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Reconstructing Contemporary Islamic Education Curricula through Ibn Khaldun's Educational Philosophy: An Integrative Dialogue with Modern Curriculum Theory

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Abstract: This study aims to reconstruct contemporary Islamic education curricula through Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy by integrating its epistemological, pedagogical, and curricular principles with modern curriculum theory. Using qualitative library research, the study analyzed *Al-Muqaddimah* as the primary source alongside contemporary Scopus-indexed literature through content analysis and philosophical interpretation. The findings identify four interconnected curriculum pillars: epistemological integration between *naqliyyah* and *aqliyyah*, development of *malakah* as holistic competence, developmental curriculum organization based on *al-tadrij* and *takrar*, and dialogical learner-centered pedagogy. These findings demonstrate that Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy provides a more comprehensive curriculum reconstruction framework than previously recognized, challenging the assumption that his contribution is primarily historical. This study strengthens previous scholarship on Islamic educational philosophy, questions the dichotomy between religious and secular knowledge, and introduces the Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework as a novel conceptual model linking classical Islamic educational philosophy with integrated curriculum, competency-based education, developmental curriculum theory, and constructivist learning. The framework provides a theoretical foundation for curriculum reform, educational policy, and future empirical studies supporting holistic, ethical, and digitally responsive Islamic education.

***Abstrak**: Penelitian ini bertujuan merekonstruksi kurikulum pendidikan Islam kontemporer melalui filsafat pendidikan Ibnu Khaldun dengan mengintegrasikan prinsip epistemologis, pedagogis, dan kurikulernya ke dalam teori kurikulum modern. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kepustakaan melalui analisis Al-Muqaddimah sebagai sumber primer serta literatur bereputasi Scopus menggunakan analisis isi dan interpretasi filosofis. Hasil penelitian mengidentifikasi empat pilar rekonstruksi kurikulum, yaitu integrasi epistemologi naqliyyah dan aqliyyah, pengembangan malakah sebagai kompetensi holistik, organisasi kurikulum perkembangan berdasarkan al-tadrij dan takrar, serta pedagogi dialogis yang berpusat pada peserta didik. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa filsafat pendidikan Ibnu Khaldun memiliki relevansi yang lebih luas daripada yang dipahami sebelumnya dan mampu menyediakan kerangka rekonstruksi kurikulum yang komprehensif. Penelitian ini memperkuat kajian tentang filsafat pendidikan Islam, mengkritisi dikotomi ilmu agama dan ilmu umum, serta memperkenalkan Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework sebagai model konseptual baru yang menghubungkan tradisi intelektual Islam klasik dengan kurikulum terpadu, pendidikan berbasis kompetensi, kurikulum perkembangan, dan pembelajaran konstruktivistik. Kerangka tersebut memberikan landasan teoretis bagi reformasi kurikulum, pengembangan kebijakan pendidikan, dan penelitian empiris untuk mendukung pendidikan Islam yang holistik, etis, serta responsif terhadap era digital.*

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid transformation of society driven by digitalisation, artificial intelligence, and global interconnectedness has fundamentally reshaped educational priorities across the world. Contemporary curricula are expected not only to transmit disciplinary knowledge but also to cultivate critical thinking, ethical reasoning, creativity, collaboration, digital literacy, and lifelong learning competencies. Within this changing landscape, Islamic Religious Education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI*) faces a particularly complex challenge. Beyond preserving Islamic beliefs and values, contemporary PAI must prepare learners to respond critically and ethically to issues such as misinformation, religious polarisation, cyberbullying, hate speech, identity construction, and the moral consequences of technological advancement (Manshur & Isroani, 2023). Consequently, curriculum development can no longer be understood merely as the organisation of learning content but rather as a comprehensive educational framework that integrates knowledge, values, competencies, and learners' social realities (Ninkovič & Sučevič, 2013; Pinar, 2012).

Despite various curriculum reforms, contemporary Islamic Religious Education continues to encounter persistent theoretical and practical challenges. In many educational contexts, curriculum implementation remains characterised by a dichotomous separation between revealed knowledge (*naqliyyah*) and rational or empirical knowledge (*aqliyyah*), resulting in fragmented learning experiences that emphasise cognitive memorisation rather than critical understanding and contextual application (Syafei, 2025). Similar concerns have been raised by Bahri (2025), Fernadi (2025), and Fakhrurazi et al (2024), who argue that the weak integration between religious and scientific knowledge has reduced the relevance of Islamic education in responding to contemporary societal challenges. Recent scholarship likewise suggests that Islamic education should be reconstructed through an integrated philosophical framework capable of connecting spiritual formation, intellectual development, ethical reasoning, and social responsibility (Embong et al., 2017; Waghid, 2009; Sijamhodžić-Nadarević, 2024). Rather than functioning solely as religious instruction, Islamic education should cultivate holistic individuals who combine faith, knowledge, character, and civic responsibility within rapidly changing societies.

The need for curriculum reconstruction is also consistent with developments in contemporary curriculum theory, which increasingly conceptualises curriculum as a dynamic, contextual, and interdisciplinary process rather than a fixed collection of subjects. Modern curriculum scholars argue that curriculum should emerge from dialogue among educational philosophy, learners' characteristics, societal needs, cultural contexts, and future competencies (Pinar, 2012; Prasad et al., 2018). Likewise, recent studies on curriculum reconstruction emphasise that effective curriculum reform requires integrating multiple domains of knowledge, practical competencies, and ethical values to prepare learners for increasingly complex environments (Liu & Guo, 2024; Tao et al., 2024). These developments indicate that curriculum reconstruction within Islamic education should likewise move beyond technical curriculum revision toward a comprehensive philosophical reorientation that reconnects Islamic intellectual traditions with contemporary educational theory.

Within this context, the educational philosophy of Ibn Khaldun offers a highly relevant yet underutilised intellectual foundation for reconstructing contemporary Islamic education curricula. Widely recognised as one of the greatest Muslim intellectuals and a pioneer of sociology, historiography, and social philosophy, Ibn Khaldun developed an integrated understanding of education in which learning is inseparable from the social, political, economic, and cultural dynamics of civilisation (Alatas, 2013; Abdalla, 2016). His *Muqaddimah* presents education not merely as knowledge transmission but as a gradual process of developing *malakah*—deep intellectual competence acquired through continuous learning, experience, reflection, and practice. Education, therefore, should nurture learners' intellectual maturity, moral character, and practical capability simultaneously rather than focusing exclusively on textual mastery or rote memorisation (Razak et al., 2020).

More importantly, Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy demonstrates remarkable compatibility with several contemporary educational perspectives. His emphasis on gradual learning (*al-tadrij*), learners' psychological readiness, experiential learning, integration between *naqliyyah* and *aqliyyah*, and the functional purpose of knowledge closely resonates with student-centred learning, constructivism, competency-based education, and humanistic pedagogy. Recent scholarship has shown that Ibn Khaldun's educational ideas remain highly relevant to contemporary child-centred education, learner agency, and contextual pedagogy without reducing his intellectual heritage to a modern reinterpretation (Ahn & Juraev, 2025). Likewise, studies on Islamic educational philosophy argue that the ultimate objective of Islamic education is holistic human development grounded in *fitrah*, ethical cultivation, justice, compassion, and intellectual growth (Pranajaya et al., 2024; Soleimani & Tashakori, 2026). These convergences suggest that Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy provides an important bridge between the classical Islamic intellectual tradition and modern curriculum theory.

Previous studies have examined Ibn Khaldun from various educational perspectives. Existing literature has explored his pedagogical methods (Nurarifah, 2023), teacher–student ethics (Hamidalloh & Fahmi, 2025), educational values (Saputra et al., 2024), philosophical foundations (Alatas, 2013), sociological thought (Razak et al., 2020), and contemporary educational relevance (Ahn & Juraev, 2025). Other scholars have discussed broader issues of Islamic educational philosophy, integrated curriculum, and holistic education (Embong et al., 2017; Waghid, 2009; Sijamhodžić-Nadarević, 2024). Nevertheless, the existing literature predominantly treats Ibn Khaldun as a historical educational thinker or moral philosopher. Few studies have systematically reconstructed his educational philosophy into a comprehensive curriculum framework capable of engaging contemporary curriculum theory while addressing the educational demands of the twenty-first century. This theoretical gap remains insufficiently addressed.

Accordingly, this study moves beyond descriptive analyses of Ibn Khaldun's educational thought by proposing an integrative dialogue between his educational philosophy and contemporary curriculum theory. Rather than simply interpreting classical concepts, this article reconstructs four fundamental educational principles derived from the *Muqaddimah*—namely gradual learning (*al-tadrij*), epistemological integration, functional-pragmatic education (*malakah*), and humanistic pedagogy—into a conceptual framework for developing contemporary

Islamic Religious Education curricula. In doing so, the study contributes theoretically by positioning Ibn Khaldun not only as a classical Muslim scholar but also as a curriculum theorist whose educational philosophy remains capable of informing present-day curriculum reconstruction.

This study therefore addresses two principal research questions. First, how can Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy be conceptualised as a theoretical foundation for reconstructing contemporary Islamic Religious Education curricula? Second, how can his educational principles be integrated with modern curriculum theory to develop an adaptive, integrative, humanistic, and socially responsive curriculum framework? By answering these questions, this article seeks to contribute to the growing discourse on curriculum reconstruction within Islamic education while demonstrating that the Islamic intellectual tradition continues to offer valuable theoretical resources for addressing contemporary educational challenges. Ultimately, the study proposes an Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework that bridges classical Islamic educational philosophy with modern curriculum theory, thereby enriching both Islamic educational scholarship and contemporary curriculum studies.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research design with a philosophical-conceptual inquiry perspective. Library research is an appropriate method for investigating theoretical and philosophical issues because it systematically examines written documents to generate conceptual understanding and theoretical reconstruction rather than empirical generalisation (Zed, 2014). In qualitative inquiry, this approach enables researchers to interpret meanings, concepts, and educational values embedded in texts while situating them within broader educational discourses (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Ng et al., 2018). Philosophical inquiry further provides a rigorous framework for critically examining educational assumptions, clarifying conceptual relationships, and reconstructing educational theories relevant to contemporary practice (Bridges, 2009; Burbules & Warnick, 2012; Ndofirepi & Shumba, 2012). Accordingly, this study did not merely describe Ibn Khaldun’s educational ideas but critically reconstructed them into a contemporary conceptual framework for Islamic Religious Education curriculum development. Such conceptual research is particularly valuable for theory building because it synthesizes philosophical arguments and scholarly literature to generate new educational perspectives (Kettley, 2010; Mathebula & Letseka, 2025).

The primary source of this study was Al-Muqaddimah by Ibn Khaldun, particularly the chapters discussing the philosophy of knowledge, educational objectives, teaching methods, human development, and the relationship between education and civilization. Secondary sources consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and book chapters indexed in Scopus, Google Scholar, and the Science and Technology Index (SINTA). The literature selection prioritized publications addressing Ibn Khaldun’s educational philosophy, Islamic educational thought, curriculum theory, philosophy of education, qualitative methodology, and curriculum reconstruction. The inclusion of contemporary Scopus-indexed literature enabled dialogue between classical Islamic intellectual traditions and

current educational scholarship while strengthening the theoretical foundation of the proposed curriculum framework (Smyth, 2004; Zackoff et al., 2019).

Data were collected through documentation and systematic textual analysis. Documentation is particularly suitable for qualitative library research because it allows researchers to examine written materials as meaningful sources of evidence and interpret them within their historical and conceptual contexts (Bowen, 2009). The collection process comprised four stages. First, relevant primary and secondary literature was identified through database searches and scholarly references. Second, the retrieved literature was screened according to its relevance to the research objectives. Third, educational concepts contained in *Al-Muqaddimah* were extracted and organized into thematic categories, including educational aims, epistemology, curriculum content, pedagogy, learner development, and teacher roles. Finally, these themes were compared with contemporary curriculum theories to identify conceptual convergence and opportunities for curriculum reconstruction. Similar systematic document analysis procedures have been widely recommended for qualitative educational research because they improve transparency and conceptual consistency (Şahin & Kiliç, 2018).

The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis integrated with critical philosophical analysis. Content analysis provides a systematic procedure for identifying recurring concepts, patterns, and relationships within textual data while preserving interpretive depth (Krippendorff, 2018; Price, 2010; West, 2017; Mendes & Miskulin, 2017). The analysis began with repeated close reading of *Al-Muqaddimah* to identify educational concepts and units of meaning. These concepts were subsequently coded into broader thematic categories before being interpreted through contemporary perspectives on Islamic education, curriculum studies, and educational philosophy. Critical philosophical analysis was then employed to examine the epistemological assumptions underlying Ibn Khaldun's educational thought and evaluate its relevance for contemporary curriculum discourse (Nicholson, 2016). Finally, an integrative synthesis was conducted to reconstruct the conceptual principles of a contemporary Islamic Religious Education curriculum centred on four major dimensions: epistemological integration, gradual learning (*al-tadrij*), competency development (*malakah*), and humanistic pedagogy. This process transformed classical educational ideas into an original conceptual framework capable of responding to twenty-first-century educational challenges (Obukhova & Proshko, 2023).

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, several qualitative validation strategies were employed. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing interpretations of *Al-Muqaddimah* with contemporary scholarship on Islamic education, curriculum theory, educational philosophy, and qualitative methodology (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition, conceptual triangulation was achieved by examining Ibn Khaldun's educational thought through multiple theoretical perspectives, including Islamic educational philosophy, modern curriculum theory, and competency-based education. Throughout the research process, an audit trail documenting literature selection, coding decisions, analytical procedures, and conceptual synthesis was maintained to improve transparency and dependability (Ng et al., 2013, 2018). Reflexive interpretation was also applied to minimize subjective bias by continuously relating emerging interpretations to the original

text and contemporary scholarly discussions. These strategies strengthened the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and theoretical rigor of the resulting Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework, ensuring that the proposed framework was grounded in both classical Islamic scholarship and contemporary curriculum research (Zackoff et al., 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Reconstructing the Epistemological Foundation of the Contemporary Islamic Education Curriculum

Content analysis of *Al-Muqaddimah* shows that Ibn Khaldun viewed education as a holistic process of developing intellectual, moral, and social capacities rather than merely transmitting religious knowledge. He conceived knowledge (*'ilm*) as an integrated epistemological system in which revelation (*naqliyyah*) and rational inquiry (*aqliyyah*) function as complementary sources of knowledge (Ibn Khaldun, 2011). Accordingly, Islamic curriculum development should move beyond the dichotomy between religious and secular disciplines toward an integrated framework combining spirituality, rationality, and social responsibility. This interpretation supports previous studies portraying Ibn Khaldun as an educational thinker who unified theology, philosophy, sociology, and history within a coherent intellectual system (Alatas, 2013; Swiney, 2014; Abdalla, 2016).

The findings further indicate that Ibn Khaldun's rejection of epistemological dualism provides a philosophical foundation for reconstructing the contemporary Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum. Rather than separating religious and empirical sciences, *Al-Muqaddimah* situates all knowledge within the broader goal of advancing civilization (*'umrān*) and preparing humans to fulfil their responsibilities as God's vicegerents on earth. Consequently, curriculum should integrate Qur'anic values, scientific inquiry, ethical reasoning, and practical problem-solving, reinforcing earlier studies that highlight the continuing relevance of Ibn Khaldun's integrative worldview for contemporary education (Amin et al., 2023; Dajani, 2015; Razak et al., 2020; Tahir & Nori, 2023).

This epistemological reconstruction also aligns with contemporary integrated curriculum theory, which emphasizes interdisciplinary learning, authentic contexts, and the integration of cognitive, moral, spiritual, and social dimensions (Ninkovič & Sučevič, 2013; Liu & Guo, 2024; Tao et al., 2024). Likewise, curriculum integration should enable learners to interpret contemporary issues—including environmental sustainability, digital ethics, social justice, economic responsibility, and technological development—through Islamic values. Similar studies report that integrated Islamic curricula strengthen intellectual development, ethical awareness, interdisciplinary thinking, and professional readiness (Mazlan et al., 2025; Isaac, 2025; Asfiati et al., 2023; Zainuddin, 2016), while coherent ontological, epistemological, theological, and axiological foundations remain essential for holistic human development (Embong et al., 2017; Sijamhodžić-Nadarević, 2024).

Accordingly, this study reconstructs Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy into an Integrated Islamic Curriculum in which epistemological integration serves as the central organizing principle. Revelation functions as the normative

foundation, rational inquiry as the methodological approach, and contextual experience as the arena for applying Islamic values. Thus, curriculum reconstruction extends beyond revising content to reorganizing the philosophical relationship among knowledge, values, competencies, and contemporary realities. This epistemological integration constitutes the first pillar of the proposed Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework.

Table 1. Reconstructing the Epistemological Foundation of the Contemporary Islamic Education Curriculum

Curriculum Dimension	Ibn Khaldun's Educational Philosophy	Modern Curriculum Theory	Reconstructed Contemporary PAI Curriculum
Knowledge foundation	Integration of *naqliyyah* and *aqliyyah*	Integrated curriculum	Holistic and non-dichotomous curriculum
Educational orientation	Knowledge serves civilization (*'umrān*)	Contextual and authentic learning	Knowledge linked to contemporary societal issues
Epistemological approach	Revelation, reason, and experience are complementary	Interdisciplinary learning	Integration of Islamic studies, science, technology, and social sciences
Learning outcome	Intellectual, moral, and social development	Competency-based education	Ethical, critical, adaptive, and spiritually grounded learners
Curriculum contribution	Development of *malakah* through integrated knowledge	Curriculum reconstruction	Integrated Islamic Curriculum Framework

Reconstructing Curriculum Goals: From *Malakah* to Twenty-First-Century Competencies

The content analysis of *Al-Muqaddimah* indicates that the primary goal of education is not the accumulation of knowledge through memorisation but the cultivation of *malakah*—deeply internalised competence that enables learners to apply knowledge wisely across diverse social contexts (Ibn Khaldun, 2011). Educational success is therefore measured by learners' ability to transform knowledge into intellectual habits, ethical conduct, and practical action rather than merely reproducing information. This interpretation reflects Ibn Khaldun's criticism of rote learning and his emphasis on understanding, reflection, and continuous practice (Dajani, 2015; Amin et al., 2023). Likewise, recent studies describe *malakah* as a dynamic process integrating cognitive, affective, and behavioural development (Widianti et al., 2024).

Building on this concept, the present study reconstructs *malakah* as the philosophical foundation of competency-oriented Islamic education. Unlike conventional competency models that emphasize technical skills, Ibn Khaldun's philosophy defines competence as the integration of intellectual maturity, moral integrity, social responsibility, and adaptive capacity. This perspective enriches competency-based curriculum theory by incorporating ethical and spiritual dimensions alongside knowledge and skills within authentic learning environments (Romero & González, 2016; Tao et al., 2024).

The findings further demonstrate that *malakah* closely aligns with twenty-first-century educational demands, including critical thinking, creativity,

collaboration, communication, digital literacy, and ethical reasoning. However, these competencies should remain grounded in spiritual formation and moral responsibility. Accordingly, the reconstructed PAI curriculum integrates Islamic values with higher-order thinking to foster responsible decision-making and meaningful social engagement, consistent with recent studies emphasizing creativity, sustainability, ethical awareness, and professional competence in Islamic education (Khimmataliev et al., 2025; Bakti et al., 2025).

Furthermore, Ibn Khaldun viewed *malakah* as a lifelong developmental process achieved through continuous learning, repeated practice, and social experience. This perspective complements contemporary curriculum theory, which regards competence as an evolving capability for adapting to technological, social, and professional change (Ninkovič & Sučevič, 2013; Prasad et al., 2018). Within Islamic education, it also reflects the integrated objectives of *tarbiyah*, *ta'līm*, and *ta'dīb*, through which intellectual, moral, and civic development progress simultaneously (Waghid, 2009; Soleimani & Tashakori, 2026).

Accordingly, this study reconstructs the goals of the contemporary PAI curriculum from the transmission of religious knowledge toward the development of holistic twenty-first-century Muslim competencies. In this framework, *malakah* serves as the conceptual bridge between Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy and competency-based curriculum theory, constituting the second pillar of the proposed Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework.

Table 2. Reconstruction of Curriculum Goals Based on Ibn Khaldun's Concept of *Malakah*

Curriculum Goal	Ibn Khaldun's Educational Philosophy	Contemporary Curriculum Theory	Reconstructed PAI Curriculum
Knowledge acquisition	Development of *malakah*	Competency-based learning	Deep understanding and application of Islamic knowledge
Character formation	Moral and spiritual cultivation	Character education	Ethical, responsible, and faithful Muslim citizens
Intellectual development	Rational inquiry and critical reflection	Higher-order thinking skills	Critical and reflective learners
Social competence	Preparation for social life (*'umrān*)	Collaborative learning	Active participation in multicultural society
Lifelong development	Continuous practice and habituation	Lifelong learning	Adaptive, innovative, and self-directed learners
Digital competence	Responsible use of knowledge	Twenty-first-century competencies	Digital ethics grounded in Islamic values

Reconstructing Curriculum Organization and Learning Process

The analysis of *Al-Muqaddimah* demonstrates that Ibn Khaldun viewed curriculum organization as a developmental process aligned with learners' cognitive, psychological, and social readiness. He emphasized *al-tadrij* (gradual progression), *takrār* (systematic repetition), and continuous practice as essential mechanisms for developing *malakah*. Learning should therefore progress from simple to complex concepts through repeated engagement in different contexts, making curriculum organization a process of creating meaningful learning experiences rather than merely sequencing content. This interpretation supports previous studies showing that Ibn Khaldun rejected rote memorization because it

inhibits intellectual development and critical reasoning (Dajani, 2015; Amin et al., 2023; Ahn & Juraev, 2025).

These principles closely correspond with contemporary curriculum sequencing and reconstruction theories, which emphasize progressive, interdisciplinary, contextual, and competency-oriented learning rather than fragmented subject-based instruction (Ninkovič & Sučevič, 2013; Tao et al., 2024; Liu & Guo, 2024). Accordingly, *al-tadrij* functions not only as a pedagogical strategy but also as a curriculum design principle ensuring coherence and developmental progression throughout the learning process.

The findings further reveal that knowledge acquires educational value only when it contributes to solving practical problems and advancing civilization (*'umrān*). Consequently, curriculum should integrate Islamic teachings with contemporary issues such as technological development, environmental sustainability, multiculturalism, economic ethics, and civic responsibility. This perspective supports recent studies demonstrating that integrated curricula strengthen learners' ability to transfer knowledge across disciplines and address authentic societal challenges (Romero & González, 2016; Cheng et al., 2025; Yang et al., 2026).

Moreover, Ibn Khaldun viewed learners as active participants who construct understanding through observation, inquiry, dialogue, and continuous practice. This perspective aligns with constructivist and student-centred learning approaches that emphasize collaboration, reflection, authentic learning, and technology integration (Onyango & Gitonga, 2017; Tunjera & Chigona, 2020). Therefore, curriculum organization should promote inquiry-based learning, collaborative projects, contextual case studies, and reflective dialogue that facilitate the internalization of Islamic values through meaningful educational experiences.

Accordingly, this study reconstructs the PAI curriculum as a developmental and contextual learning system integrating *al-tadrij*, interdisciplinary curriculum design, authentic learning, and student-centred pedagogy. The reconstructed model emphasizes progressive competency development and the continuous interaction of revelation, rational inquiry, and contemporary societal issues, constituting the third pillar of the proposed Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework.

Table 3. Reconstruction of Curriculum Organization and Learning Process

Curriculum Component	Ibn Khaldun's Educational Philosophy	Contemporary Curriculum Theory	Reconstructed Contemporary PAI Curriculum
Curriculum sequence	*Al-tadrij* (gradual progression)	Developmental curriculum	Progressive learning according to learner readiness
Knowledge development	*Takrār* (systematic repetition)	Spiral curriculum	Continuous reinforcement and deeper understanding
Learning orientation	Functional knowledge for *'umrān*	Authentic and contextual learning	Islamic learning connected with real-life problems
Learning process	Observation, reflection, dialogue, and practice	Constructivist and student-centred learning	Inquiry-based, collaborative, and reflective learning
Curriculum integration	Unity of religious and rational sciences	Interdisciplinary curriculum	Integrated Islamic curriculum across disciplines

Expected outcome	Internalization of *malakah*	Comprehensive competency development	Holistic, adaptive, and socially responsible graduates

Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework: A Dialogue between Ibn Khaldun and Modern Curriculum Theory

The synthesis of the findings demonstrates that Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy provides a coherent foundation for reconstructing contemporary Islamic education curricula. Rather than serving merely as a historical legacy, his educational thought offers an integrated framework encompassing epistemological foundations, curriculum goals, curriculum organization, and pedagogy. These dimensions align closely with contemporary curriculum theories, including integrated curriculum, competency-based education, constructivist learning, and curriculum reconstruction, highlighting Ibn Khaldun's continuing relevance for curriculum reform in rapidly changing educational contexts (Alatas, 2013; Ahn & Juraev, 2025; Pranajaya et al., 2024).

The findings further indicate that curriculum reconstruction should extend beyond revising curriculum content or instructional strategies to rethinking the philosophical foundations of education. Ibn Khaldun viewed educational success as the harmonious integration of knowledge, human development, and civilization (*'umrān*). Accordingly, curriculum should cultivate intellectual competence, ethical responsibility, spiritual maturity, and social engagement within a unified educational framework. This holistic perspective complements recent studies advocating integrated philosophical, theological, and pedagogical foundations for Islamic education that preserve Islamic identity while addressing contemporary educational challenges (Embong et al., 2017; Sijamhodžić-Nadarević, 2024; Khimmataliev et al., 2025).

The analysis also reveals a strong conceptual dialogue between Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy and modern curriculum theory. The integration of *naqliyyah* and *aqliyyah* parallels integrated curriculum theory, *malakah* corresponds to competency-based education, *al-tadrij* reflects developmental curriculum sequencing, and his emphasis on observation, dialogue, and practice aligns with constructivist and student-centred learning. These convergences demonstrate that curriculum innovation can emerge through a critical dialogue between classical Islamic educational philosophy and contemporary curriculum theory rather than replacing one with the other (Yang et al., 2026; Liu & Guo, 2024; Tao et al., 2024).

Based on these findings, this study proposes the Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework as its principal conceptual contribution. The framework positions epistemological integration as the curriculum foundation, holistic competency development as its objective, developmental and contextual learning as its organizational principle, and dialogical pedagogy as its instructional approach. By integrating cognitive, affective, spiritual, ethical, and social dimensions into a unified curriculum architecture, the framework offers a theoretically grounded model through which Islamic education can respond to technological transformation, globalization, multiculturalism, environmental sustainability, and digital ethics while preserving its philosophical identity.

Table 4. Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework Based on Ibn Khaldun's Educational Philosophy

Curriculum Dimension	Ibn Khaldun's Educational Philosophy	Modern Curriculum Theory	Reconstructed Contemporary Islamic Education Curriculum
Epistemological Foundation	Integration of *naqliyyah* and *aqliyyah*	Integrated curriculum	Holistic integration of revelation, reason, and scientific inquiry
Curriculum Goals	Development of *malakah*	Competency-based curriculum	Islamic character, critical thinking, lifelong learning, and digital competence
Curriculum Organization	*Al-tadrij*, *takrār*, and functional knowledge	Developmental and interdisciplinary curriculum	Progressive, contextual, and integrated curriculum
Learning Process	Observation, dialogue, reflection, and practice	Constructivist and student-centred learning	Inquiry-based, collaborative, reflective, and authentic learning
Graduate Profile	Morally upright, intellectually mature, socially responsible individual	Twenty-first-century global citizen	Spiritually grounded, ethically responsible, adaptive, and globally competent Muslim graduate

The proposed framework contributes to the growing discourse on curriculum reconstruction by demonstrating that Islamic educational philosophy possesses sufficient conceptual resources to engage contemporary educational theories critically and constructively. Rather than positioning Islamic education in opposition to educational modernization, the framework illustrates how classical Islamic intellectual traditions can become active partners in designing innovative, contextual, and future-oriented curricula. Accordingly, the Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework offers a theoretically robust model for curriculum development in Islamic educational institutions seeking to balance religious authenticity with contemporary educational relevance. This framework therefore represents the central novelty of the present study and provides a conceptual foundation for future empirical research examining its implementation across diverse Islamic educational contexts.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy provides a coherent conceptual foundation for reconstructing the contemporary Islamic education curriculum. Rather than representing a historical account of medieval Islamic pedagogy, *Al-Muqaddimah* presents an integrated educational philosophy encompassing epistemological assumptions, curriculum objectives, curriculum organization, pedagogical principles, and the broader social purpose of education. The synthesis of the four findings indicates that education is a transformative process directed toward the cultivation of *malakah*, the integration of *naqliyyah* and *aqliyyah*, and the advancement of human civilization (*'umrān*). These findings suggest that Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy remains highly relevant for addressing contemporary curriculum reform, particularly within Islamic educational institutions seeking to reconcile religious authenticity with the demands of twenty-first-century education.

This interpretation extends previous scholarship that has predominantly examined Ibn Khaldun as a historian, sociologist, or philosopher of civilization rather than as a curriculum thinker. Cheddadi (2020) highlights Ibn Khaldun's interdisciplinary worldview, while Alatas (2013) argues that his epistemological framework transcends conventional disciplinary boundaries. Building on these perspectives, the present study demonstrates that Ibn Khaldun's interdisciplinary philosophy also provides a robust foundation for curriculum reconstruction because it rejects the fragmentation of knowledge and instead emphasizes the integration of revelation, rational inquiry, and empirical observation. Consequently, this study positions Ibn Khaldun not merely as an educational philosopher but as a curriculum philosopher whose ideas anticipate many principles underlying contemporary integrated curriculum theory.

One of the principal contributions of this study is the reconstruction of the epistemological foundation of Islamic education. Contemporary curriculum reforms often continue to reflect the dichotomy between religious sciences and modern disciplines, producing fragmented learning experiences that separate spiritual formation from intellectual development. In contrast, the analysis of *Al-Muqaddimah* demonstrates that Ibn Khaldun regarded all branches of knowledge as complementary components of a unified intellectual enterprise whose ultimate purpose is the advancement of civilization. Accordingly, the distinction between *naqliyyah* and *aqliyyah* should be understood as complementary rather than oppositional domains of knowledge. This interpretation reinforces recent studies advocating the integration of theological foundations, scientific reasoning, ethical reflection, and social responsibility within a coherent curriculum framework (Embong et al., 2017; Mazlan et al., 2025; Isaac, 2025). It also aligns with contemporary curriculum theories emphasizing interdisciplinary learning and authentic knowledge integration as essential characteristics of future-oriented education.

The present findings further enrich current discussions on integrated curriculum theory. Contemporary curriculum scholars argue that meaningful learning occurs when learners establish connections among different forms of knowledge within authentic contexts. A similar principle is evident in Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy, where religious knowledge, philosophical reasoning, social analysis, and practical experience collectively contribute to the development of *malakah*. Consequently, curriculum integration should not be understood merely as combining subject content but as reconstructing the philosophical assumptions that underpin educational practice. This interpretation is consistent with recent studies demonstrating that interdisciplinary curricula promote deeper conceptual understanding, creativity, and contextual problem-solving when grounded in coherent epistemological principles rather than administrative integration alone (Liu & Guo, 2024; Cheng et al., 2025; Yang et al., 2026). Viewed from this perspective, Ibn Khaldun's philosophy provides an Islamic epistemological foundation that complements and enriches contemporary integrated curriculum theory while broadening global curriculum discourse through insights derived from the classical Islamic intellectual tradition.

Another major contribution of this study is the reinterpretation of *malakah* as the central objective of curriculum development. While previous studies have

translated *malakah* as habit, mastery, or professional competence, the present findings demonstrate that it represents a holistic competence integrating intellectual understanding, moral character, practical wisdom, reflective judgment, and adaptive capability. Educational success should therefore be assessed not only through cognitive achievement but also through learners' ability to apply knowledge ethically and responsibly. This interpretation extends the work of Widianti et al. (2024) and supports competency-based curriculum theory, which emphasizes transferable competencies beyond technical skills (Romero & González, 2016). By integrating competency development with Islamic ethical formation, *malakah* offers a more comprehensive philosophical foundation than conventional outcome-based curriculum models.

This interpretation also aligns closely with twenty-first-century educational priorities. Although contemporary curriculum frameworks emphasize critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, digital literacy, and lifelong learning, they frequently prioritize employability over moral development. Ibn Khaldun's philosophy broadens this perspective by positioning competence as a means of promoting ethical responsibility, social cohesion, and civilizational progress. Consequently, curriculum objectives should integrate professional competence with spiritual maturity and community engagement, consistent with recent Islamic educational scholarship (Khimmataliev et al., 2025; Bensaid & Machouche, 2013).

The findings further demonstrate that competency development is inseparable from curriculum organization. Ibn Khaldun's principles of *al-tadrij* and *takrār* emphasize gradual learning, repeated practice, and authentic experience, closely corresponding to developmental curriculum theory and constructivist learning. Rather than presenting isolated content, curriculum should provide coherent learning experiences that progressively develop learners' understanding according to their cognitive readiness (Tao et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2026). Likewise, Ibn Khaldun's emphasis on observation, dialogue, and reflection supports learner-centred pedagogy in which knowledge is actively constructed through meaningful social interaction (Onyango & Gitonga, 2017; Tunjera & Chigona, 2020). These findings demonstrate that constructivist principles are deeply rooted in the classical Islamic educational tradition rather than being exclusively derived from contemporary Western educational thought.

The findings also highlight the relevance of Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy for contemporary curriculum innovation in the digital era. Although *Al-Muqaddimah* predates modern educational technology, its emphasis on functional knowledge, contextual learning, and adaptability suggests that curriculum should continuously evolve in response to social transformation while preserving enduring ethical values. Digital technologies should therefore be understood not merely as instructional tools but as learning environments that foster critical thinking, collaboration, ethical judgment, and responsible citizenship. This perspective is consistent with studies showing that meaningful technology integration depends on the alignment of pedagogy, curriculum, and technological knowledge rather than the simple adoption of digital tools (Onyango & Gitonga, 2017; Tunjera & Chigona, 2020). Likewise, interdisciplinary curricula supported by technology enhance conceptual understanding, creativity, and problem-solving when learning is

organized around authentic contexts rather than isolated subject content (Cheng et al., 2025; Yang et al., 2026).

Another important implication is that curriculum reconstruction should be viewed primarily as a philosophical rather than a technical process. Contemporary reforms often concentrate on learning outcomes, instructional methods, or assessment systems while overlooking the educational philosophy that shapes them. The present findings indicate that sustainable curriculum transformation begins with reconstructing assumptions about the nature of knowledge, the purposes of education, and the qualities of the ideal graduate. This conclusion supports recent conceptual work emphasizing that coherent educational philosophy is the foundation of meaningful curriculum reform (Asri et al., 2025). Whereas previous studies have applied Islamic educational philosophy to particular educational settings, the present study extends this scholarship by reconstructing a comprehensive curriculum framework derived from Ibn Khaldun's philosophy that is applicable across broader contexts.

The originality of this study lies in synthesizing Ibn Khaldun's epistemology, curriculum objectives, developmental learning principles, and civilizational vision into a single conceptual model. Previous research has generally examined these dimensions separately from historical, sociological, philosophical, or pedagogical perspectives (Alatas, 2013; Cheddadi, 2020; Ahn & Juraev, 2025). Other studies have explored Islamic curriculum development through different Muslim scholars or the integration of Islamic values into contemporary education (Asri et al., 2025; Mazlan et al., 2025). By integrating these previously disconnected dimensions, this study proposes the Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework, which bridges classical Islamic educational philosophy with modern curriculum theory and contributes to broader discussions on curriculum innovation, interdisciplinary learning, and competency development.

The findings also have important implications for educational policy and institutional curriculum development. Many Islamic educational institutions continue to face tensions between preserving classical Islamic scholarship and responding to contemporary educational demands, often resulting in fragmented curricula and limited integration between religious studies, science, technology, and social issues. The Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework proposed in this study offers an alternative philosophical direction by demonstrating that curriculum modernization can emerge through the critical reinterpretation of Islamic intellectual traditions in dialogue with contemporary curriculum theory. Such an approach enables Islamic educational institutions to develop graduates who are spiritually grounded, intellectually competent, ethically responsible, technologically adaptive, and socially engaged. Curriculum reconstruction therefore becomes a process of intellectual renewal rather than curricular replacement.

The principal theoretical contribution of this study is the development of the Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework, which synthesizes Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy with contemporary curriculum theory into a coherent model. The framework integrates four interrelated dimensions: epistemological integration between *naqliyyah* and *aqliyyah* as the philosophical foundation, *malakah* as the educational objective, developmental and contextual learning as the organizational principle, and dialogical constructivist pedagogy as the instructional

approach. Collectively, these dimensions provide a comprehensive curriculum architecture capable of responding to contemporary educational challenges while preserving the intellectual identity of Islamic education.

This framework also contributes to ongoing debates concerning the relationship between Islamic educational philosophy and modern curriculum theory. Rather than adopting externally developed educational models uncritically, the findings demonstrate that curriculum innovation can emerge through constructive dialogue between classical Islamic intellectual traditions and contemporary paradigms such as integrated curriculum, competency-based education, interdisciplinary learning, and constructivist pedagogy. This dialogue enriches curriculum theory by introducing alternative epistemological perspectives derived from the Islamic intellectual tradition and supports current efforts to broaden global curriculum discourse beyond predominantly Western perspectives (Bensaid & Machouche, 2013; Cheddadi, 2020).

From a practical perspective, the proposed framework provides curriculum developers, policymakers, and educational leaders with a conceptual reference for redesigning Islamic Religious Education curricula. Curriculum reform should establish coherence among educational philosophy, curriculum structure, instructional strategies, assessment practices, and graduate competencies while integrating religious authenticity with scientific advancement, technological innovation, environmental sustainability, multicultural citizenship, and global competitiveness. Furthermore, future curriculum development should ensure that technological competencies—including artificial intelligence and digital literacy—are accompanied by ethical reasoning, social responsibility, and spiritual formation. In this regard, Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy offers a valuable reminder that knowledge attains its highest value only when directed toward individual excellence and the advancement of civilization.

The conceptual model proposed in this study is summarized in Figure 1, which illustrates the dialogical relationship between Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy and contemporary curriculum theory. The figure demonstrates how the integration of epistemology, educational objectives, curriculum organization, and pedagogy converges into a reconstructed curriculum framework designed to produce graduates who are intellectually competent, spiritually grounded, ethically responsible, technologically adaptive, and socially engaged. Rather than depicting a linear curriculum model, the framework emphasizes the reciprocal interaction among these curriculum dimensions, reflecting Ibn Khaldun's understanding that education constitutes a dynamic and continuous process of human development.

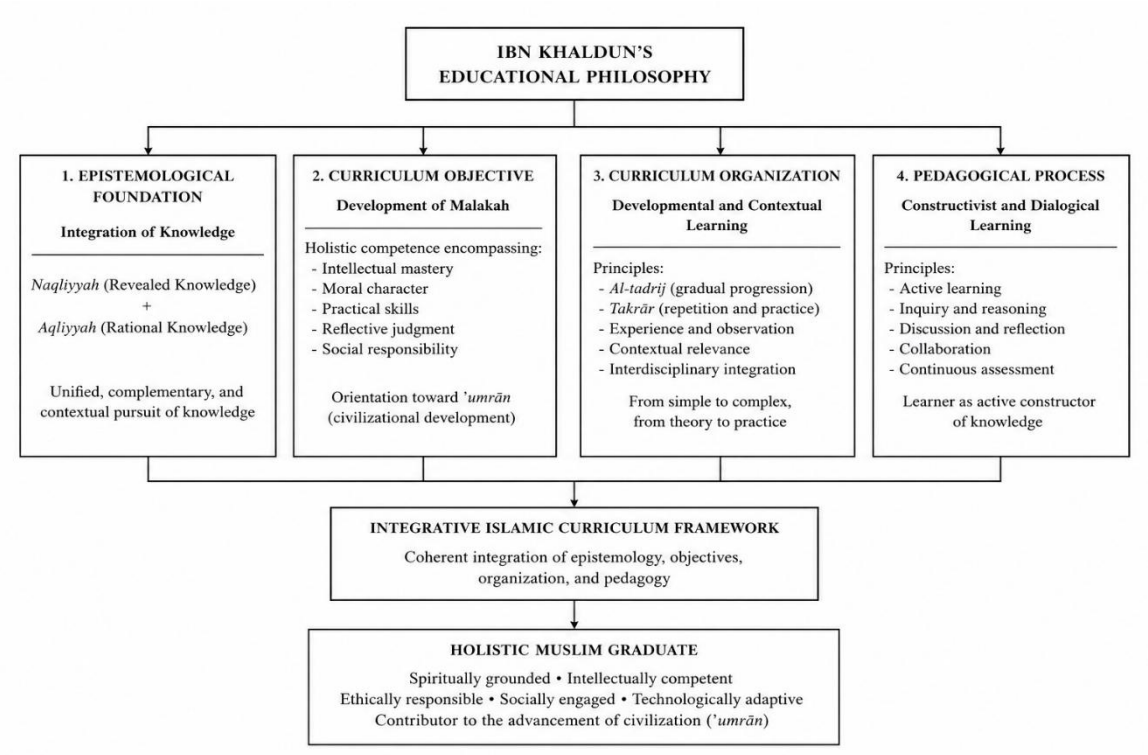


Figure 1. Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework: Reconstructing Contemporary Islamic Education through Ibn Khaldun's Educational Philosophy

The findings reaffirm that Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy remains remarkably relevant for addressing contemporary curriculum challenges despite originating in the fourteenth century. His educational vision transcends temporal and geographical boundaries because it is grounded in universal principles concerning the nature of knowledge, human development, moral formation, and civilizational progress. By reconstructing these principles through dialogue with contemporary curriculum theory, this study demonstrates that Islamic educational philosophy is not merely an object of historical inquiry but a living intellectual tradition capable of generating innovative theoretical frameworks for present and future educational reform. Consequently, the Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework proposed in this article represents both the principal novelty and the central theoretical contribution of the study, offering a comprehensive foundation for future empirical investigations examining its implementation, effectiveness, and adaptability across different Islamic educational settings.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy provides a comprehensive conceptual foundation for reconstructing the contemporary Islamic Religious Education curriculum through an integrative dialogue with modern curriculum theory. The principal finding reveals that Ibn Khaldun's educational thought has greater contemporary relevance than previously recognized, extending beyond its historical significance to offer a coherent curriculum framework encompassing epistemological integration, competency-oriented educational objectives, developmental curriculum organization, and constructivist pedagogy.

Specifically, this study identifies four interconnected pillars of curriculum reconstruction: (1) the integration of *naqliyyah* and *aqliyyah* as the epistemological foundation of curriculum design, (2) the development of *malakah* as a holistic conception of twenty-first-century competencies, (3) developmental and contextual curriculum organization based on the principles of *al-tadrij* and *takrār*, and (4) dialogical and learner-centred pedagogy that promotes meaningful knowledge construction. These findings challenge the long-standing assumption that Ibn Khaldun's educational thought is primarily of historical interest and instead demonstrate its substantial relevance for addressing contemporary curriculum reform within Islamic education.

This study makes several significant scholarly contributions. First, it reinforces previous studies that acknowledge the enduring relevance of Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy while extending their scope from educational thought to curriculum reconstruction. Second, it questions curriculum approaches that continue to maintain a dichotomous separation between religious and secular knowledge by proposing an integrated epistemological perspective rooted in the Islamic intellectual tradition. Third, and most importantly, this study introduces the Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework, a novel conceptual model that synthesizes Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy with contemporary curriculum theories, including integrated curriculum, competency-based education, developmental curriculum, and constructivist learning. This framework enriches current scholarly discussions by demonstrating that classical Islamic educational philosophy can actively contribute to contemporary curriculum theory rather than merely serving as a historical reference. Accordingly, the study broadens theoretical discourse on curriculum reconstruction while providing a conceptual foundation for developing Islamic education that is simultaneously faithful to its intellectual heritage and responsive to the educational demands of the twenty-first century.

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. As a conceptual study based primarily on philosophical and document analysis of *Al-Muqaddimah*, its conclusions are derived from a specific intellectual context and have not yet been empirically validated through curriculum implementation in educational institutions. Consequently, the proposed framework cannot be generalized directly to all educational settings without further empirical investigation. Future research should therefore examine the implementation and effectiveness of the Integrative Islamic Curriculum Framework across different educational levels, institutional contexts, and national education systems using qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method approaches. Comparative studies involving various Islamic educational traditions are also recommended to evaluate the adaptability and practical impact of the framework. Such investigations will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how Ibn Khaldun's educational philosophy can inform sustainable curriculum innovation and strengthen the future development of Islamic education in an increasingly interconnected and digital world.

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