principles that can inform level mapping, assessment, and curriculum transparency, although Arabic requires careful adaptation due to its diglossic, religious, and textual characteristics (Alderson, 2007; Mohamed, 2023; Musthofa, 2022). The CIPP model supports comprehensive curriculum evaluation through context, input, process, and product analysis (Stufflebeam, 2003; Sankaran & Saad, 2022). Meanwhile, PCK and TPACK explain the knowledge base required by lecturers to integrate Arabic content, pedagogy, and technology effectively (Shulman, 1986; Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Irwanto, 2021; Schmid et al., 2021).

This article argues that Arabic language curriculum management in Islamic higher education should be understood as an integrated and cyclical process: needs analysis, curriculum planning, organizational structuring, pedagogical implementation, assessment alignment, curriculum evaluation, continuous improvement, and digital innovation. Digital transformation should not be reduced to the use of LMS platforms or online assignments. Rather, it should reshape how curriculum data are collected, how student progress is monitored, how lecturers design learning activities, how assessment evidence is stored, and how institutional decision-making becomes more responsive to learner needs and quality assurance demands (Castro Benavides et al., 2020; Haleem et al., 2022; Crompton & Burke, 2023; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019).

Unlike previous studies that examine Arabic curriculum management, CEFR adaptation, digital learning, or curriculum evaluation separately, this study integrates these dimensions into a single analytical and quality-oriented framework for Islamic higher education. The novelty of this study lies in the development of the Integrated Arabic Curriculum Management Framework (IACMF), which conceptualizes Arabic curriculum management as a cyclical system connecting needs analysis, constructive alignment, CEFR-informed proficiency development, CIPP-based evaluation, lecturer competence, and digital transformation. This study therefore extends existing Arabic language education research by positioning curriculum management not merely as administrative planning, but as an evidence-informed, digitally responsive, and contextually grounded quality assurance process within Islamic higher education.

This study is guided by the following research questions: How is Arabic language curriculum management planned, implemented, and evaluated in Islamic higher education? How do curriculum alignment, CEFR adaptation, and CIPP-based evaluation contribute to improving Arabic language learning quality? How does digital transformation reshape Arabic language curriculum management in Islamic higher education?

The article contributes theoretically by integrating curriculum management, CEFR, constructive alignment, CIPP evaluation, TPACK, and digital learning into a single analytical framework for Arabic language education. Practically, it offers curriculum managers, Arabic lecturers, program leaders, and Islamic higher education institutions a quality-oriented model for designing, implementing, evaluating, and transforming Arabic language curricula in ways that are linguistically rigorous, religiously meaningful, academically relevant, and digitally adaptive.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative case study design to examine Arabic language curriculum management in Islamic higher education. A case study approach was selected because the research focused on understanding curriculum management as a situated institutional process involving policy, pedagogy, assessment, evaluation, and technology. Qualitative inquiry is appropriate for exploring how participants interpret curriculum practices, how institutional systems shape classroom implementation, and how digital tools influence learning experiences (Busetto et al., 2020; Levitt et al., 2018; O'Brien et al., 2014). The study was designed to generate a contextualized understanding rather than statistical generalization.

The research was situated in an Arabic language learning program at an Islamic higher education institution in Indonesia. The institution was selected because Arabic language learning was positioned as a compulsory and strategic component of Islamic academic formation. The program included courses in Arabic grammar, reading, speaking, listening, writing, academic Arabic, and Arabic for Islamic studies. The institution also used a learning management system and e-campus platform to support course delivery, assessment submission, attendance monitoring, and learning resource distribution.

Data collection was conducted from January to March 2024 during the academic semester. Semi-structured interviews lasted between 35 and 60 minutes and were conducted with lecturers, curriculum managers, students, and digital learning administrators. Classroom observations were carried out in six Arabic language classes representing grammar, reading, speaking, writing, academic Arabic, and Arabic for Islamic studies. In addition, eight curriculum-related documents, including curriculum guidelines, course syllabi, assessment rubrics, and LMS activity records, were reviewed to examine the consistency between planned, implemented, and evaluated curriculum practices.

The researcher approached the study as an academic observer interested in curriculum quality, Arabic language pedagogy, and Islamic higher education. Reflexive awareness was maintained throughout the study to minimize the risk of interpreting curriculum practices only from a policy or administrative perspective. Reflexive memoing was used to record assumptions, emerging interpretations, and possible tensions between institutional curriculum documents and participants' lived experiences. This reflexive process is important in qualitative research because the researcher's position shapes access, interpretation, and representation (Braun & Clarke, 2021a; Nowell et al., 2017). Participants were selected purposively to represent multiple perspectives on Arabic language curriculum management. They included lecturers, curriculum managers, students, and digital learning administrators.

Table 1. Participant Profiles and Research Purposes

Participant group	Number	Purpose
Arabic language lecturers	9	To explore curriculum planning, teaching strategies, implementation challenges, and assessment practices
Curriculum managers or program leaders	4	To examine institutional curriculum policy, quality assurance, and curriculum evaluation mechanisms
Undergraduate and postgraduate students	24	To understand learner needs, learning experiences, and perceived curriculum relevance
Digital learning administrators	3	To identify the role of LMS, e-campus, digital platforms, and data-based monitoring in curriculum management

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, curriculum document analysis, course syllabus analysis, classroom observation, LMS activity observation, and field notes. Interviews explored participants' experiences of curriculum planning, implementation, assessment, evaluation, digital platform use, and perceived curriculum relevance. Curriculum documents and syllabi were analyzed to identify learning outcomes, course sequencing, content organization, assessment design, and references to CEFR or other proficiency standards. Classroom observations focused on the relationship between stated outcomes and pedagogical practices. LMS observations examined how digital platforms were used for materials, interaction, assignment submission, feedback, assessment, and learning analytics.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis involved familiarization with data, initial coding, categorization, theme development, interpretation, and theoretical alignment. Codes were first generated inductively from interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents. They were then compared with theoretical concepts such as needs analysis, constructive alignment, CEFR adaptation, CIPP evaluation, PCK, TPACK, and digital transformation. This process enabled the study to move from descriptive coding toward analytical interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2021a; Braun & Clarke, 2021b; Nowell et al., 2017).

Table 2. Example of Data Condensation and Theme Development

Raw Data Segment	Initial Code	Subtheme	Main Theme
Students entered the program with different Arabic backgrounds, ranging from pesantren graduates to beginners.	Diverse learner proficiency	Need for diagnostic assessment	Curriculum planning through needs analysis
Speaking and reading outcomes were written in the syllabus, but assessment often focused on grammar and translation.	Assessment mismatch	Weak outcome-assessment alignment	Constructive alignment
Students found everyday conversation easier than reading Islamic or academic Arabic texts.	Difficulty with academic Arabic	Islamic academic literacy needs	CEFR adaptation
LMS was mostly used for uploading materials and collecting assignments.	Limited LMS use	Technology as repository	Lecturer competence and TPACK
Semester evaluations were conducted but rarely used to revise syllabi and assessment practices.	Evaluation not linked to revision	Weak feedback loop	CIPP-based curriculum evaluation
Students accessed materials easily through LMS but still experienced limited Arabic interaction.	Low digital interaction	Need for interactive digital pedagogy	Digital transformation

All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, resulting in approximately 37 interview transcripts from lecturers, curriculum managers, students, and digital learning

administrators. Observation notes, curriculum documents, LMS activity records, and field notes were also organized as part of the qualitative dataset. Data analysis followed a reflexive thematic analysis procedure consisting of familiarization, open coding, categorization, theme generation, theme refinement, and theoretical interpretation. Initial coding was conducted manually by identifying recurring statements related to curriculum planning, assessment alignment, CEFR adaptation, lecturer competence, curriculum evaluation, and digital transformation. Similar codes were subsequently grouped into subthemes and broader analytical themes.

For example, statements concerning differences in students' Arabic backgrounds were initially coded as "diverse learner proficiency," which later contributed to the subtheme "need for diagnostic assessment" under the broader theme "curriculum planning through needs analysis." Likewise, statements describing LMS use mainly for assignment submission were coded as "limited LMS interaction" and later categorized under "digital transformation."

To enhance trustworthiness, member checking was conducted by sharing selected interpretations and thematic summaries with several participants to confirm the accuracy of interpretation. Peer debriefing was also carried out with academic colleagues familiar with qualitative research and Arabic language education to evaluate coding consistency and thematic coherence. In addition, triangulation was applied by comparing interview data, classroom observations, curriculum documents, LMS activity records, and field notes. An audit trail consisting of coding notes, analytic memos, and theme development records was maintained throughout the research process to strengthen transparency and dependability.

Several strategies were used to enhance trustworthiness. Triangulation was conducted by comparing data from interviews, documents, observations, and LMS records. Member checking was used to confirm selected interpretations with participants. Peer debriefing was conducted to discuss emerging themes and reduce interpretive bias. An audit trail was maintained through coding notes, analytic memos, and theme development records. Thick description was used to contextualize findings and support transferability. These strategies align with qualitative reporting and trustworthiness standards in applied educational research (Tong et al., 2007; O'Brien et al., 2014; Levitt et al., 2018).

This study was conducted in accordance with ethical principles for qualitative research, including informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and secure data storage. Participants were informed of the research objectives, data collection procedures, potential use of the findings, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. To ensure confidentiality, identifying information was removed from transcripts and all reporting processes. Pseudonyms or participant codes were used throughout the analysis and presentation of findings to protect participants' identities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings contribute to Arabic language education research by demonstrating that curriculum quality in Islamic higher education depends on the integration of curriculum planning, assessment alignment, lecturer competence, evaluation systems, and digital transformation within a continuous quality assurance cycle. While earlier studies often focused on isolated aspects such as CEFR adaptation, Arabic pedagogy, or digital learning platforms, this study shows how these elements interact systematically within institutional curriculum management. The proposed

Integrated Arabic Curriculum Management Framework (IACMF) therefore offers a broader conceptual contribution to Arabic language curriculum studies, particularly within the context of Islamic higher education.

Curriculum Planning through Needs Analysis and Institutional Vision

The first theme concerns the relationship between curriculum planning, institutional mission, and learner needs. The curriculum documents positioned Arabic as a foundational competence for Islamic studies, academic communication, and professional development. However, interviews indicated that needs analysis was not always conducted systematically. Curriculum managers recognized that student profiles were diverse: some students had pesantren-based Arabic backgrounds, while others entered university with limited exposure to Arabic. This diversity created a need for diagnostic assessment and level-based curriculum planning.

> "*The students who enter the program have very different backgrounds. Some come from pesantren and are already familiar with reading classical texts, while others are still learning basic Arabic grammar for the first time. Because of that, lecturers often find it difficult to use the same learning approach for all students*." (Curriculum manager 2, interview)

This finding supports the argument that curriculum planning should begin with a careful analysis of learner needs, institutional goals, target discourse domains, and future professional demands. Needs analysis is central to language curriculum design because it prevents programs from becoming generic or teacher-assumption-based (Long, 2005; Jasso-Aguilar, 1999; Richards, 2021). In Arabic language education, needs analysis must include at least five dimensions: religious literacy, academic literacy, communicative competence, cultural literacy, and digital readiness. This is particularly important in Islamic higher education, where Arabic is closely connected to Qur'anic interpretation, turats reading, Islamic scholarship, and academic participation.

The study also found that curriculum planning was influenced by institutional quality assurance demands. Program leaders referred to graduate profiles, national qualification frameworks, accreditation requirements, and institutional vision. Yet, the translation of these policy-level expectations into course-level outcomes remained uneven. Some courses explicitly linked Arabic learning to Islamic studies, while others focused heavily on grammatical mastery. This indicates a common curriculum management issue: institutional vision may be well articulated, but operational curriculum design requires stronger alignment mechanisms (Widodo & Setiyawan, 2021; Nurbayan et al., 2021).

From an academic perspective, curriculum planning in Islamic higher education should avoid two extremes. The first is a traditional grammar-dominant model that treats Arabic mainly as a system of rules. The second is a purely communicative model that underestimates the importance of religious texts, classical registers, and academic reading. A stronger model should integrate Arabic for Islamic Studies, Arabic for Academic Purposes, Arabic for Communication, and Arabic for Digital Learning. This integrative planning reflects the multidimensional nature of Arabic and responds to global discussions on language curriculum development and proficiency-based learning (Alhawary, 2018; Mohamed, 2023; Abdullah et al., 2023).

Constructive Alignment between Learning Outcomes, Materials, Pedagogy, and Assessment

The second theme shows that curriculum quality depended heavily on the degree of alignment between learning outcomes, materials, pedagogy, and assessment. Curriculum documents

included outcomes related to reading comprehension, speaking, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and academic communication. However, classroom observations and syllabus analysis revealed that assessment practices sometimes remained narrower than the stated outcomes. In several courses, communicative competence appeared in the syllabus, but assessment emphasized written grammar tests and translation exercises.

> "*In the syllabus, we already mention speaking and reading competencies, but during assessment it is often easier to prepare grammar or translation tests. As a result, students' speaking ability is not always fully evaluated*." (Lecturer 5, interview)

Constructive alignment requires that intended learning outcomes guide teaching activities and assessment methods (Biggs, 1996). If a course outcome states that students should be able to deliver academic presentations in Arabic, then the learning process should include presentation practice, peer feedback, oral rehearsal, vocabulary scaffolding, and rubric-based oral assessment. Conversely, if assessment only tests grammatical rules, the actual curriculum experienced by students becomes narrower than the intended curriculum. This misalignment has been widely discussed in higher education literature, where constructive alignment may become a bureaucratic requirement rather than a pedagogical principle if not implemented critically (Loughlin et al., 2021; Roßnagel et al., 2021).

The study found four types of alignment challenges. First, some learning outcomes were too broad, making assessment design difficult. Second, materials were often selected from textbooks without sufficient adaptation to institutional graduate profiles. Third, teaching methods varied significantly across lecturers. Fourth, assessment rubrics for speaking, writing, and academic Arabic were not always standardized. These challenges suggest that Arabic curriculum management requires more than curriculum documentation; it requires collaborative curriculum mapping, rubric development, assessment moderation, and periodic course review.

Theoretically, constructive alignment should be combined with Arabic-specific curriculum logic. Arabic learning in Islamic higher education requires alignment among linguistic form, communicative function, textual interpretation, and academic use. For example, qirā'ah courses should not only train literal comprehension but also develop inferential reading, vocabulary recognition, discourse analysis, and understanding of Islamic terminology. Similarly, kalām courses should not only train everyday conversation but also academic discussion, seminar participation, and religious-ethical communication. Such alignment would strengthen both language competence and disciplinary relevance (Canale & Swain, 1980; Ellis et al., 2019; Hyland & Thompson, 2016).

Integrating CEFR with Islamic and Arabic Academic Literacy

The third theme concerns the adaptation of CEFR to Arabic language learning in Islamic higher education. Participants perceived CEFR as useful for mapping proficiency levels, designing progression, and clarifying outcomes. However, lecturers also emphasized that CEFR descriptors require adaptation because Arabic learning in Islamic higher education includes classical texts, religious vocabulary, academic registers, and diglossic realities.

> "*For everyday conversation, we can practice using dialogues from class activities. But when we have to read Islamic texts or explain Arabic academic materials, it becomes much more challenging*." (Student 14, interview)

This finding aligns with recent scholarship indicating that CEFR can support Arabic curriculum design but should not be transferred mechanically (Mohamed, 2023; Musthofa, 2022; Abdullah et al., 2023). CEFR was originally developed as a language proficiency framework with broad applicability, but Arabic presents specific issues, including the relationship between Modern Standard Arabic, classical Arabic, dialects, religious registers, and academic discourse. Therefore, CEFR adaptation in Islamic higher education should include descriptors for reading Islamic texts, summarizing Arabic academic materials, presenting religious arguments, writing structured academic paragraphs, and participating in scholarly discussions.

The study suggests that CEFR could be used at three levels of curriculum management. At the macro level, it can support program-level proficiency mapping from beginner to advanced levels. At the meso level, it can guide course sequencing, materials selection, and learning outcome formulation. At the micro level, it can inform task design, rubrics, formative assessment, and learner self-assessment. This approach is consistent with studies on Arabic CEFR frameworks, Arabic proficiency tests, Arabic-Online.net, and LexArabic as tools for proficiency mapping and assessment (Mohamed, 2023; Mahmudah & Musthofa, 2023; Gazali & Saefuloh, 2023; Alzahrani, 2024).

Nevertheless, CEFR integration should not displace local Islamic academic purposes. In Islamic higher education, Arabic proficiency is meaningful when students can use Arabic to access Islamic knowledge, analyze texts, participate in academic dialogue, and engage with contemporary Arabic resources. Thus, a CEFR-informed Arabic curriculum should include "Islamic academic literacy descriptors," such as identifying key concepts in turats texts, explaining Qur'anic or hadith-related vocabulary, summarizing Arabic journal articles, and presenting Islamic studies arguments in Arabic. This would make CEFR adaptation more contextually relevant and academically defensible.

Lecturer Competence, Pedagogical Content Knowledge, and TPACK

The fourth theme highlights the central role of lecturers in curriculum implementation. Participants agreed that lecturer competence strongly influenced whether curriculum goals were translated into meaningful learning experiences. Lecturers with strong Arabic content knowledge were able to explain grammar, vocabulary, and Islamic texts effectively. However, digital learning administrators and students noted that some lecturers needed further support in designing interactive digital tasks, online assessment, and LMS-based feedback.

> "*Some lecturers already use the LMS actively, but mostly for uploading materials and collecting assignments. Interactive discussions, online quizzes, and direct feedback are still not used consistently across courses*." (Digital learning administrator 1, interview)

This finding reflects the importance of pedagogical content knowledge, which refers to teachers' ability to transform subject matter into teachable and learnable forms (Shulman, 1986). In Arabic language education, PCK includes knowing how to teach grammar communicatively, how to scaffold reading comprehension, how to sequence vocabulary, how to correct pronunciation, how to integrate cultural context, and how to connect language forms with Islamic academic meanings. Lecturer competence therefore cannot be reduced to mastery of Arabic content; it must include pedagogical decision-making.

In the digital era, PCK must be extended into TPACK, which integrates technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). The study found that lecturers used technology in different ways. Some used LMS platforms mainly for

distributing PDFs and collecting assignments. Others used online quizzes, video-based tasks, discussion forums, digital portfolios, and recorded speaking assignments. These differences suggest that digital transformation depends not only on platform availability but also on lecturers' ability to design technology-supported learning aligned with Arabic learning goals. This is consistent with TPACK studies showing that technology integration requires a situated understanding of content, pedagogy, learners, and context (Irwanto, 2021; Schmid et al., 2021; Schmid et al., 2024).

The interpretation is that lecturer development should be embedded into curriculum management. Institutions should not assume that curriculum revision alone will improve learning quality. Lecturers need professional development in CEFR-based outcome writing, Arabic task-based learning, authentic assessment, LMS design, digital feedback, AI-supported learning ethics, and Arabic digital resources. Studies on digital Arabic learning, game-based Arabic learning, and e-campus platforms indicate that technology can increase flexibility and engagement, but only when pedagogically integrated (Abdul Ghani et al., 2022; Ritonga et al., 2022; Ritonga et al., 2024; Muhlis et al., 2024).

Curriculum Evaluation through CIPP and Continuous Quality Improvement

The fifth theme concerns curriculum evaluation. The institution conducted course evaluations at the end of semesters, but participants indicated that evaluation data were not always systematically connected to curriculum revision. Student feedback was collected, but it was sometimes treated as a satisfaction measure rather than evidence for curriculum improvement. Lecturers also reflected on teaching challenges, but these reflections were not always integrated into program-level decisions.

"We already conduct evaluations at the end of each semester, but they often stop at the reporting stage. What still needs improvement is how the evaluation results are used to revise the syllabus, teaching materials, and assessment practices." (Program leader 3, interview)

The CIPP model provides a useful framework for addressing this limitation. Context evaluation examines learner needs, institutional mission, graduate profiles, and external demands. Input evaluation examines lecturers, materials, facilities, technology, assessment instruments, and funding. Process evaluation examines classroom implementation, student engagement, LMS use, formative feedback, and teaching consistency. Product evaluation examines learning outcomes, proficiency gains, graduate competence, and curriculum impact (Stufflebeam, 2003; Sankaran & Saad, 2022). Applied to Arabic language curriculum management, CIPP enables evaluation to function as continuous improvement rather than end-point judgment.

The study indicates that Arabic curriculum evaluation should include multiple data sources. These include diagnostic proficiency tests, course syllabi, classroom observations, LMS analytics, student work samples, assessment rubrics, student feedback, lecturer reflection, alumni feedback, and stakeholder input. Such evaluation would help institutions identify whether students are progressing from basic language competence to academic Arabic, whether assessment reflects stated outcomes, whether digital tools support learning, and whether graduates can use Arabic in Islamic academic contexts.

Assessment quality is also central to curriculum evaluation. Formative assessment can support learning when feedback helps students understand current performance and next steps (Black & Wiliam, 2010). In Arabic language learning, this may include oral performance feedback, reading comprehension diagnostics, writing portfolios, vocabulary tracking, and self-assessment

against proficiency descriptors. Research on second language instruction and assessment emphasizes the importance of evidence-based instructional improvement (Norris & Ortega, 2000; Alderson, 2007). Therefore, Arabic curriculum evaluation should not merely check whether courses were delivered; it should examine whether learning actually occurred and how the curriculum can be improved.

Digital Transformation and the Future of Arabic Curriculum Management

The sixth theme concerns digital transformation. Participants reported that LMS and e-campus platforms had improved access to materials, assignment submission, attendance tracking, and communication. However, students emphasized that digital tools did not automatically increase Arabic interaction. The quality of digital learning depended on whether lecturers designed meaningful online activities.

> "*The LMS is helpful because we can access materials and submit assignments easily. But if the activities are only uploading files and submitting tasks, we still feel that there is limited interaction in Arabic*." (Student 21, interview)

This finding suggests that digital transformation should be understood as a curriculum management issue rather than a technical add-on. Digital platforms can support Arabic learning in at least four ways. First, they provide access to digital resources such as Arabic corpora, dictionaries, videos, podcasts, e-books, Qur'anic and hadith databases, and Arabic academic articles. Second, they enable interaction through forums, recorded speaking tasks, online discussions, peer feedback, and virtual seminars. Third, they support assessment through quizzes, digital portfolios, oral recordings, rubrics, and automated submission tracking. Fourth, they generate data for curriculum monitoring, such as student participation, assignment completion, assessment patterns, and learning progress.

Recent studies show that digital technologies can reshape teaching, learning, assessment, and institutional management in higher education (Castro Benavides et al., 2020; Haleem et al., 2022; Crompton & Burke, 2023). In Arabic education specifically, e-campus platforms, digital games, social media, mobile applications, and online Arabic learning platforms have been explored as ways to increase engagement and expand learning beyond the classroom (Ritonga et al., 2024; Abdul Ghani et al., 2022; Al-Abdullatif & Aldoghan, 2022; Wang & Vásquez, 2012; Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). However, technology also raises issues of access, digital competence, feedback quality, academic integrity, and pedagogical coherence.

The future of Arabic curriculum management in Islamic higher education will depend on whether institutions can integrate digital transformation into quality assurance. This requires digital curriculum mapping, LMS-based evidence collection, online assessment rubrics, lecturer training in TPACK, ethical guidelines for AI tools, and data-informed curriculum review. AI tools may support vocabulary practice, writing feedback, pronunciation training, translation comparison, and adaptive learning, but they also require critical literacy and ethical supervision. Therefore, digital transformation should strengthen—not replace—humanistic, religious, and scholarly dimensions of Arabic learning.

Overall, the six themes show that Arabic language curriculum management should be treated as a cyclical system. Needs analysis informs planning; planning shapes alignment; alignment structures pedagogy and assessment; assessment produces evidence; evaluation interprets evidence; digital platforms support learning and monitoring; and evaluation results feed back into

curriculum improvement. Such a model moves Arabic curriculum management beyond administrative compliance toward evidence-informed, learner-centered, digitally responsive, and religiously grounded educational quality.

The Integrated Arabic Curriculum Management Framework (IACMF) was developed from the six major findings of this study. It illustrates Arabic curriculum management as a cyclical and evidence-informed process connecting needs analysis, planning, constructive alignment, implementation, assessment, CIPP-based evaluation, lecturer competence, and digital transformation. This framework emphasizes that curriculum quality in Islamic higher education depends on the continuous integration of institutional vision, Islamic academic literacy, pedagogical practice, assessment evidence, and digital learning systems.

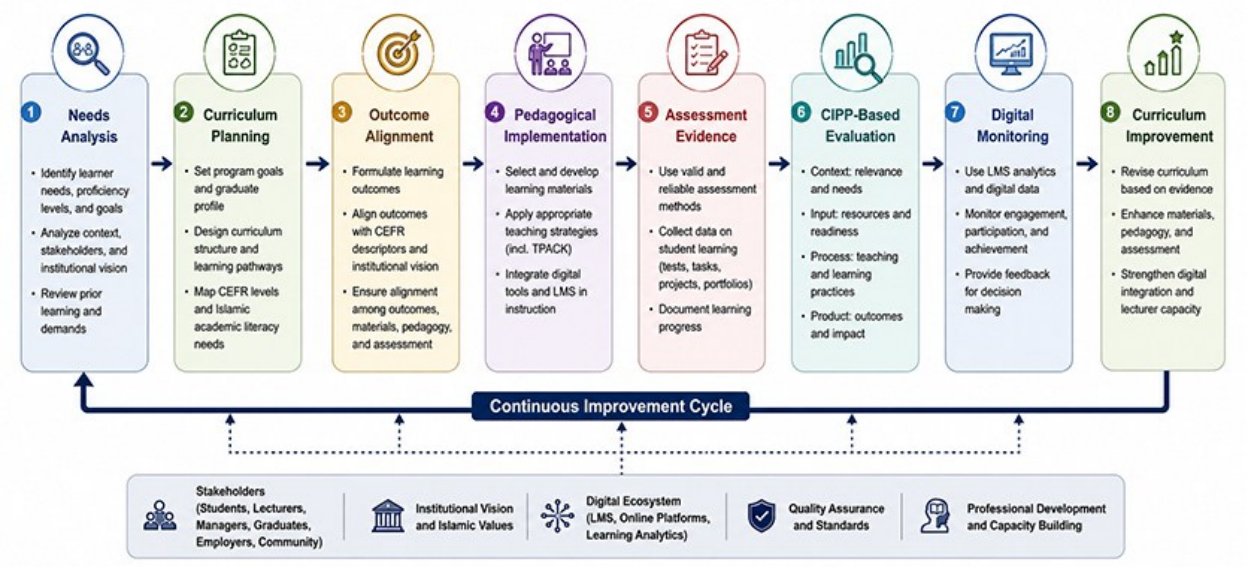


Figure 1. Integrated Arabic Curriculum Management Framework (IACMF)

Figure 1 illustrates the integrated and cyclical nature of Arabic language curriculum management identified in this study. The framework demonstrates how needs analysis informs curriculum planning and outcome alignment, which subsequently shape pedagogical implementation and assessment practices. Assessment evidence and digital monitoring support CIPP-based evaluation and continuous curriculum improvement. The framework also highlights that curriculum quality depends on the interaction among institutional vision, lecturer competence, digital ecosystems, and evidence-based quality assurance processes.

The findings of this study indicate that Arabic language curriculum management in Islamic higher education should be understood as a multidimensional process rather than a purely administrative activity. Needs analysis, for example, cannot be limited to identifying students' general language proficiency. Participants repeatedly associated curriculum relevance with students' ability to engage with Islamic academic texts, participate in scholarly communication, and use Arabic in digital learning environments. This suggests that learner needs in Islamic higher education are simultaneously linguistic, academic, religious, communicative, and technological. This finding is consistent with Richards (2021) and Nation and Macalister (2010), who argue that language curriculum design becomes ineffective when learner diversity and contextual demands are insufficiently addressed. In the present study, curriculum managers were aware of student diversity,

especially between pesantren graduates and students with limited Arabic backgrounds, yet the operational translation into differentiated learning pathways remained limited.

The issue of constructive alignment also emerged as a central challenge. Although curriculum documents emphasized communicative competence, classroom assessment practices often continued to privilege grammar, translation, and written tests. This mismatch reflects the risk that constructive alignment becomes procedural rather than transformative when institutions focus mainly on syllabus documentation rather than actual pedagogical coherence. Loughlin et al. (2021) similarly argue that alignment should not be reduced to administrative consistency among learning outcomes, teaching activities, and assessment. In Arabic language education, this issue is more complex because lecturers must balance grammatical accuracy, textual interpretation, communicative fluency, and academic discourse. Therefore, alignment in Arabic curricula should be treated as an ongoing pedagogical negotiation between linguistic tradition, communicative goals, Islamic academic literacy, and institutional expectations.

The findings further show that CEFR adaptation in Arabic language education requires contextual reinterpretation rather than direct adoption. Participants perceived CEFR-informed mapping as useful for clarifying levels and progression, but they also emphasized that Arabic learning in Islamic higher education involves more than everyday communication. Students are expected to read Islamic texts, understand religious terminology, summarize Arabic academic materials, and participate in scholarly discussions. This supports Mohamed's (2023) argument that Arabic proficiency frameworks must account for the linguistic characteristics of Arabic as well as the sociocultural purposes of its use. In this context, CEFR should be understood as a flexible reference system that interacts with local Islamic epistemological traditions, rather than as an imported framework applied without modification.

Lecturer competence appeared as another determining factor in curriculum implementation. The availability of LMS platforms and digital infrastructure did not automatically produce meaningful digital learning. In several cases, technology was used mainly for uploading materials and collecting assignments, while interactive discussions, online feedback, and collaborative Arabic tasks were not consistently implemented. This finding aligns with the TPACK framework, which emphasizes that technology integration becomes meaningful only when technological tools are pedagogically connected to disciplinary learning objectives (Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Schmid et al., 2021). Thus, digital transformation in Arabic education is not merely a matter of platform availability, but of lecturer capacity to transform digital tools into interactive, purposeful, and content-sensitive Arabic learning environments.

The study also reveals that curriculum evaluation needs to move beyond administrative reporting. Although course evaluations and student feedback were collected, participants indicated that these data were not always systematically used to revise syllabi, teaching materials, or assessment practices. This finding resonates with Stufflebeam's (2003) view that evaluation should support decision-making and continuous improvement rather than function solely as institutional accountability. In Arabic language curriculum management, CIPP-based evaluation is particularly relevant because curriculum quality depends on the interaction among learner progression, assessment validity, lecturer competence, digital readiness, and institutional support. Evaluation should therefore be positioned as an evidence-informed mechanism for curriculum renewal, not merely as an end-of-semester formality.

Finally, the findings demonstrate that digital transformation should be evaluated not only by the presence of LMS or online platforms, but also by the quality of interaction and learning support they enable. Students appreciated easier access to materials and assignment submission, yet they still experienced limited Arabic interaction when digital activities were restricted to uploading files and submitting tasks. This is consistent with studies on online and mobile-assisted language learning, which emphasize that meaningful interaction remains central to second language acquisition despite technological advancement (Wang & Vásquez, 2012; Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). Therefore, digital transformation in Arabic curriculum management should prioritize interactive learning ecology, formative feedback, learning analytics, and curriculum decision-making, rather than platform utilization alone. Overall, these findings strengthen the argument that Arabic curriculum management should move from document-based compliance toward an integrated, evidence-informed, digitally responsive, and contextually grounded quality assurance model.

Based on the six themes identified in this study, the Integrated Arabic Curriculum Management Framework (IACMF) is proposed as a conceptual model for Arabic curriculum management in Islamic higher education. This framework explains that curriculum quality is produced through a cyclical relationship among needs analysis, curriculum planning, constructive alignment, pedagogical implementation, assessment, CIPP-based evaluation, lecturer competence, and digital transformation. The IACMF shows that Arabic curriculum management should not be limited to syllabus preparation or administrative compliance, but should function as an evidence-informed quality assurance process that continuously connects institutional vision, Islamic academic literacy, student needs, teaching practices, assessment evidence, and digital learning ecosystems.

The findings of this study also provide several pedagogical, policy, and institutional implications for Arabic language education in Islamic higher education. Pedagogically, Arabic lecturers should move beyond grammar-oriented instruction by integrating communicative competence, Islamic academic literacy, formative assessment, and interactive digital learning into classroom practice. From a policy perspective, curriculum management should be supported through CEFR-informed curriculum mapping, standardized assessment frameworks, lecturer professional development, and evidence-based quality assurance systems. Institutionally, Islamic higher education institutions need to strengthen the integration of curriculum evaluation, digital learning ecosystems, LMS-based monitoring, and continuous curriculum improvement in order to ensure that Arabic language education remains academically relevant, religiously grounded, and responsive to contemporary digital transformation.

CONCLUSION

This study examined Arabic language curriculum management in Islamic higher education by integrating curriculum planning, constructive alignment, CEFR-informed proficiency mapping, CIPP-based evaluation, lecturer competence, TPACK, and digital transformation into a single analytical framework. The findings show that the quality of Arabic language curricula depends on the institution's capacity to connect learner needs, Islamic academic purposes, learning outcomes, materials, pedagogy, assessment, evaluation, and digital platforms within a coherent and cyclical quality assurance system. The theoretical novelty of this study lies in its synthesis of language curriculum development, constructive alignment, CEFR adaptation, CIPP evaluation, and TPACK into an integrated model specifically designed for Arabic language education in Islamic higher education.

Contextually, the study contributes to Indonesian Islamic higher education by demonstrating that Arabic curriculum management must respond not only to linguistic proficiency but also to religious literacy, academic communication, institutional vision, and digital learning ecosystems.

Conceptually, this study proposes the Integrated Arabic Curriculum Management Framework (IACMF), a theoretical model that positions Arabic curriculum management as a cyclical and interconnected system integrating needs analysis, curriculum planning, constructive alignment, CEFR-informed proficiency development, pedagogical implementation, CIPP-based evaluation, lecturer competence, and digital transformation. The framework extends existing discussions in Arabic language education by connecting language curriculum theory with Islamic academic literacy, evidence-informed quality assurance, and digitally responsive pedagogy within the context of Islamic higher education.

Despite its contribution, this study has several methodological limitations. First, the research was conducted within a single Islamic higher education institution; therefore, the findings should be interpreted as contextually grounded rather than universally representative of Arabic language programs in different institutional settings. Second, as with qualitative inquiry more broadly, the interpretation of interview, observation, and document data may still reflect elements of researcher subjectivity despite the use of reflexive memoing, triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing. Third, although LMS activity records provided insight into patterns of digital participation and curriculum implementation, the analytics available through the institutional platform remained limited and did not fully capture the depth or quality of learner interaction. In addition, the study did not employ longitudinal proficiency measurement; consequently, the long-term relationship between curriculum management practices and sustained Arabic language development could not be comprehensively examined. Future studies may therefore expand the investigation across multiple Islamic higher education institutions, integrate longitudinal proficiency tracking, and combine qualitative inquiry with learning analytics and mixed-method approaches to strengthen evidence-based curriculum evaluation.

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