

# CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR 21ST-CENTURY: INVESTIGATING ENTREPRENEURIAL STRATEGIES FOR CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT IN ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES FOR NIGERIA UNIVERSITIES

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## Abstract

This research investigates entrepreneurial strategies for curriculum development and enhancement in Arabic and Islamic studies education in Nigeria to meet the demands of the 21st century. Nigeria, with its rich Islamic heritage and rapidly evolving educational landscape, presents a unique context for exploring innovative approaches to curriculum design. The study focuses on integrating entrepreneurial principles, skills, and pedagogies into the Arabic and Islamic studies curriculum to equip students with the competencies needed for success in the modern world. Drawing on a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, the research examines current curriculum frameworks, pedagogical practices, and educational policies related to Arabic and Islamic studies in Nigeria. It explores the feasibility, effectiveness, and challenges of incorporating entrepreneurial concepts such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation into the curriculum. Additionally, the study investigates the role of community engagement and stakeholder collaboration in enriching the curriculum with real-world learning experiences. Through this research, insights were gained into how entrepreneurial strategies can enhance Arabic and Islamic studies education in Nigeria, empowering students with the skills, knowledge, and mindset necessary to thrive in the dynamic global landscape of the 21st century.

**Keywords:** Arabic and Islamic Studies; Curriculum Design and Enhancement; Curriculum Development; Entrepreneurial Strategies

## **INTRODUCTION**

The 21st century has brought unprecedented changes in various spheres of life, largely driven by rapid technological advancements, globalization, and evolving socio-economic dynamics. Education, as a critical sector, is not exempt from these transformative forces. In particular, authorities in higher education are increasingly called upon to produce exceptional graduates who are not only academically proficient but also equipped with entrepreneurial skills that can easily enable them to navigate and contribute meaningfully to the contemporary global economy in all ramifications (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2020).

It is unarguable that Nigeria is the most populous country as far as Africa is concerned with a diverse and vibrant cultural heritage, which includes in it a significant Muslim population, has a unique educational landscape. Arabic and Islamic Studies hold a vital place in Nigerian universities, reflecting the religious, cultural, and historical contexts of the country (Balogun, 2021). However, the traditional curriculum in these disciplines has been critiqued for its rigidity and lack of alignment with modern entrepreneurial and employability skills for its graduates (Yusuf, 2022).

Entrepreneurial education has emerged and been seen as a crucial way and strategy in curriculum development, aiming to foster innovation, creativity, and problem-solving skills among students. Incorporating entrepreneurial strategies into the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies can potentially enhance the relevance and applicability of these disciplines in the modern world (Fayolle, 2018). This approach not only addresses the pressing need for graduates who can create job opportunities but also aligns with global trends in higher education that emphasize interdisciplinary and practical learning experiences (Gibb, 2019).

The current job landscape in the 21<sup>st</sup> century underscores the importance of integrating entrepreneurial components into curricula to prepare students for the challenges they could come across in the job market (Jones, Matlay, & Maritz, 2020). In Nigeria, where youth unemployment remains a significant challenge, there is an urgent need to reform higher education curricula to include entrepreneurial strategies that can equip students with the necessary skills to drive economic development and social change (Nwosu, 2023).

Indubitably, by looking at the context this study seeks to investigate the potential for enhancing the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Nigerian universities through the incorporation of entrepreneurial strategies. By doing so, it aims to provide a framework that can help bridge the gap between traditional academic disciplines and the contemporary demands of the labour market, ultimately contributing to the broader goals of national development and global competitiveness.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the growing emphasis on 21st-century skills and the increasing need for entrepreneurial competencies in the global job market, the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education in Nigerian universities remains largely traditional and theoretical. Arabic and Islamic studies curriculum fails to equip students with the practical skills and entrepreneurial mindset necessary to navigate and thrive in today's dynamic and competitive economic landscape.

As a result, graduates of Arabic and Islamic Studies often face significant challenges in finding employment and contributing meaningfully to the socio-economic development of their communities. The curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Nigerian Universities currently lacks peculiar entrepreneurship content which includes but is not limited to Islamic Finance and Banking, Halal Industry Management, Arabic Language Services, Islamic Cultural Consultancy, Islamic Education and Outreach services, Islamic Heritage and Tourism

Management, Islamic Publishing and Media Production, Islamic Social Entrepreneurship, Technology and Innovation in Islamic Services, and Islamic Ethical Leadership and Governance. There is a critical need to investigate and expand the Arabic and Islamic curriculum to accommodate entrepreneurship strategies to enhance its relevance, practicality, and impact.

This study aims to address this pressing issue by exploring the current gaps in the curriculum, understanding the potential benefits of incorporating entrepreneurial skills, and proposing a structured framework for curriculum enhancement.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this research is to investigate and develop entrepreneurial strategies that can enhance the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education in Nigerian universities. Specifically, this study aims to:

1. Determine the current gaps in the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education in Nigerian Universities in relation to entrepreneurship skills.
2. Ascertain how entrepreneurial skills can be effectively integrated into the Arabic and Islamic Studies Education curriculum in Nigerian universities.
3. Determine the perceived benefits of incorporating entrepreneurial strategies in the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education for students, educators, and the larger community.
4. Assess the stakeholders' perception and attitude towards the inclusion of entrepreneurship skills into Arabic and Islamic studies in Nigerian Universities.
5. Investigate the challenges that might arise from the implementation of entrepreneurial strategies in Arabic and Islamic Studies education in Nigerian universities.
6. Determine how those challenges can be addressed.
7. Suggest the framework that can be developed to enhance the Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum in Nigerian universities through entrepreneurial strategies.

## Research Questions

1. What are the current gaps in Nigerian universities' Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum?
2. How can entrepreneurial skills be effectively integrated into the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education in use across universities in Nigeria?
3. What are the perceived benefits of incorporating entrepreneurial strategies in the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education for students, educators, and the larger community?
4. Will the stakeholders in Arabic and Islamic Studies be favourably disposed to the inclusion of entrepreneurial skills into the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic studies Nigerian universities?
5. What challenges might arise from the implementation of entrepreneurial strategies in Arabic and Islamic Studies education, and how can they be addressed?
6. What framework can be suggested developed to enhance the Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum in Nigerian universities through entrepreneurial strategies?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **a. Historical Context of Curriculum Development**

Without an iota of doubt curriculum development has evolved over time, reflecting changes in educational philosophy, societal needs, and technological advancements. Ab initio, curriculum development was majorly concerned with the transmission of established knowledge and cultural values cum ethics, often through rote memorization and didactic instruction (Taba, 1962). This approach was rooted in a more static view of knowledge and education, where the primary goal was to preserve and pass down existing information to generation.

Above all, in early 20<sup>th</sup> century Franklin Bobbitt (1918) proposed a systematic approach to curriculum development and viewed the curriculum as a means to prepare students for specific roles in society, emphasizing efficiency and scientific management principles. His work laid the path for subsequent curriculum theories that sought to make education more purposeful and aligned with societal needs and advancements.

In (1949) Ralph Tyler further advanced curriculum theory with his influential work, titled "Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction" Tyler's rationale emphasized the importance of clearly defined objectives, organized learning experiences, and evaluation methods to ensure that educational outcomes were achieved. By providing his model he made a structured framework that has lasting impact on curriculum design practices.

As the curriculum advanced the mid-20th century witnessed a shift towards more progressive educational philosophies, inspired by thinkers such as John Dewey. Dewey which was reported to in (1938) argued for a more experiential and inclusive student-cantered approach to education, other than the traditional method of teaching where teachers actions dominated the class.

Taba in (1962) further contribution to the evolution of curriculum development and advocated for a grassroots approach, where teachers play the major role in developing the curriculum based on the needs and interests of their learners.

Incontrovertibly, in the late 20th and early 21st centuries here comes the emergence of more flexible, outcome-based, and competency-driven curriculum models. As said by Ornstein & Hunkins, (2018) these approaches are designed to prepare students for the rapidly changing demands of the modern world, emphasizing skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and digital literacy at all time.

The evolution of technology and digital tools into the educational system has also transformed curriculum development. The integration of e-learning platforms, online resources, and interactive technologies has created new opportunities for personalized and adaptive learning experiences (Voogt et al., 2013).

In the context of higher education, there has been a growing emphasis on aligning curricula with the needs of the job market and fostering

entrepreneurial skills among students. This shift is driven by the recognition that traditional educational models may not adequately prepare graduates for the complexities and uncertainties of the 21st-century workforce (Gibb, 1996).

In Nigeria, the development of curriculum has been influenced by both local and global trends. The post-independence period saw efforts to indigenize the curriculum and make it more relevant to the Nigerian context. However, as postulated by Obanya (2004), challenges such as inadequate resources, outdated teaching methods, and a mismatch between academic programs and labour market needs have persisted.

#### **b. Current Curriculum in Arabic and Islamic Studies**

In May (2024), it was reported by naija scholar that Arabic and Islamic Studies involve the learning of the Arabic language and the teachings of Islam in general. These disciplines hold significant importance in Nigeria due to the country's large Muslim population.

He further the discussion by saying that, In Nigeria where Islam has a strong presence, the study of Arabic and Islamic teachings plays a crucial role in religious and educational settings. Arabic and Islamic studies expanded to include a broader curriculum covering Hadith, Fiqh, Islamic history, and jurisprudence.

The incorporation of Arabic and Islamic Studies into the Nigerian educational system has been a response to the growing interest in Islamic knowledge and a desire to preserve the country's cultural heritage. Today, Arabic and Islamic education continues to thrive in Nigeria, with institutions offering specialized programs at various levels, from primary schools to universities.

The curriculum for Arabic and Islamic Studies in Nigerian universities is designed to immerse students in the linguistic, theological, historical, and legal dimensions of the Islamic tradition. Arabic language curriculum includes grammar, literature, and rhetoric, essential for achieving proficiency. This is crucial as Arabic is not only the language of the Quran but also the key to accessing a vast body of Islamic scholarship. However, the current teaching methods may not fully align with contemporary pedagogical standards, which emphasize communicative competence over rote learning (Abdul-Raheem, 2019).

The Islamic studies curriculum includes the study of Islamic creed (Aqidah) which involves a deep exploration of core Islamic beliefs about the super natural being. However, there is often a gap in connecting these traditional beliefs with contemporary issues in theology and religious practice. Bridging this gap is essential for making the curriculum more relevant to today's students (Saeed, 2020).

While Islamic history as part of the curriculum typically covers the development of Islamic civilizations, the spread of Islam, and the roles of key figures in the Islamic historical context. However, there is often a lack of emphasis on the socio-political implications of these historical events and how they relate to current global dynamics (Khan, 2018).

It's also pertinent to know that Islamic law focuses on Sharia's principles and applications to our day to day activities. The challenge here is to ensure that students understand both classical interpretations and contemporary legal issues, particularly in a multi-religious society like Nigeria (Alawiye, 2021).

### **c. Entrepreneurial Opportunities Available for Arabic and Islamic Studies**

It is undoubtedly that entrepreneurial strategies in education set to equip students with the skills, mind-set, and knowledge necessary to innovate, create value, and adapt to an ever-changing world. Integrating these strategies into educational curricula can foster critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and resilience. The following discussion outlines key entrepreneurial strategies and their application in educational settings.

**1- Islamic Finance and Banking:** Islamic finance and banking play a crucial role in the economic development of Muslim-majority countries and communities. Unlike conventional banking, Islamic finance adheres to Sharia law, which prohibits the charging of interest (riba) and emphasizes ethical investments.

The global Islamic finance market is rapidly growing, presenting numerous entrepreneurial opportunities. Entrepreneurs can develop Sharia-compliant financial products, such as Islamic bonds (sukuk), Islamic mutual funds, and interest-free microfinance services. This field also includes Islamic fintech, which is an emerging area where technology is used to offer Sharia-compliant financial services (El-Gamal, 2006).

**2. Halal Industrial Management:** Halal industrial management extends beyond food to include pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, logistics, and even tourism, where compliance with Islamic principles is required.

Entrepreneurs can establish businesses that certify and manage Halal products, ensuring that they meet the rigorous standards required by Sharia law. This sector is not limited to Muslim-majority countries; there is a growing demands for Halal-certified products in non-Muslim countries as well (Tieman, 2013).

**3. Islamic Cultural Consultancy:** Islamic cultural consultancy provides advice and strategies for businesses and governments on how to operate within or engage with Muslim communities effectively. This field includes advising on cultural sensitivity in marketing, helping companies to develop products that appeal to Muslim consumers, and assisting with public relations strategies in Muslim-majority countries. Islamic cultural consultants are in high demand as globalization increases cross-cultural interactions (Alserhan, 2011).

**4. Islamic Education and Outreach Services:** Islamic education and outreach services aim to provide religious education and spread Islamic teachings, both in traditional and contemporary forms. Entrepreneurs in this field can establish online education platforms, develop apps for learning Quranic Arabic, or create programs for Islamic studies that cater to different age groups and educational levels. There is also potential in organizing seminars, workshops, and conferences on Islamic topics (Douglass & Shaikh, 2004).

**5. Islamic Publishing and Media Production:** Islamic publishing and media production involve the creation and distribution of content that aligns with Islamic values. Entrepreneurial Opportunities: This includes publishing books on Islamic topics, producing Islamic films and documentaries, and creating Islamic-themed digital

content such as podcasts and social media channels. With the increasing demand for content that reflects Islamic values, this is a burgeoning field with significant potential (Nasr, 2001).

**6- Islamic Social Entrepreneurship:** Islamic social entrepreneurship combines the principles of Islam with the goals of social entrepreneurship, focusing on creating social value in a manner that is consistent with Islamic teachings. This involves initiatives that aim to solve social issues such as poverty, education, and healthcare while adhering to Islamic ethical guidelines. Islamic social entrepreneurs can create businesses or non-profit organizations that address issues like poverty alleviation through microfinance, educational programs for underserved communities, and health services in line with Islamic charitable principles (Zakat, Sadaqah). These initiatives are driven by the Islamic concepts of Maqasid al-Shariah (the objectives of Shariah), which seek to promote welfare and prevent harm (Abu-Saifan, 2012).

**7- Technology and Innovation in Islamic Service:** The integration of technology and innovation into Islamic services has transformed the way these services are delivered and accessed. From mobile apps for Zakat calculation to online platforms for Islamic education, technology is playing an increasingly vital role. Entrepreneurs in this space can develop technology-based solutions such as Islamic fintech platforms, online Islamic education portals, and AI-driven applications that provide personalized religious guidance. Additionally, block chain technology is being explored for creating transparent and efficient systems for managing Islamic charitable donations (Mollah & Zaman, 2015).

**8- Islamic Ethical Leadership and Governance:** Islamic ethical leadership and governance are grounded in the principles of Tawhid (unity of God), Adl (justice), and Amanah (trust). These principles guide leaders in making decisions that are not only effective but also ethically sound at all time. There is a growing demand for leadership training programs that emphasize Islamic ethics, particularly in the business and political spheres. Entrepreneurs can offer consulting services, workshops, and certification programs that equip leaders with the skills and knowledge to govern according to Islamic principles (Ali, 2014).

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population comprises all Arabic and Islamic Studies Lecturers and Students available in Nigerian Universities. Out of the available population, a sample of 132 lecturers and 527 Arabic and Islamic studies students were selected using convenient sampling technique. A self-developed questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on Revitalisation of Arabic and Islamic Studies Curriculum for Nigerian Universities". The instrument is divided into two (2) sections (A&B). Section A contains the respondents' information while section B contained items to answer the research questions. The instrument was distributed online through email and social media platforms to respondents in selected Universities in both Northern and Southern Nigeria. Simple percentage was used to analyse bio-data while mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the research questions using the statistic package for social sciences (SPSS 23).

## RESULTS

This deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected for the study via the web questionnaire administered to lecturers from different universities. The raised

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research questions were also tested in this chapter. The analysis of data collected was done using a statistical package for data analysis.

**a. Descriptive Statistics of Respondents' Bio-Data**

**Table 1:** Distribution of respondents based on lecturers' and students' university

University Lecturers'		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Lagos State University	31	23.48
	Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin	51	38.64
	Lagos State University of Education	12	9.09
	Kwara State University, Malete	14	10.61
	University of Lagos	11	8.33
	University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State	13	9.85
	Total	132	100.0
University Students'		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Lagos State University	162	30.74
	Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin	107	20.30
	Lagos State University of Education	86	16.31
	Kwara State University, Malete	48	9.10
	University of Lagos	63	11.95
	University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State	61	11.57
	Total	527	100.0

Table 1 above shows that, 23.5% of the respondents (Lecturers) are from Lagos State University, 20.30% are from Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, 9.09% are from Lagos State University of Education, 10.61% are from Kwara State University, Malete, 8.33% are from University of Lagos, while the remaining 9.85% are from University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State.

However, the above table also shows that, 30.74% of the students' respondent are from Lagos State University, 23.48% are from Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, 16.31% are from Lagos State University of Education, 9.10% are from Kwara State University, Malete, 11.95% are from University of Lagos and the remaining 11.57% are from University of Ilorin.

**Table 2:** Distribution of respondents based on their teaching experience

Teaching experience		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Below 5 years	22	16.7
	5 - 10 years	33	25.0
	11 - 15 years	44	33.3
	16 - 20 years	11	8.3
	Above 20 years	22	16.7
	Total	132	100.0

Table 4.2 above shows that 16.7% of the respondents have below 5years of teaching experience, 25.0% have 5-10years of teaching experience, and 33.3% have 11-15years of teaching experience, 8.3% have 16-20years of teaching experience while the remaining 16.7% have 20 and above years of teaching experience.



**Table 3:** Distribution of respondents (students) based on their year of study

Year of Study		Frequency	Percent
Valid	100Level	127	24.1
	200Level	124	23.5
	300Level	132	25.0
	400Level	120	22.8
	500Level	12	2.3
	900Level	12	2.3
	Total	527	100.0

Table 3 above shows that, 24.1% of the respondents (Students) are from 100 level, 23.5% are from 200 level, 25% are from 300 level, 22.8% are from 400 level, 2.3% are 500 level, and the same percentage 900 level.

**Table 4:** Distribution of respondents (students) based on their major/field of study

Major/Field of Study		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Islamic Studies	158	29.98
	Islamic Studies Education	275	52.18
	Arabic Language	35	6.64
	Arabic Language Education	60	11.38
	Total	527	100.0

Table 4 above shows that, 29.98% of the students are from Islamic Studies, 52.18% are from Islamic Studies Education, 6.64% are from Arabic Language, while the remaining 11.38% are from Arabic Language Education.

## **b. Answering of Research Questions**

### **1. Answer to Research Questions One:**

What are the current gaps in Nigerian universities' Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum?

**Table 5:** The current gaps in Nigerian universities' Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum

Items		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Complexity of the topics	22	16.7
	Complexity of the topics; Limited entrepreneurial and practical applications	11	8.3
	Lack of integration with modern technology	22	16.7
	Lack of integration with modern technology; Limited entrepreneurial and practical applications	11	8.3
	Lack of integration with modern technology; Insufficient focus on contemporary issues; Outdated teaching methods	11	8.3
	Lack of integration with modern technology; Insufficient focus on contemporary issues.....	33	25.0
	Outdated teaching methods	22	16.7
	Total	132	100.0

*continued*

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Table 5 provides information for the answer to research question one. The table shows that 16.7% of the Lecturers were of the opinion that complexity of the topics is the current gaps in Nigerian universities' Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum, 8.3% view the complexity of topics along with a lack of practical applications as problematic. 16.7% highlights the lack of integration with modern technology as a critical problem. 8.3% of respondents are concerned with both the lack of technological integration and insufficient entrepreneurial and practical applications. 8.3% point out a triad of issues: lack of modern technology, insufficient contemporary content, and outdated teaching methods. The largest percentage (25%) indicates concern over both the lack of modern technology and insufficient attention to contemporary issues, while the remaining 16.7% view outdated teaching methods as a major issue.

### **2. Answer to research questions two:**

How can entrepreneurial skills be effectively integrated into the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education in use across universities in Nigeria?

**Table 6:** Ways at which entrepreneurial skills be effectively integrated into the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education in use across universities in Nigeria

	Items	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Project-based learning	22	16.7
	Project-based learning; Collaboration with local businesses and organizations.....	66	50.0
	Collaboration with local businesses and organizations	22	16.7
	Collaboration with local businesses and organizations; Internship and experiential learning opportunities	11	8.3
	Development of online courses and digital resources	11	8.3
	Total	132	100.0

Table 6 provides information for the answer to research question two. The table shows that 50% of the respondents (Lecturers) emphasize project-based learning combined with collaboration with local businesses and organizations as the most significant strategy. 16.7% of the respondents support project-based learning alone and equal percentage support collaboration with local businesses and organizations independently. 8.3% of them endorse internship and experiential learning opportunities in addition to business collaboration, while the remaining 8.3% focus on the development of online courses and digital resources as the effective entrepreneurial skills that should be integrated into the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education across universities in Nigeria.

### **3. Answer to research questions three:**

What are the perceived benefits of incorporating entrepreneurial strategies in the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education for students, educators, and the larger community?

**Table 7:** The perceived benefits of incorporating entrepreneurial strategies in the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education for students, educators, and the larger community

	Items	Frequency	Percent
Valid	It will meet the contemporary standards if all measures required are put in place	22	16.7
	Very relevant and useful	22	16.7
	To see Arabic and Islamic Studies taking a lead in all spheres of human endeavor as it was in the past.	22	16.7
	Should include as one of compulsory subjects for all Muslims students	11	8.3
	To change the view of ulama's in the country	11	8.3
	the role plays in fostering understanding and harmony among different group	11	8.3
	To lead the world of morality and be part of empowerment engulfment	11	8.3
	To make students more productive	11	8.3
	Both of them are developing rapidly	11	8.3
	Total	132	100.0

Table 7 provides information for the answer to research question three. The table shows that 16.7% of the respondents (Lecturers) believe that Arabic and Islamic Studies will meet contemporary standards if all required measures are put in place. 16.7% of the respondents were in supports that are very relevant and useful. 16.7% of them perceived the benefits as taking a lead in all spheres of human endeavour as it was in the past. 8.3% of the respondents support making Arabic and Islamic Studies a compulsory subject for all Muslim students, and same percentage believe it can change the view of the Ulama in the country. 8.3% also emphasize its role in fostering understanding and harmony among different groups, 8.3% of them advocate leading morality and empowerment, the same percentage see the benefit as making students more productive while the remaining 8.3% assert that both subjects will develop rapidly.

#### 4. Answer to research questions four:

Will the stakeholders in Arabic and Islamic Studies be favourably disposed to the inclusion of entrepreneurial skills into the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic studies Nigerian universities?

**Table 8:** The stakeholders in Arabic and Islamic Studies will be favourably disposed to the inclusion of entrepreneurial skills into the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic studies Nigerian universities

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
The current Arabic and Islamic Studies curriculum meets my academic and personal interests	527	3.53	1.374	Agreed
The curriculum is relevant to contemporary issues and challenges in today's world	527	3.46	1.306	Agreed
The course materials and textbooks are up-to-date and reflective of current knowledge in the field	527	3.20	1.277	Agreed
The teaching methods used in the curriculum are engaging and effective	527	3.61	1.198	Agreed

*continued*

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Incorporating modern technology and digital tools into the curriculum would enhance my learning experience	527	4.49	.806	Agreed
Practical applications of Arabic and Islamic Studies, such as internships or real-world projects, would be valuable	527	4.13	1.043	Agreed
The curriculum should include opportunities for student-led projects and entrepreneurial activities	527	4.25	.927	Agreed
I believe that partnerships with industries or community organizations could provide beneficial learning experiences for me	527	4.29	.779	Agreed
I feel that the current resources and facilities are adequate for supporting innovative approaches in the curriculum	527	2.82	1.370	Disagreed
I believe that my Lecturers will be open to incorporating new ideas and approaches into the curriculum	527	4.06	1.129	Agreed
Additional funding or resources would improve the quality and innovation of the Arabic and Islamic Studies curriculum	527	4.44	.804	Agreed
I would like to see more integration of interdisciplinary studies within the Arabic and Islamic Studies curriculum	527	4.10	1.260	Agreed
The Arabic and Islamic Studies program should be restructured to better align with global educational standards and practices	527	4.28	1.071	Agreed
I am enthusiastic about the potential for entrepreneurial and innovative changes in the curriculum	527	3.94	1.194	Agreed
Valid N (listwise)	527			
<b>Criterion Mean = 3.00</b>				
<b>Weighted Mean = 3.50</b>				

Data in Table 8 showed the mean and standard deviation of responses of Students on Investigating Entrepreneurial Strategies for Curriculum Enhancement in Arabic and Islamic Studies for Nigeria Universities. From the result, all the fourteen items have the following mean scores 3.53, 3.46, 3.20, 3.61, 4.49, 4.13, 4.25, 4.29, 2.82, 4.06, 4.44, 4.10, 4.28, and 3.94 respectively with the corresponding standard deviation of 1.374, 1.306, 1.277, 1.198, .806, 1.043, .927, .779, 1.370, 1.129, .804, 1.260, 1.071, and 1.194. Items 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12, and 13 were above the criterion mean rating of 3.00, while items 9 was below the criterion mean rating of 3.00. Since the weighted mean rating of 3.50 was higher than the criterion mean of 3.00, it implied that stakeholders in Arabic and Islamic Studies favourably disposed to the inclusion of entrepreneurial skills into the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic studies Nigerian universities.

#### **5. Answer to research questions five:**

What challenges might arise from the implementation of entrepreneurial strategies in Arabic and Islamic Studies education, and how can they be addressed ?

**Table 9:** The challenges that might arise from the implementation of entrepreneurial strategies in Arabic and Islamic Studies education, and how can they be addressed

	Items	Frequency	Percent
	Lack of resources and funding	33	25.0
	Lack of resources and funding; Resistance to change among Ulama.....	66	50.0
Valid	Resistance to change among faculty	11	8.3
	Resistance to change among faculty.....	11	8.3
	Insufficient training and professional development	11	8.3
	Total	132	100.0

Table 9 provides information for the answer to research question five. The table shows that 25% of the respondents (Lecturers) were the opinion that Lack of resources and funding is the challenges that might arise from the implementation of entrepreneurial strategies in Arabic and Islamic Studies education. The largest percentage (50%) indicates concern over among lack of resources and funding; resistance to change among Ulama; resistance to change among faculty; Limited industry partnerships and collaboration; Institutional passiveness and bureaucratic hurdles, 8.3% view it as resistance to change among faculty. However, 8.3% also extended their opinion as both resistance to change among faculty; insufficient training and professional development; Limited industry partnerships and collaboration; Institutional passiveness and bureaucratic hurdles. Then the remaining 8.3% of respondents are concerned with insufficient training and professional development as the challenges that might arise.

**Table 10:** How the challenges will be addressed

	Items	Frequency	Percent
	Professional development and training programs	44	33.3
Valid	Professional development and training programs; Increased funding and grants ...	77	58.3
	Administrative support and policy changes	11	8.3
	Total	132	100.0

Table 10 provides information for the answer to research question five. The table shows that 33.3% of the respondents (lecturers) were the opinion that professional development and training programs would be most helpful in overcoming these challenges. The largest percentage (58.3%) indicates concern over among professional development and training programs; increased funding and grants; Partnerships with industry and community organizations; Access to technology and digital tools; Administrative support and policy changes would be helpful to overcome it, and 8.3% view that Administrative support and policy changes will address the challenges.

## 6. Answer to research questions six:

What framework can be suggested developed to enhance the Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum in Nigerian universities through entrepreneurial strategies?

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**Table 11:** The suggested framework to develop and enhance the Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum in Nigerian universities through entrepreneurial strategies

	Items	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Facilitating partnerships with related industries and community organizations	11	8.3
	Incorporating technology and digital tools	22	16.7
	Incorporating technology and digital tools; Developing practical skills and real-world applications.....	66	50.0
	Developing practical skills and real-world applications	22	16.7
	Promoting student-led projects and initiatives	11	8.3
	Total	132	100.0

Table 11 provides information for the answer to research question six. The table shows that 50% of the respondents (Lecturers) emphasize Facilitating partnerships with related industries and community organizations as the most suggested framework to develop and enhance the Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum in Nigerian universities through entrepreneurial strategies. 16.7% of the respondents support Incorporating technology and digital tools and the same equal percentage support Developing practical skills and real-world applications. 8.3% of them advocate facilitating partnerships with related industries and community organizations, while the remaining 8.3% focus on the promoting student-led projects and initiatives as the suggested framework.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The summary of this study as it was revealed from the analysis above proved that;

1. The current gaps in Nigerian universities' Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum evolved from complexity of the topics, limited entrepreneurial and practical applications, Out-dated teaching methods, Insufficient focus on contemporary issues and Lack of integration with modern technology.
2. Project-based learning, collaboration with local businesses and organizations, Internship and experiential learning opportunities, development of online courses and digital resources are ways at which entrepreneurial skills can be effectively integrated into the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education in use across universities in Nigeria
3. Some perceived benefits of incorporating entrepreneurial strategies in the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education for students, educators, and the larger community include; seeing Arabic and Islamic Studies taking a lead in all spheres of human endeavour as it was in the past, Both knowledge will lead the world of morality and be part of empowerment engulphment, It will also make students more productive and rapidly grow.
4. All most all the stakeholders in Arabic and Islamic Studies will be favourably disposed to the inclusion of entrepreneurial skills into the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic studies Nigerian universities.
5. Lack of resources and funding, resistance to change among the core stakeholders, insufficient training and professional development, might arise as challenges for the implementation of entrepreneurial strategies in Arabic and Islamic Studies education.

6. Suggested framework to develop and enhance the Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum in Nigerian universities through entrepreneurial strategies include; Incorporating of technology and digital tools; development of practical skills and real-world applications, Promoting student-led projects and initiatives, Facilitating partnerships with related industries and community organizations.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study aimed to investigate on how entrepreneurial strategies can be effectively use to enhance the curriculum of Arabic and Islamic Studies education to be more relevant in Nigerian universities. While painstakingly looking at the statement of the problem, research purpose as well as the research question the study revealed several opportunities as well as challenges rendezvous bellow;

The study revealed that the current gap in Nigerian universities' Arabic and Islamic Studies education curriculum evolved from different angle which doesn't limited to complexity of the topics that can overwhelm both the students and the lecturers, limited entrepreneurial and practical applications, Out-dated teaching methods is also seen as a major gap in Arabic and Islamic studies curriculum since the students will not be acquainted with relevant or contemporary knowledge as it will be expected from a university graduate, Insufficient focus on contemporary issues and Lack of integration with modern technology also create huge gap for a balance curriculum.

This study also highlights the importance of integrating technology into the curriculum system by focusing on e-learning platforms, digital content creation, and Islamic app development which are area that can significantly boost students' ability to get acquainted with technology tools for religious and entrepreneurial purposes. This aligns with global trends toward tech-enhanced learning, providing students with both religious knowledge and practical digital skills (Ali, A. J. 2014)

By incorporating entrepreneurial courses in to the curriculum, students of Arabic and Islamic Studies could benefit by diversifying their career opportunities, bridging the gap between religious knowledge and real-world application. Indubitably the findings indicate that such incorporation would not only enhance employability but also foster a culture of innovation and problem-solving in Islamic and global communities as it established in the work of (Abu-Saifan, S. 2012)

The study shows that the current curriculum in Arabic and Islamic Studies is undoubtedly focused on traditional academic content with a parochial incorporation of entrepreneurial skills. The research cogently revealed some valuable and favourable entrepreneurial opportunities. However; there is notable recognition and reformation among educators and policymakers of the need to prepare students with practical, business-related skills alongside academic knowledge. Entrepreneurial strategies like Islamic finance and banking, Halal industrial management, Islamic Media and Publishing, and Islamic cultural consultancy has been observed to be key areas where curriculum enhancements can provide students with marketable skills relevant to the global economy (Ali, A. J.2014).

Apart from lack of necessary financial resources, complexity of the materials and qualified trained personnel to design and implement a curriculum that combines entrepreneurship with Islamic studies, the findings also significantly observed that many traditional scholars and institutions also served as challenges as they are resistant in altering the content and structure of the curriculum, fearing that it may dilute the core religious teachings. (Haneef, M. A. 2005)

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It was retrieved in (2024) through Naija scholar that, since one of the rationales behind this work is to widen the curriculum of the Arabic and Islamic studies students, the research suggested that having a framework that combine entrepreneurship with Islamic education can enhance both moral and academic development. Students are more likely to engage with the curriculum when they see clear practical applications of their studies in the real world by incorporating technology and digital tools. Without gainsaying, entrepreneurial education that is well grounded with Islamic values promotes ethical business practices, fostering a new generation of morally upright entrepreneurs which can make a balance to the economy growth.

### **CONCLUSION**

The future of Arabic and Islamic Studies curriculum in Nigerian Universities lies in development of entrepreneurial education and embracing technological advancements, personalizing learning experiences, emphasizing soft skills, promoting sustainability, incorporating global perspectives, and fostering industry collaboration. Addressing the identified research gaps will provide valuable insights and evidence to guide the evolution of entrepreneurial education, ensuring it remains relevant and impactful in preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. University management should strategies on how to bridge the gaps that hinder the growth of the inclusion of entrepreneur into the Arabic and Islamic studies curriculum.
2. Higher Institutions should invest more in the training of educators who can teach both Islamic knowledge and entrepreneurial skills for proper and ease execution of the purpose modern curriculum.
3. Technological-based entrepreneurial courses and digital skills training should be prioritized and put into consideration as it is going to equip educators, students and the communities with competencies necessary for the 21st-century workforce at all time.
4. Stakeholders should conduct conferences engaging people in concern; this approach will foster discussion and create awareness about the importance of entrepreneurship skill with the broader scope of Arabic and Islamic Education.
5. Universities should design a curriculum that maintains the integrity of religious contents while seamlessly integrating entrepreneurial skills.
6. Universities management and policymaker's expertise should create frameworks that encourage modern curriculum innovation with the inclusiveness of entrepreneurship into traditional fields like Arabic and Islamic studies.

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