

INTEGRATING ISLAMIC AND NATIONAL CURRICULA: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE FIRST PUBLIC MADRASAH IN THE BANGSAMORO REGION IN THE PHILIPPINES

A Thesis

**Submitted to the Master's Study Program of Education at the Faculty
of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

Master of Arts (M.A.)



by:

Sairah Millor Mangulamas

04212320011

UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA

DEPOK

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ABSTRACT

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This study explores the integration of Islamic and national curricula of the first public madrasah at the Bangsamoro region in the Philippines. It focuses on how elementary education, particularly from kindergarten to grade 3, is impacted by this integration. The study used a qualitative methodology, collecting information using the document analysis, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews. The school principal, administrators, teachers, and students are among the participants of this study. These individuals were selected according to their prior expertise with the curriculum integration, as they are also implementers in the field.

The main purpose of this research is to understand how the national and Islamic curriculum are combined into one integrated educational system. It also addresses the challenges and opportunities that come up throughout this process. The study also seeks information about the opinions of various groups regarding the effectiveness of this integrated approach, including students, teachers, principal and school administrators.

The findings demonstrate that integrating the two curricula contributes to a more well-rounded education. Islamic teachings teach the students moral and spiritual principles in addition to the cognitive skills like reading and math. Teachers also employ what is known as an "integrated approach," in which the Islamic beliefs are taught alongside the courses like science or social studies. For the students, this enhances the significance of learning and aligns with their cultural background.

However, the study also identifies certain challenges. These include inadequate infrastructure, including clean water and electricity, teacher preparation, and school supplies. Additionally, some educators require additional assistance in order to teach academic and religious subjects in an efficient manner. However, the community and school personnel are still very supportive despite of these problems. That is why, the balanced education in the public madrasah is valued by the parents.

The study emphasizes how crucial the community involvement, legislative support, and teacher training are to the success of the curriculum integration. It also implies that the Bangsamoro experience could teach other multicultural areas too, particularly about how to retain the ethnic identity while also fulfilling the national educational requirements. By demonstrating how the faith-based and the secular education may coexist in a public school context, this study advances the area of the curriculum studies. For the educators, school administrators, and policymakers who wish to develop inclusive and culturally sensitive educational institutions, the study offers a helpful suggestions.

Keywords: *Curriculum Integration, Bangsamoro Region, Public Madrasah*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. All praise belongs to Allah SWT, for all the blessings, mercy, and peace be upon Prophet Muhammad SAW. Please allow me to express my genuine gratitude to all the people who continuously support me throughout my academic and non-academic journey here at the Indonesia International Islamic University.

First of all, I would like to give thanks to the Faculty of Education, including the Dean, Prof. Nina Nurmila, the Head of the Master's Program, Dr. Tati Wardi, and all the respected lecturers who have guided and supported me throughout my academic journey at Indonesia International Islamic University. Also, I would like to give special thanks to Dr. Destina Winarti, my first supervisor, for assisting and guiding me in writing and completing my thesis. Your support and motivation helped me move forward and do better in my writing. Thank you so much for understanding. Additionally, for Dr. Muzakkir, thank you so much for putting so much effort into supervising me. It is very much appreciated and I am truly blessed.

Secondly, I would like to give thanks to my participants for taking the time and effort to participate in this study. I hope this research will be beneficial not just for me but also for the Bangsamoro people. A heartfelt gratitude to the curriculum and development section head, school principal, administrator, teachers and students who gave me so much effort and kindness in the long run. Indeed, it helped me complete and gather the information needed for my study.

Third, all thanks to my classmates, we finally did it, everyone. The journey was not that easy, and we've been through a lot but it did not stop us from achieving our dreams. I am forever grateful for all your support, motivation and care. Our struggles, joys, and silent cries were all worth it.

Lastly, to my family, relatives, cousins, and close friends, my utmost thanks go to you all. Thank you for your unending prayers and support. Thank you for all the love that you gave. I really felt that even though I was far away from home. I am forever blessed to all of you. I love you, Mommy and Ama.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALIVE	: <i>Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education</i>
BARMM	: <i>Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao</i>
BPM	: <i>Bangsamoro Public Madrasah</i>
DEPED	: <i>Department of Education</i>
FGD	: <i>Focus Group Discussion</i>
GPTA	: <i>General Parents-Teachers Association</i>
IPCRF	: <i>Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form</i>
ISAL	: <i>Islamic Studies and Arabic Language</i>
LET	: <i>Licensure Examination for Teachers</i>
LPT	: <i>License Professional Teacher</i>
MAPEH	: <i>Music, Arts, Physical Education and Health</i>
MATATAG	: <i>(1) Make the curriculum relevant to produce competent, job-ready, Active, and responsible citizens; (2) Take steps to accelerate the delivery of basic education facilities and services; (3) Take good care of learners by promoting learner well-being, inclusive education, and a positive learning environment; and (4) Give support to teachers to teach better.</i>
MBHTE	: <i>Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education</i>
MKOs	: <i>More Knowledgeable Others</i>
MOOE	: <i>Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses</i>
NGOs	: <i>Non-Governmental Organizations</i>
NRP	: <i>National Reading Program</i>
PISA	: <i>Programme for International Student Assessment</i>
REMC	: <i>Refined Elementary Madrasah Curriculum</i>
SDGs	: <i>Sustainable Development Goals</i>
SMC	: <i>Standard Madrasah Curriculum</i>
ZPD	: <i>Zone of the Proximal Development</i>

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides five components that further explain the study. First, this will explain the background and description of the study to explain and gain more insights regarding the focus or main issue of this study. Second, this will also cover the gap and significance of this study. Third, research questions that will provide an overview of the particular questions with regard to the issue of the study. Fourth, research objectives that will explain the reasons why this study needs to be conducted. Fifth, the significance of the study both in practical and theoretical that explains the importance of conducting the study.

1.1 Background and description of the issue

Islamic education is essential for the Muslims in general, particularly for Muslims who are a minority in the nations with a non-Muslim majority (Samid, 2022). In these environments with a non-Muslim majority, the Islamic education helps the Muslims to develop and also preserve their Muslim identity in addition to giving them the important knowledge about their faith. Muslims in the non-Muslim countries can also thrive in a society that is peaceful, prosperous, and just on both a material and a spiritual level with the support of the Islamic education (MBHTE, 2024). Regardless of the background, gender identity, belief, or religion, everyone has the right to seek knowledge and scientific inquiry (Guadalupe et al., 2023). In addition to encouraging development in the fields of science, religion, creativity, intellect, and language, it then integrates all of these attributes into an all-encompassing educational framework that can aspire to greatness and virtue (Samid, 2022).

In a multicultural and religiously varied environments, education is particularly essential for promoting a social cohesiveness and cultural preservation (Gamon & Tagoranao, 2022). Integrating the Islamic and national curricula is a major educational reform in the Philippines, particularly in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) that aims to meet the region's particular sociocultural and religious demands. Integrating the Islamic and the national curricula has been one of the top priorities of the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE) in order to give the students an education that honors their Islamic heritage and also gives them the skills they need in order to participate in both domestically and also internationally.

Given that the Philippines is primarily a Catholic Christian nation, it is widely believed that meeting the urgent needs of the Muslim Filipinos for an Islamic education

that will appropriately represents their aspirations, cultures, identities, and interests within the Muslim Filipino community is currently one of the government's top priorities (Abdulkarim & Suud, 2020). An article from Samid (2022) discussed about the Islamic education in the Philippines, wherein the Muslims are considered as a minority. There are four distinct forms of madrasah (plural of madaris) education in the Philippines. These consist of the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE), tahdiriyyah, integrated madaris, and the traditional madaris. However, there are other kinds of institutions that offer an Islamic education in addition to the four that was previously stated. One of this institution is Toril, a boarding school that emphasizes learning, reciting, and comprehending the Qur'an. Additionally, a few of the Philippine colleges offer an advanced degrees in Islamic studies through the social sciences department (Solaiman, 2017).

According to the findings of the study conducted by Abdulkarim et al. (2020), the Madaris Education Curriculum, which was incorporated into the public schools, complied with the Department of Education (DepEd) Regulation Number 40 of 2011 (Standard Curriculum for Public Elementary Schools and Private Madaris). The Refined Elementary Madrasah Curriculum (REMC) preserves the cultural history of the Filipino Muslims while fostering the Philippine nationalism. Through the ALIVE Program, this curriculum also facilitates the Muslim learners to smooth transition from the private madrasahs to its public schools. Additionally, it bridges the widespread divide in the Muslim education. The program teaches the students on how to apply theory to the actual issues and offers a theoretical information based on its expertise. The curriculum meets the requirements for the graduates, in terms of their technical and professional preparedness. In appropriate situations, it also incorporates the values that represent the national traditions, culture, and customs (Bustaman-Ahmad et al., 2011).

The first public madrasah, under the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE) serves as a critical case study for exploring this integration process. The mission of the institution is to provide a more comprehensive education that gives a balance between the academic success, also a spiritual growth by combining the Islamic and the national curriculum (MBHTE, 2023). However, in order to achieve this balance, it presents many difficulties, including the coordinating of the instructional strategies, then dealing with the limitations in terms of the resources, and also resolving with the disparities in the curriculum objectives. In addition, this program offers a chance to improve the

regional with educational standards, also to encourage inclusivity, and then the advance understanding between the people.

Currently, there are few research on the curriculum integration in the Philippines, with the majority of the studies are concentrating more on the general in education changes (Cariaga, 2023). By investigating the integration of the national and the Islamic curriculum in the Bangsamoro region, this study fills in the knowledge gap and then offers a paradigm for an inclusive, and a well-rounded education in diverse cultures in the said region. With regards to the efficacy of the integrated curriculum, this study aims to investigate the integration process, then identify the possible opportunities and the challenges that have been faced, and also investigate the viewpoints of the school community, including the principals, administrators, teachers, and the students. By doing this, the study will try to expand to the discussion around the curriculum integration in the various settings and provides information for the educators and the policymakers in the BARMM and other comparable regions across the world (UNESCO, 2016).

1.2 Islamic Education and the Integrated Curriculum in Indonesia

From the informal instruction in mosques and in pesantren to a more structured and a state-recognized system, the Islamic education in Indonesia has experienced substantial historical and structural changes. Religious experts used the traditional techniques like the sorogan and wetonan in order to transmit the classical Islamic sciences throughout the early days of the Islamic education, which was primarily an informal and took place in various mosques and pesantrens (Daulay & Tobroni, 2017). In order to address the societal demands and national development objectives, Islamic education reformers gradually started to incorporating general subjects into the religious instruction, especially in the 20th century. Both the internal renewal movements and international Islamic reformist ideas had an impact on this development (Daulay & Tobroni, 2017). Madrasahs started offering a secular courses in addition to the religious ones as part of this modernization, which it reflected the Indonesian government's attempts to bring the Islamic education into line with the National Education System (Sobirin et al., 2022).

The goal of Indonesia's integrated curriculum, especially after the reform, is to blend the general knowledge and religion into a cohesive educational process. This method is based on the idea that the students should learn subjects as interrelated aspects of life and the society rather than as discrete concepts. Thus, it is believed that the integrated learning offers the students a more comprehensive, contextualized, and meaningful learning

experience in response to the fragmented character of traditional subject teaching (Akib et al., 2020). Curriculum design has been influenced by Robin Fogarty's 10 models of integration, which it emphasize a project-based learning and thematic learning to be able to connect ideas across disciplines (Akib et al., 2020).

This integrated method has been embraced by Islamic schools, especially the madrasahs, to achieve both the intellectual and spiritual objectives. By incorporating *hablum minallah* (connection with God), *hablum minannas* (relationship with people), and *hablum minal 'alam* (relationship with nature) into their curriculum, these schools are supposed to foster *insan kamil* (the ideal, balanced person) (Daulay & Tobroni, 2017). Aiming to balance the cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects of education, the integration is not only thematic but also philosophical and pedagogical. The integration is in line with the initiatives to reform and match the Islamic education with the larger objectives of the national development by private as well as public institutions (Mukminin et al., 2019).

On the other hand, there are a number of obstacles to implementing integrated curricula in Islamic schools, including the lack of funding, inadequate teacher preparation, and an overburdened curriculum. In spite of these obstacles, there are numerous Islamic educational establishments that persist in innovating and modifying their models in order to meet the national standards and 21st-century skills (Mukminin et al., 2019; Akib et al., 2020). In general, the Indonesia's integrated Islamic education system has continue to evolved through a dynamic interaction between the tradition and modernity, with the goal of producing graduates who are socially and religiously knowledgeable.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In order to give the Muslim students a thorough education that complies with both the national academic requirements and the Islamic principles, it is significant that the national and madrasah curriculum be integrated. Through this combination, student and their religious and cultural identities are preserved while they are adequately equipped to meet the demands of modern society. However, there are a variety of obstacles to overcome in the integration process, such as the differences of the opinions among the school stakeholders and the real-world implementation issues (MBHTE, 2024).

The development of a well-rounded, intellectually skilled, and a religiously committed individuals depends on the integration of the Islamic and national curriculum. Students may encounter disparities in learning in the absence of integration, such as

insufficient exposure to the contemporary academic subjects or insufficient religious instruction. These disparities may limit the students access to the tertiary education and their career chances, which may eventually impact their long-term performance. According to research by Rohman et al. (2024), integrating local and global variety into the national curriculum and making education more accessible to all societal levels are two of curriculum development problem of Indonesia.

Principals, teachers, and other school stakeholders are essential to the successful integration of the curricula. The integration process can be greatly impacted by their opinions and the amounts of support given. According to the research, while some educators see the benefits of the curriculum integration, some others struggle because they lack the necessary tools and the training. Both students and the lecturers had favorable opinions of an integrated curriculum, according to a study by Suryadi et al. (2018) at an Islamic institution. However, the lecturers encountered difficulties like the unclear implementation of the rules and a lack of skills to integrate learning processes.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How does the integration process of the Islamic and national curriculum in the first accredited madrasah under the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) in the Bangsamoro region?
2. What challenges and opportunities occur during the process of integrating between the Islamic and national curriculum?
3. How do the principals, administrators, teachers, and students perceive about the effectiveness of the integrated curricula so far?

1.5 Research Objectives

1. To explore the process of integrating an Islamic and national curricula in the first accredited madrasah by the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) in the Bangsamoro Region.
2. To understand the challenges and the opportunities that came up during the process of the integration of the Islamic and the national curricula.
3. To investigate how does the principals, administrators, teachers, and students envision the usefulness and the applicability of the integrated curriculum.

1.6 Significance of the Study

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This study addresses to the existing research gap that concerns with the integration process of the national and the Islamic curricula in the public madrasah, particularly in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). While there have been previous studies on the advantages and the disadvantages of these curricula individually (Samid, 2022; Tomas et. al., 2024), there are limited research that has explored the integration of the national and the Islamic curricula in a multicultural and a religiously diverse setting. By examining the integration process of both the Islamic and the national curricula in the public madrasah, this study will provide a more comprehensive view of the curriculum integration as this is essential in the educational and the social endeavor. The findings may also contribute to the broader discussion on the education in a culturally diverse of contexts in which particularly in the regions like the BARMM and align with the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) with regards to the inclusive and the equitable quality of the education (UNESCO, 2016).

1.6.2 Practical Significance

The findings of this study are expected to have an offer of more meaningful insights for the educators, policymakers, and the communities of the Bangsamoro region. For the educators, this highlights the importance of the integration of the national and the Islamic curricula to address the diverse needs of the students in terms of its cognitive, spiritual, and the social needs, and then promoting a more well-rounded educational approach (Halstead, 2004). These insights can be the guide to the development and the implementation of more pedagogically and culturally appropriate courses that are tailored to the diverse backgrounds of the Bangsamoro learners.

For the policymakers, the study will help provides actionable recommendations to have or create inclusive educational frameworks that can be helpful with the support to the coexistence of both the national and the Islamic curricula. These include designing more culturally aware policies, improving the teacher preparation programs, and developing various evaluation frameworks that align with both the secular and spiritual learning goals.

Moreover, this study underscores the role of curriculum integration in the community development and its peacebuilding. By fostering understanding and solidarity in religiously and culturally diverse communities, it can help produce graduates that are

fully equipped in order to contribute to the societal development and its peace initiatives in BARMM (Samid, 2022). These practical contributions aim to strengthen the role of education as a tool for cultural preservation and peacebuilding in the region.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This chapter will discuss the literature review and theoretical framework used in this study. It will begin by discussing the previous studies about Islamic and national curricula in Southeast Asia and the Philippines, followed by the definition of curriculum and curriculum integration, importance of the curriculum integration in the Islamic and national education, the integration of religious and secular educational systems, demographic profile of the Bangsamoro region and the integration of the Islamic and secular educational systems. Then, it will be followed by the theoretical framework used in this study, which will be elaborate on the use of theoretical frameworks, such as the Dual Curriculum Theory by John Dewey and the Socio-Cultural Theory by Vygotsky.

2. 1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Overview of Islamic and national curricula

In Southeast Asia, the Islamic education has long been a significant component of the various region's religious and cultural legacy. It was started when Islam arrived in the 13th century by trade routes, and it was formalized with the construction of the pesantren and madrasahs (Gamon & Tagoranao, 2022). These establishments functioned as a focal point for the social and political leadership in addition to being the places of the religious instruction. In the Philippines, madrasahs had two purposes: they preserved Islam and provided as a substitute for the colonial educational system, which can be frequently ignored by the religious and cultural demands of the Muslim community (Cariaga, 2023).

Based on my knowledge, the holistic development of the students is at the center of the Islamic education in madrasahs. It aims to develop knowledge ('ilm), moral character (akhlaq), and the students' readiness to serve their communities and society as a whole. Studying the Qur'an, Hadith, Arabic, and Islamic law (fiqh) are among of the fundamental principles. The madrasah system places a strong emphasis on its moral and spiritual aspects, which seeing the education as a continuous process that leads to both material and spiritual success. To guarantee that the Islamic education satisfies all the demands of the modern society, however, issues like the modernization and integration with the national education systems have called for reforms, especially in some areas like Bangsamoro.

Worldwide, education is one of the most significant factors that influence the national progress. In line with this, the Philippines is undergoing major educational reforms which aimed at raising its standards, similar to efforts that are being made in other

countries. These reforms are expected to enhance the competitiveness of young Filipino graduates in both domestic and foreign labor markets (Cariaga, 2023). Significant changes have been made to the Philippine educational system, and the most recent one of which being the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum as part of the K–12 Basic Education Program. In addition to the promotion civic and global competencies, this curriculum seeks to bridge the fundamental gaps in reading, numeracy, and critical thinking. In order to offer a well-rounded education that incorporates both the Islamic and secular subjects, public madrasah in the Philippines have tried to adopt this curriculum.

The MATATAG Curriculum respects cultural diversity and inclusivity while also preparing the students for more global competitiveness and lifelong learning (Department of Education, Bureau of Curriculum Development, 2023). For instance, it has an emphasis on the fundamental abilities and how it affects the children's overall growth. In order to prepare the learners for challenges in the future, it is crucial to give them the foundational skills, such as the literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills. Additionally, there is the inclusion of values education and peace competencies, in which these components are essential to producing a future filipino citizens who are responsible and compassionate (DepEd, 2023).

Inclusion and cultural diversity are important elements of the MATATAG Curriculum. According to Banks (2015), valuing the diversity in education not only promotes an inclusivity but also trains the students to be prepared to engage in active engagement in a globalized and multicultural society. Nieto and Bode (2012) reaffirmed this by supporting intercultural education that fosters an equity and global citizenship while also valuing diversity. These viewpoints support the curriculum goal of which is fostering global and civic competences in addition to the fundamental academic abilities.

Furthermore, the goals of the MATATAG Curriculum are centered on the civic involvement and lifelong learning. Delors et al. (1996) argued for an educational system that encourages curiosity, adaptation, and personal development, describing a lifelong learning as a crucial aspect for adjusting to a world that is changing quickly. Active citizenship and lifelong learning were linked by Hoskins and Crick (2010), who emphasized the acquisition of the abilities that allow people to make significant contributions to the society. The MATATAG Curriculum, which aims to prepare the Filipino students for both immediate and long-term societal contributions, is clearly designed with these values in mind.

The MATATAG Curriculum specifies the goals to improve fundamental abilities at the primary school level. These include raising students' knowledge of its social, moral, and environmental issues as well as improving their reading, writing, and their math skills. These goals are combined with the Islamic principles in public madrasah to create a distinctive educational paradigm that attends to the students' intellectual and spiritual growth. The curriculum's dual focus guarantees that the Muslim students in the Bangsamoro region remain grounded in their cultural and religious identity while also, preparing them for the challenges on a national and international level (DepEd, 2022).

2.1.2 Definition of curriculum and curriculum integration

The right understanding of the term "curriculum" has grown increasingly significant as formal education has spread throughout practically in every society in the world (Mulenga, 2019). The organized content and learning activities designed by an educational institution to accomplish the specific learning objectives are called a curriculum (Tyler, 1949). Aligning or merging various curricula to provide a meaningful, balanced and coherence learning across a range of educational objectives is known as curriculum integration (Taba, 1962). This method combines many pedagogical theories and goals to give the students a coherent education.

However, there is still a lot of interest in curriculum issues today, both domestically and globally, and a variety of different theoretical perspectives are still being discussed in relation to international standards established by the global players through academic conferences, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), and other platforms. Since the measure of educational achievements, which is essentially caused by the implemented curriculum, is compared between and among countries and continents, it is necessary to reflect on a shared understanding of the components of an appropriate curriculum (Mulenga, 2019).

Moreover, curriculum experts like Kelly (2009) refer to the curriculum as the purpose of education, or the core of learning. What is taught in schools is called a curriculum. Stated differently, a curriculum is a collection of disciplines. It is in fact somewhat unclear to describe a curriculum as "what is taught in schools." Because of this, people frequently use the phrase "school curriculum" in a broad sense, referring to the variety of courses taught, and the amount of time allotted to each subject in terms of hours or minutes (Mulenga, 2019). It appears that this method of teaching restricts learning to the classroom and then restricts the curriculum to academic subjects. Additionally, Marsh

(2009) noted that this definition makes a belief that what is examined is what is learned. As previously mentioned, a curriculum encompasses much more than just courses or what is taught in schools.

Seeing a curriculum as content is another popular way to conceptualize it. Curriculum as a content is another intriguing focus that calls into question other terms, such as "syllabi" and "course outline," which are particularly used in higher education institutions (Mulenga, 2019). Curriculum experts like Walker (2002) and Kelly (2009) were very critical of the definition's similarity and emphasis on these standards. As Kennedy (2005) found, it is well known that a curriculum that just emphasizes the essential skills needed for the workforce is lacking.

Instead, a strong curriculum should cover a wide range of competencies and skills that are applicable to every stage of a person's life. A curriculum should also cover a wide range of competencies, or what we might call "capacities," such as effective communication, civic engagement, harmony, respecting and caring for others, and taking care of one's own health and well-being (Marsh, 2009). It is possible to observe that the concept of curriculum has been handled as what is taught in schools, a subject area, content, a set of materials, everything that the school plans, and a set of experiences that students gain in a school when one looks at the different definitions of the curriculum in the literature (Kelly, 2009).

The integration of the national curriculum with the madrasah curriculum, or the ISAL is important for the Philippine madrasah education. This makes their education more inclusive and also relevant by guaranteeing that the Muslim students receive both a secular education and religious teaching (Sali & Ancho, 2021). Aligning the methods of its teaching, curriculum structure, and the assessment is one of the primary goals of this integration. The Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) are two of the new disciplines added to the regular national curriculum by the Refined Elementary Madrasah Curriculum (REMC) (Sali, 2021). This enables the Muslim students to study various Islamic topics in addition to the national curriculum in its foundational areas, such as science, math, and English. Students may proceed flexibly to higher education or the workforce due to this integration. Both academic and religious assessments are part of the integrated curriculum in its assessment process. Madrasah students are evaluated in Arabic fluency and the Islamic values in addition to the topics like English and mathematics, which are the focus of the national assessments. However, the research reveals that certain

Madrasah exams lack of precise evaluation techniques, which makes it challenging to properly evaluate the students' development (Sali & Marasigan, 2020).

The traditional Islamic teaching techniques and contemporary pedagogical approaches are combined in the integrated madrasah education. While the national subjects employ interactive and student-centered learning strategies, *asatidz* (Madrasah teachers) frequently depend on the textbooks and also rote memorization for its religious education (Sali & Ancho, 2021). In order to give the students a well-rounded education, the Philippines' national and madrasah curricula must be integrated. Students are given a well-rounded education that will equip them for both the religious and secular opportunities through the integration of Islamic education with the national curriculum. However, there are still issues with the teacher preparation and assessment techniques, which is in need for more advancements.

2.1.3 Curriculum Principles

In the modern education, curriculum development is essential for the overall success of the educational system (Sali, 2022). The curriculum is the foundation and can also be the plan for achieving educational outcomes. The curriculum processes and the products involve various key stakeholders in the development process, which is unmatched (Walker, 1971). The product is crucial in creating an instructional decision that will greatly affect the curriculum implementation. Thus, investigating the issues in curriculum studies help to address the gaps in education as it set towards the pivotal changes in the contemporary society.

To further democratize the development process, curriculum designers must take into account the diverse contexts and narratives from the multiple sources when creating the curriculum (Sali, 2021). As stated by Walker (1971) that the naturalistic model was then "constructed to represent phenomenon and relations observed" (p. 51) in terms of curriculum planning. In contrast with the classical model in which it follows logical operations and is mostly prescriptive, the naturalistic model tends to democratize curriculum development by involving various stakeholders in curriculum planning. In this study by Sali (2022), democratization is described as the involvement of numerous essential stakeholders, especially those at the grassroots in the curriculum building process. The naturalistic model as an alternative allows the simultaneous decisions to be incorporated, especially in the curriculum planning. Many narratives that can be considered in the planning, this includes the teachers, schools, and even the community are

highly encouraged to also participate in the development process. Therefore, the democratization of curriculum development is meant to create a more scope for having a collective decision-making without neglecting even the minorities.

The following key characteristics and applications of the naturalistic model were highlighted in the Walker's (1971; 2002) academic works: it offers a descriptive alternative to the more prescriptive classical model in the curriculum development; it emphasizes the role of teachers, schools, and the community in curriculum planning and decision-making; Walker's analysis of the curriculum policy-making suggests that the local community participation is one of the main actors in the school system when it comes to the curriculum decision-making; and the deliberation process, wherein the design decisions are can be made based on the platforms, that has become a crucial component also, of the curriculum planning and the curriculum development in general.

2.1.4 Importance of curriculum integration in Islamic and national education.

Curriculum development is a top priority for all the educational institutions since it establishes the learning objectives and the abilities that students will gain (Mulenga, 2019). To guarantee that children obtain a well-rounded education in varied areas like Bangsamoro, where there are both national and Islamic educational systems, curriculum integration is essential. It enables students to maintain their cultural and religious identity while meeting national academic standards (Rahman, 2010). Furthermore, the integration incorporates both spiritual and academic improvement, both of which are critical to students' overall development (Halstead, 2004).

Islamic education focuses more on the emphasis on its moral growth, spiritual awareness, and ethical responsibility than the national curriculum, in which stresses with the skills development, critical thinking, and global competitiveness. A balanced educational framework that equips students for both the contemporary societal difficulties and their religious obligations is produced by integrating these two systems (Al-Attas, 1980). According to the research, a well-designed curriculum improves the student engagement, character development, and also cognitive growth, all of which that can contribute to their success in life as a whole (Zhu et al., 2021; Dewey, 1938).

Numerous research have demonstrated how the curriculum integration improves the student attainment. Students in the integrated Islamic-national education programs typically keep strong ethical and moral beliefs while performing better in reading and numeracy, according to Abdulkarim et al. (2020). According to a Tan (2014) study,

Singaporean Madrasah children who attended an integrated curriculum outperformed students at strictly religious schools in terms of academic proficiency and adaptability. This implies that curriculum integration fosters moral and intellectual development.

Students' educational experiences are likewise expanded when the national and Islamic curricula are aligned. A well-integrated curriculum exposes children to a variety of subjects, including science, technology, and the humanities, without sacrificing religious education, according to a study by Abdulkarim and Suud (2020). This guarantees that the students are prepared for a variety of job options by providing them with technical skills, ethical reasoning, and problem-solving ability (Tomas & Bagolong, 2024).

Curriculum integration has difficulties despite its advantages, such as the variations in the teacher preparation, evaluation techniques, and pedagogical approaches (Mulenga & Ng'andu, 2022). However, the research indicates that these issues can be resolved by having curriculum flexibility, teacher capacity building, and robust policy support (Walker, 2022). It has been shown that developing a curriculum involves a detailed grasp of the competencies to be developed, the instructional activities to be employed, the suitable pedagogical content, learning and facilitating assessment techniques. Therefore, in order to create meaningful changes, it was essential to prepare teachers to use the teaching and learning strategies needed to successfully execute the curriculum (Mulenga & Ng'andu, 2022).

In areas like the Bangsamoro, wherein culture and religious identity are important factors in education, it is imperative that the national and Islamic education be integrated. Students receive a thorough education that upholds their religious principles while also preparing them for both the professional and postsecondary education by fusing Islamic teachings with the national academic requirements. To improve teacher preparation, improve the evaluation techniques, and guarantee that curriculum integration continues to benefit the students, further study and policy creation are necessary.

2.1.5 Demographic profile of the Bangsamoro region, Philippines

The K–12 educational system that used in the Philippines was recently improved by the MATATAG Curriculum. The MATATAG Curriculum was unveiled by the Philippine Department of Education in 2023 with the goals of filling up the learning gaps, strengthening the fundamental abilities, and simplifying the material that will be useful to help improve the mastery of the critical competencies. This reform aims to prepare the students in both of higher education level and the lifelong learning, by placing a stronger

emphasis in terms of literacy, numeracy, and socioemotional development (Department of Education, 2023).

In line with the international educational standards, the curriculum reform put a stronger emphasis on the fundamental both in the literacy and also the numeracy skills (Department of Education, 2023). By using the simplified content and research-based teaching strategies, the curriculum seeks to close a learning gap and enhance the student outcomes. English is the main language of instruction in the Philippines in its current formal education system, which is also modelled after that of the American-style (Samid, 2022).

The Philippines has extended the elementary education from 10 to 13 years in order to bring its educational system in line with the other Asian nations. Young Filipino graduates should become a more competitive in the national and the foreign employment markets as a result of this effort. Enhancing the youth and children's access to the formal and informal learning opportunities and also enhancing the government's ability to raise the standards and applicability of teaching and the learning environments are two ways to address the Philippines' education issue that is present as of the moment (Samid, 2022).

The public school and the madrasah make use of the dual framework under in which education is conducted in the BARMM area. This distinctive system put a balance between the national academic requirements and the Islamic teachings, that also reflecting the sociopolitical and cultural diversity of the region. The main goals are to provide a fair access and raise standards in both academic programs. The MBHTE is in charge of the BARMM education, implementing policies and various initiatives specific to the area's needs. Its objectives include improving educational quality and equity through curriculum creation, teacher training, and the resource allocation. The ministry is essential in the merging national and Islamic curricula to address the region's sociocultural dynamics.

The establishment of a public Madrasa that was run by the MBHTE is strongly supported by the teachers and school leaders, just 12.6% of the school leaders and teachers polled are against it, while there are over eight out of 10 are in favor. The majority of the survey participants (54.5%) who were asked to describe the ideal relationship between the national Department of Education (DepEd) and BARMM's MBHTE in relation to the madrasah education stated that the MBHTE should have operational control of the public madrasah, but the two agencies should collaborate on a shared program, such as the

madrasah education in the secular public schools (Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 2019).

Typically, the private individuals or organizations establish madrasahs to educate the local children in Islam (Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 2019). Since making money was not the primary reason for starting the institution, tuition is not required. Depending on their financial means, the parents sometimes voluntarily pay. Additionally, teachers work as a volunteer and receive small salary (Samid, 2022). In order to comply with the national criteria, the madrasahs in BARMM emphasizes the Islamic principles, Arabic language proficiency, and Quranic studies in addition to the secular topics. Despite the substantial contribution to the moral and the spiritual growth, madrasah in overall effectiveness is impacted by the issues with regards to the curriculum implementation, teacher preparation, and the resource availability (Samid, 2022).

There are a number of obstacles to integrating the Islamic and national curriculum, such as disparities in the evaluation criteria, the content priority, and the pedagogical approaches (Mulenga & Ng'andu, 2022). The integration process is made to be more difficult by the lack of culturally responsive materials and the teacher training, in which these calls for a need of a more focused interventions and governmental assistance (Rahman, 2010).

2.1.6 Integration of religious and secular educational systems

Many nations have concentrated on combining religious and secular education, especially those in the Southeast Asia (Rohman et al., 2024). The pesantren system in the country like Indonesia, which also offers a curriculum that incorporates both of the Islamic studies alongside with the usual topics like physics and mathematics, is a prime example of the so-called integration (Sali, 2022). To adjust to the requirements and circumstances of local communities, it is critical to comprehend the difficulties involved in developing curricula for Islamic education (Samid, 2022). Additionally, curriculum development is crucial to ensuring that the millions of Muslims in Indonesia continue to get high-quality spiritual education (Rohman et. al., 2024). These models show how the educational systems will also create more well-rounded learners who can help succeed in a variety of the situations by striking a balance between the faith-based principles and the requirements of a contemporary education.

Nevertheless, these efforts will still have encountered difficulties. Common obstacles in which can include practical challenges in the curriculum design, limited

finances, and opposition from the conventional religious instructors (Sali, 2022). However, these systems, in its achievements highlights the value of the participatory policymaking, the stakeholder cooperation, and the ongoing professional development for teachers. The Bangsamoro region will be able to learn a lot from these nations, with regard to their experiences as it works to align with its national and the Islamic curricula funding (Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 2019).

In diverse cultures like the Philippines, balancing the religion and its secular education provides a particular sociopolitical and its cultural difficulties. Finding a balance between the respect for its cultural and its religious groups and the necessity of the national unity is one of its main challenges. For example, just like in the Bangsamoro region, wherein their local customs and their beliefs must be carefully considered also, while incorporating with the Islamic education into the national curriculum, or then vice versa. The implementation process may also be affected by practical issues just like the curriculum design, the teacher training, and its resource distribution (Teskey et. al., 2022).

Since madrasah teachers need to be proficient in terms of both Islamic studies and the general education, the teacher preparation is very important (Suryadi et al., 2018). In order to ensure that both the religious and the academic competencies are addressed, the curriculum creation must also consider the varied requirements of the students (Sali, 2021). The curriculum integration, which can be really challenging also to develop and be executed, must be reflected in the assessment systems. Considering these mentioned obstacles, combining the religious and secular education can still foster for inclusivity, social cohesiveness, and a more all-encompassing method of instruction (Zhu et al., 2021).

Al-Attas (1980) emphasized the idea that the Islamic values should be used together with the secular education, stressing the significance of both the intellectual and spiritual development in education. Muslims in the Philippines have endured hardships that have shown the world how religion, the light of spiritual life, and adherence to Islamic principles can coexist in a setting that is founded on a secular philosophy of life. In order to protect the community from Western education, Muslim intellectuals in the Philippines have demonstrated their undying hope and concern for the change of Islamic education (Abdulkarim & Suud, 2020). This integration is particularly essential in the Bangsamoro region, where it is important to preserve the cultural identity while also preparing the students for the struggles in both domestically and outside the country.

The Bangsamoro region's history of its education is believed to be linked to its political conflicts and its independence movement. The Muslim communities did oppose the introduction of the Western education during the colonial era because they saw it as a dangerous threat to their religious and their cultural identity. Rather, they just depended on the madrasah in order to maintain their Islamic roots and their beliefs. Attempts with the inclusion of the madrasah into the national education system after independence were then unsuccessful because lack of confidence and insufficient funding (Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 2019).

An important turning point with the history of the education in the area was the creation of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), that was also previously an ARMM (Gamon & Tagoranao, 2022). The BARMM government gave education as their first priority as a means of the promotion of a peace and development after their gaining more of an authority. The public madrasahs, in which stand for the integration and the reform, became one of the essential movements to this endeavor funding (Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 2019). These institutions will seek to solve the socioeconomic and also the cultural issues of the area while also maintaining its distinct identity by then combining the traditional Islamic education with the national curriculum.

In order to raise the standard and the inclusivity of the education in the area, the BARMM government has also implemented important reforms. The Standard Madrasah Curriculum (SMC), in which this combines the Islamic subjects and with the national education norms, is one of its important initiatives (Sali & Ancho, 2021). The goal of this curriculum is to give the students a well-rounded education that can address their intellectual and their spiritual needs of funding. To make sure that the teachers are well prepared in successfully teaching the dual-focused curriculum, teacher training and programs have also been designed.

The main objectives of these changes are to advance the harmony, peace, and the standard of education in the Bangsamoro area. The BARMM government aims to eliminate the socioeconomic inequities that the region has continue been experiencing for a very long time and promote a more inclusive in culture by expanding the access to a high-quality education funding (Institute for Autonomy and Governance, 2019). In addition to these, the implementation of this reforms will also set an example for combining the secular and the religious education in multicultural communities such as the BARMM region.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Dual Curriculum Theory (John Dewey)

Based on John Dewey's writings, the Dual Curriculum Theory examines how the two different educational frameworks coexist and how do they interact inside a single system. In order to meet the requirements of both the individuals and society as a whole, Dewey viewed education as a comprehensive process that included a variety of a learning opportunities. In order to reconcile with the disparate goals, academic and practical, secular and religious, in educational contexts, the dual curriculum paradigm was developed (Dewey, 1938). According to this view, students gain the most from a curriculum that blends with the moral and social growth with the intellectual rigor, producing people who are both competent and good morality.

Dual Curriculum Theory has its roots in Dewey's more general experiential education theory, which promoted the learning by interacting with the one's surroundings. Dewey maintained that in order to prepare students for the challenges of the real world, the educational systems should close the gap between the theory and the practice. Since it offers a framework for combining the various knowledge systems while recognizing the cultural and spiritual values, this idea has been used over time in contexts where religious and secular education coexist. This philosophical basis is somehow critical in multicultural and multireligious cultures just like the Philippines, where it is necessary to strike a balance between the demands of the national development and its religious observance.

The Dual Curriculum Framework has been applied as a lens in a variety of educational contexts outside of the Bangsamoro environment, where the national education standards are combined with the religious or cultural training. These can include the indigenous education initiatives around the world and Islamic schools, such as those in the Indonesia and Malaysia. The framework, which reflects the harmony between the contemporary society demands and ancient values, offers a framework for comprehending how the education can promote both the academic preparedness and a cultural or spiritual identity in each of these situations.

The Bangsamoro region, with regards to the integration of Islamic and national curriculum may be examined through a structured lens, to the Dual Curriculum Theory's implementation in the madrasah education. This approach emphasizes that the complementary roles of religion and secular knowledge play in a holistic education, while also promoting their coexistence (Dewey, 1938). The dual curriculum in public madrasahs

tackles the two mandate of conserving Islamic customs and giving the students the information and abilities they need in order to participate in the modern society.

Using this idea, the Bangsamoro integration process may be assessed on how well it integrates the national competences just like reading, numeracy, and critical thinking with religious teachings. The theory also emphasizes the importance of a teacher preparation program, same as the evaluation techniques that can complement the dual focus, and the contextually appropriate educational approaches. It offers a starting point for investigating how does the educational changes might promote academic achievement and global competitiveness while also still honoring the cultural and the religious identity.

2.2.2. Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky)

In the educational process, the Sociocultural Theory by Vygotsky highlights the significance of the social environment, cultural resources, and cooperative learning. The idea that learning is fundamental and a social activity that is mediated by interactions with the teachers, peers, and the cultural objects is at the heart of this approach (Vygotsky, 1978). The Zone of the Proximal Development (ZPD), distinction in between what can the students be accomplish on their own and what they can be accomplish with the assistance, and the function of the scaffolding are the important ideas of this theory. The importance of language and cultural resources as the facilitators of the cognitive development is emphasized also by the theory.

The Sociocultural Theory then emphasizes how crucial it is to use the social and a cultural context to improve the learning results when merging both the Islamic and the national curricula. By putting this theory into practice, the integration process can be seen through the perspective of using the culturally appropriate in instructional resources and a more collaborative learning. This method supports the goals of the study by then emphasizing how the social and cultural settings can influence the educational practices and its results. In addition, by presenting the teachers as a More Knowledgeable Others (MKOs) who lead the learners through a culturally relevant instruction, Vygotsky (1978) then highlights the importance of the social interaction in the learning process. Indeed, the teachers play a crucial role in mediating the dual curriculum in regard to its implementation, that is balancing the preservation of the cultural identity with the advancement of the cognitive development.

The Bangsamoro region, with its public madrasah that integrated the Islamic and national curricula through the sociocultural exchanges. All the parties involved in these

interactions, such as the teachers, students, parents, and the larger community, can really contribute to the learning process. For instance, a more inclusive and a productive learning environment can be produced through the cooperative teaching techniques that can also be incorporate both the national skills and the Islamic principles. In order to mediate with this integration and to make sure that the students make the connection between the new information and their preexisting cultural context, the cultural resources like the Islamic books, language, and its customs are essential in this.

Learning is then emphasized as a dynamic social and a cultural process when the Sociocultural Theory is used as a framework. It enables the study to look at how can be the public madrasah deal with the integration issues like the possible cultural conflicts, the limited resources, and the different teaching credentials. Additionally, the emphasis of the theory on the ZPD and the scaffolding will help provides a more useful guidance for creating such as the lesson plans and the instructional techniques that can cater to a range of the student needs. The Sociocultural Theory thus offers a thorough framework for its comprehension and then improving in the Bangsamoro region, in terms of the blend in the religious and the secular education.

Lastly, the Sociocultural Theory provides a sophisticated framework in order to comprehend how the public madrasah in the Bangsamoro region mediate the integration of the Islamic and national curricula. It makes it possible to examine how the teachers function as a cultural mediators, encourages a culturally responsive teaching by utilizing the Islamic customs and the local language, and provides a useful teaching techniques using the ZPD and scaffolding in order to accommodate a range of student demands. Additionally, it emphasizes the value of the community engagement and social interaction in the curriculum delivery, which promotes a more inclusive and a context-sensitive educational reform.

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology that was employed in order to explore the experiences, challenges, and the strategies within the integration of both the Islamic and the national curricula in the first public madrasa in the Bangsamoro region. This qualitative study provides an information that captured the perspectives of the school community, such as the curriculum and development section head, administrators, principals, teachers, and the students. The research adopted a single case study approach, as it recommended by the Creswell and Creswell (2018), in order to facilitate a more detailed information of the curriculum integration within the real-life context. This approach allows the researcher to uncover a more meaningful insights by then, focusing on the specific instance, ensuring that the findings are well grounded with the lived experiences of the target and chosen participants.

3.1 Research Design and Methods

The study employed a qualitative research design in order to provide a more comprehensive in the exploration of the study. The process of this is structured as illustrated in the diagram below:

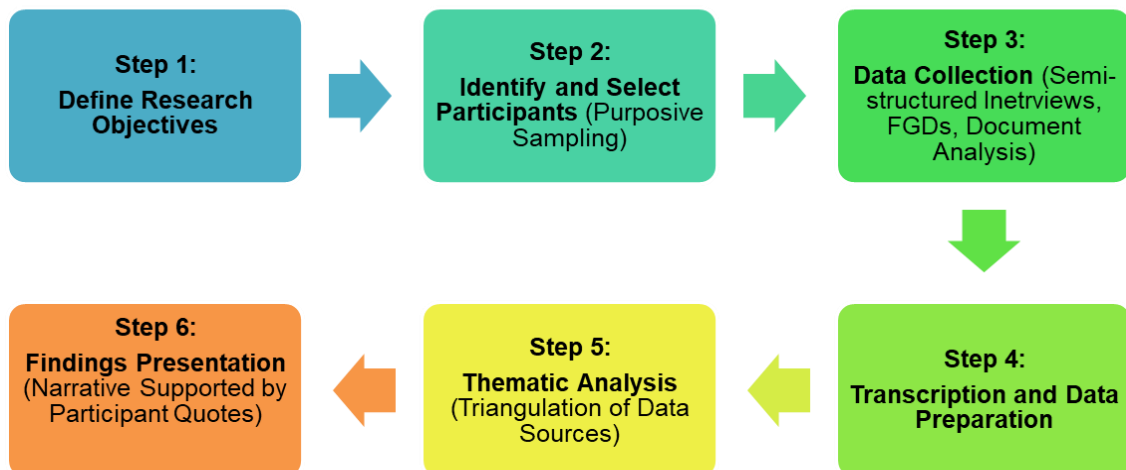


Figure 1.0 Diagram of the research process

This study employed a qualitative method in order to gather a rich data, and the information needed. The semi-structured interviews served as a primary tool, that truly offered a more flexible process that helped to explore the participants' perspectives while

also ensuring that the critical topics that are related to the curriculum integration are completely addressed. This approach allowed the researcher to have a deeper understanding into the individual experiences and then uncovered the insights that may not be covered in a fully through a more rigid interview format.

The Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) was utilized in order to gather a more collective insights, in a particularly from the students, with the guidance of their parents. The FGDs was fostered interaction and dialogue, that created a more dynamic environment wherein the participants could also reflect on their shared experiences and also perspectives. This method is as important for exploring how was the integration of the Islamic and national curricula is perceived and also implemented in a community level. Additionally, the document analysis was conducted to review the curriculum guides being used, policy documents, and the various school reports. After analyzing the various materials being used, the study added to the participant data with the contextual information, that helped provide a more comprehensive understanding of the integration process and the policy framework in the Public Madrasah.

The study used a purposive sampling in order to ensure that the selection of the participants who are most relevant to the research objectives. This targeted approach allowed the researcher to be able to recruit the chosen participants, such as the students, teachers, administrators, and policymakers, who really possessed the important and unique insights into the integration of the Islamic and national curricula. By focusing on these participants with the direct experience or expertise in the subject, the study was able to enhance the richness and validity of its findings. This method was not only ensured the relevance of the data collected but also facilitated in such deeper exploration of the challenges and the opportunities in the integration process.

3.2 Participants

The study was focused on the stakeholders who directly involve in the elementary education, as it believed that this stage is a critical and important phase in a child's academic journey and this is the foundation for their lifelong learning. The elementary education serves as a critical platform for embedding the values, skills, and the knowledge, that making it an ideal focus of this study with regards to the exploration of the curriculum integration in the public madrasah. By targeting the key stakeholders, the study aimed to get a meaningful understanding of the processes, challenges, and the outcomes that are associated with the integration of the both the Islamic and national curricula.

To achieve the aims of the study, a total of at least nine (9) participants was recruited through the use of the purposive sampling, in order to ensure that it will meet the study criteria and can contribute with meaningful insights on the study. The participants consist of diverse stakeholders that are directly involved in the education system. One administrator from the Public Madrasah, and one (1) who is the section head of the curriculum and development, this is the one who responsible for the planning and the implementation of the curricula that provided the strategic perspectives on the integration efforts. A principal, that served as a key figure in shaping the madrasah education within the region was also selected to share their leadership experiences and their insights. Additionally, a total of three teachers (1 ISAL teacher and 2 regular teacher) from across the different stages of the elementary education level was chosen in order to offer a varied perspectives on the delivery of the curriculum. Lastly, a total of three students that are actively experiencing with the integrated curriculum was the one who helped to share their perspectives, unique insights, and then provided a valuable data on the impact of the integration from their learner viewpoint. This approach was useful in order to ensures a holistic understanding of the integration process of the curriculum integration in the public madrasah in the Bangsamoro region.

3.3 Data Collection

In order to have a full understanding of the integration process of the Islamic and national curriculum, this study employed a several methods for collecting the data. These methods include the document analysis, focus group discussions (FGDs), and semi-structured interviews.

3.3.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

One of the primary methods for gathering information from the chosen participants was the semi-structured interviews. While using this approach, the researcher was able to prepare a guiding questions ahead of time and still have the opportunity to ask follow-up questions in response to the participant responses. It facilitated the development of a dialogue-style setting in which participants can elaborate on their individual experiences, opinions, and insights. Individual interviews with the important stakeholders, including principals, teachers, students, and administrators, was carried out. To ensure the accuracy, each interview was audio and video recorded, with a proper consent and was able to last between twenty to thirty-five minutes. In order to make sure that all the relevant issues pertaining to the curriculum integration are well covered, the researcher employed an interview guide. This allowed the researcher to have a natural and organize creation of a

deeper or unexpected insights during the conversation. This approach was useful for documenting the actual experiences of those who are directly involved in or impacted by the implementation of the curriculum.

3.3.2 Document Analysis

The study made use of the document analysis in addition to interviews and focus group discussions. This approach requires reading and evaluating essential textual documents in order to have an in-depth understanding of the rules, regulations, and the procedures pertaining to the integration of the national and Islamic curriculum. Curriculum guides, policy papers, lesson plans, school reports, and other important materials utilized in public madrasahs are some examples of the documents that was examined. The background material and contextual data presented in these documents was able to verify and/or contradict the results of the interviews and the focus group discussions. The researcher was able to determine how the integration is formally intended and how it was corresponds with the actual events by looking at these materials. This contributed to the development of a more thorough and deeper understanding of the curriculum integration procedure.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data that was collected in this study undergoes in a systematic thematic analysis in order to identify and then interpret the key patterns and the insights. All the interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) was transcribed in verbatim in order to maintain the integrity of the data that gathered. This step was really beneficial and important as it was able to help ensure that the participants' voices was represented well, and it helped provide a complete and a comprehensive basis for the analysis of the data. The transcription process was thoroughly transcribed manually by the researcher to capture not only with the words that are spoken by the participants, but also the possible contextual insight that will be a useful for the interpretation of the data gathered.

In order to enhance the reliability, and the validity of the findings, the study tried to employ a triangulation such as the cross-referencing of the data from the interviews, also from the FGDs, and the document analysis. This methodological approach was helpful to ensure that the results are well-supported and that was consistent across the multiple sources, in this way will help strengthen the credibility of the study. The findings were presented in a narrative format, and that will be enriched by direct quotes and possible examples from the chosen participants. This approach offers a more detailed information

of the curriculum integration process, making the results of this both engaging and also informative for the readers.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

While studying in Indonesia, I learned a lot about their education system, which made me reflect on many things about the Philippines. The MBHTE delegates visited Indonesia, particularly at the Indonesian International Islamic University (UIII), last May 2024. During their visit, the Filipino students were invited to join the discussion, and that is how I learned about the public madrasah and became interested in getting to know more about it. After that, they revisited Indonesia last April 2025, and Filipino students had a short conversation with the delegates, especially with the Director General of the MBHTE. I reintroduced myself and shared with them that my research is about the public madrasah, and everyone was happy to hear that, and that is how I started to get access to the site.

I lived in a different region, not in the BARMM region. So I am an outsider in this study. I did not experience the education system in that region, also, and the islamic curricula they are using were new to me, as this is only available in the BARMM region. Personally, I experienced the difficulties getting an education while growing up in a remote community with a diverse culture. These first experiences have influenced my curiosity about how the place and diversity affect the students' educational experiences. These realities and lived experiences form the foundation of my positionality as a researcher. My approach to this research has also been influenced by my social identity and personal experiences. How I interact with the data and interpret the participant narratives is influenced by my position as an outsider in this region.

Ethical procedures were completely observed throughout the conduct of the study. The soft file of informed consent was sent to the principal via Facebook Messenger, as this is the only app that is easier and convenient to use for both parties. After providing the detailed information about the study, and its purpose, methods, potential risks, and its benefits, the permission letter to conduct the study was forwarded from all of the participants. Pseudonyms was used to protect the identities of the participants, and the data was promised to be securely stored, and can be accessible only to the researcher and its authorized personnel. This approach was necessary because it will give the protection and of the integrity of the research and its process. And also, it will help in order to foster the trust and the cooperation from the chosen community, which is the Bangsamoro region.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

The validity and the reliability was performed in the process of this study in order to demonstrate that the credibility and the trustworthiness of the research findings are well presented. To ensure validity, the research tools for the interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) was carefully developed. The questions was adapted from the several previous studies related to the curriculum integration, Islamic education, and educational policies. It was also improved by reviewing the current research and official documents in order to match the study's goals and local context. Several experts in the curriculum making, Islamic education, and qualitative research reviewed the draft questions in order to check if they were clear, relevant, and unbiased.

By then combining of the information that has been gathered from the semi-structured interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and the document analysis, the study made use of a triangulation approach in order to increase the validity of the study. A thorough grasp of the curriculum integration process was provided by this method, in order to guarantee that the results are well supported by the numerous sources. Additionally, the member checking was employed, in which this enabled the participants to examine and then confirm the detail of their interpretations and the transcribed of interviews. For example, with regards to the research question number one (1) of this study, since the school administrator was not able to give the researcher the complete detail of the integration process of the curriculum, the section head of the curriculum and development took the opportunity to share some information about the public madrasah. This procedure was helpful to reduce the chances of the misinterpretation and then validates the validity of the opinions and the facts expressed by the participants.

The reliability was ensured by the use of the consistent methods during the phases of the data collection and its analysis. To guarantee that the consistency in the data collection was present, the semi-structured interviews and also the focus group discussions was conducted using the interview guide. To lower and also avoid the possibility of the transcription errors, the researcher manually transcribed the data from the interview and was supervised by the researcher's supervisor with regard to data analysis to maintain the credibility of the study. Then, all the interviews and the focus group discussions were video and audio recorded and then transcribed in verbatim. The audio and video recordings took about 20 to 30 minutes, the longest was about 40 minutes for some participants because of the problem with the internet connection and electricity. Moreover, the researcher finished the transcription in four days. To reduce the biases and to guarantee the consistency in

regard to the coding process, the thematic analysis was carried out. By using these various techniques, the study was able to demonstrate both an external and an internal reliability that was a big help in order to guarantee the strength of the research methodology.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter will elaborate and explain the findings in answering the research questions gathered from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The result came from the school administrator, head principal, teachers, students, and with special participation of the curriculum and development section head. Every answer to the research questions will be answered and elaborated using subchapters in order to explain it well and have a deeper understanding of the curriculum integration in the Bangsamoro Public Madrasah. The first subchapter will answer the first research question about the Islamic and national curriculum integration process in the first public madrasah. The second subchapter will answer the second research question about the challenges and opportunities in the curriculum integration. Additionally, the third subchapter will answer the third research question about the perceptions of curriculum effectiveness from the school community. And the last subchapter will discuss the summary of the findings.

4.1 Integration of the Islamic and National Curricula

This subchapter addresses the first research question, as follows: *How does the integration process of the Islamic and national curriculum in the first accredited madrasah under the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) in the Bangsamoro region?* This is related to how was the curriculum integration in Islamic education within the national education framework and intersects with the educational policy, its cultural relevance and the institutional development of the Public Madrasah in the BARMM region. Due to the limited information from the School Administrator giving answers to the first research question, the researcher tried to seek an alternative participant to fully give the information needed for the first research question number one. The added participant was Mocsin, the Curriculum and Development Section Head.

4.1.1 Political Will and Strategic Leadership

The integration of the Islamic and national curriculum within the first accredited public madrasah in Bangsamoro region is not merely an educational endeavor but it reflects deeper religious, political, and cultural dimensions. According to Mocsin, who was designated as the Curriculum and Development Section Head, the process was initiated as a direct mandate from the MBHTE leadership, stating,

“My role in the public madrasa is... I was tasked by the Minister and by my Director General to personally supervise the operation of the public madrasa in Cotabato City. I was assigned to oversee the progress and development of the public madrasa. I helped the

Administrator, also the School Head, so that the public madrasa can operate properly.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

4.1.2 International Benchmarking and Curriculum Modeling

A significant step in the integration process involved an international benchmarking visit to Indonesia. The MBHTE delegation, including the curriculum planners and the education officials, visited various integrated Islamic schools such as Insan Cendekia and many other schools. As Mocsin recalled,

“Actually, the curriculum structure was patterned and modelled in Indonesia... me and our team, along with Pak Bahrul Hayat, we went to (Insan Cedekia)... We also visited Insan Cedekia and School in Istiqlal Mosque. Before the development and implementation of the public madrasa, we went to Indonesia to benchmark with their curriculum there and how they manage the public madrasa and (so on and so forth).” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

The benchmarking led to the adoption of what Mocsin described as a “balanced curriculum,” combining Islamic and national learning. The Mocsin explained further:

“We went to many places (5 schools) to benchmark the curriculum. The structure of our curriculum here is what we call a Balanced Curriculum. Balanced in the sense that the learners will acquire knowledge for the world and the knowledge for the future. That is the aspiration of the good minister, Sir Muhajir Iqbal... There is a saying in the Qur’an, that if you study this for the world, do not forget the future in the afterlife.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

Based on the MBHTE's benchmarking visits to Indonesia, the Bangsamoro region's integration of Islamic and the national curricula is in line with the Indonesia's long-standing initiatives to balance the religious and secular education. In the Indonesian setting, the integrated Islamic institutions like Madrasah Aliyah Negeri Insan Cendekia have played a crucial role in showing how the Islamic principles may be incorporated into a curriculum that is accepted nationwide. They are examples of what Daulay and Tobroni (2017) refer to as a "modern Islamic education" that strikes a balance between the social and scientific advancement and the spiritual development. Their study highlights how the Islamic education in Indonesia changed from being based on a traditional religious framework to meeting a modern educational demands by incorporating general courses like science, math, and languages into the madrasah system (Daulay & Tobroni, 2017).

Mukminin et al. (2019), who describe Indonesia's curriculum reform movement, reflect this idea by then describing the country's shift from a centralized to a decentralized

approach, which this gave the schools more freedom to incorporate a local and religious content within the national framework. This reform framework allows the Islamic schools to create a curricula that are both in line with the national education requirements and sensitive to community values, a balance that the MBHTE also aims to achieve. Furthermore, the integrated curriculum approach that Akib et al. (2020) support—one that is thematically and philosophically connects the religious teachings and a general knowledge to create holistic learners is reflected in the idea of a "balanced curriculum," as highlighted by Mocsin.

Furthermore, Sobirin et al. (2022) point out that the historical evolution of madrasah in Indonesia demonstrates how the Islamic schools have gradually integrated the national qualifications. Government policy and the efforts of Islamic reformers had a major role in the transition from a solely religious instruction to a more comprehensive educational paradigm, confirming the feasibility of an integrated or a dual-track curriculum. Mocsin's goals are in line with this integrated strategy, which is based on the Islamic principles including training the students for both the success in this life and the hereafter. According to Akib et al. (2020), the integrated curriculum in the Indonesian Islamic schools is made to strike a balance between the spiritual, affective, and cognitive domains. This aligns with the Qur'anic principle of *dunya wal akhirah*, which is to pursue knowledge that will benefit both this world and the hereafter.

4.1.3 Integrated Teaching as Pedagogical Approach

The integration is implemented at the classroom level through what Mocsin described as an "integrated approach" to teaching, as this is part of the objectives of integrating Islamic and national curriculum in the public madrasah. As Mocsin explained:

“The primary objective of having the balanced curriculum in the Bangsamoro region is for our learners to have a balanced education. They will have knowledge for the world and knowledge for the future. That is the main objective of having this kind of balanced curriculum. In order to achieve and implement that, we have to use the integrated approach in teaching. Suppose you are familiar with the integrated approach in delivering the learnings inside the classroom. In that case, if you are teaching a subject, for example science, you are teaching science but you are integrating the Islamic concept on science.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

Other than separating the Islamic and secular subjects, lessons are also designed to include both of the dimensions. For example, the Islamic concepts are incorporated into science lessons to provide its religious relevance. Likewise, in the teaching of the Islamic

jurisprudence (fiqh), the teachers connect the spiritual teachings with the scientific understanding, as Mocsin described:

“If you are teaching a subject, for example science, the water cycle. Although you are teaching science, there are concepts in the Quran and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW that will be integrated in the teaching. You will say that this is a blessing from Allah to us that we are being given water that does not run out because this is what he said in the Quran...In the teaching of Fikhi, you are teaching ablution or cleanliness, tahara, and you are integrating science in your teaching. So by that means, you are teaching one subject but the competencies are multiple. Although the time is limited, the knowledge that you get is complete.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

This practice reflects a pedagogical orientation grounded in both the Islamic worldview and the national standards, promoting a holistic learning experience for the students. Moreover, Mocsin was thankful that the teachers at Public Madrasah acquired this what they called an “integrated approach” in teaching, saying,

“So fortunately, our teachers here at Bangsamoro Public Madrasa, the regular teachers or the permanent teachers, are also ustads and ustadza... They happened to pass a licensure examination for teachers, so they became professional teachers.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

4.1.4 Teacher Competency and Dual Qualifications

The implementation of the integrated curriculum relies heavily on the teacher qualifications. Some teachers possess dual qualifications, having passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) while also being trained as ustadz or ustadzah. Some may have also limited knowledge or lack expertise in teaching ISAL subjects, still, they can teach because they were once an ALIVE teacher in public school.

“But there are also other ustads, aside from them, that they do not teach the Quran...What they teach is secular subjects or general subjects in (Indonesia). Their partner ustads are the ones who really teach ISAL subjects. But if the ustads are absent, they can teach those subjects (ISAL) because they used to teach ALIVE in their government.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

However, he also emphasized that some teachers may lack deep expertise in either religious or secular domains, especially ISAL content. This gap led to his recommendation for sustained professional development:

“But that's why one of the recommendations that I recommend is that we have to orient and have (to have) a training with the Bangsamoro Public Madrasah teachers and associates to acquire this integrated approach in teaching. You will not be taught this if

you only have a little knowledge of science and religious subjects.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

4.1.5 Religious and Cultural Relevance

The integrated curriculum was seen as particularly appropriate and fair for Muslim learners. Mocsin emphasized the initiative's religious and cultural grounding. Mocsin also further explained that many parents in the region choose public madrasas because of the holistic educational framework. That is why Mocsin strongly believed that learning the Islamic and national curriculum is fair for the Muslim learners.

“So much fair in the side of the Muslim. The good Minister and even as a parent, for example me, I really want my children to learn the worldly skills and their preparation for the afterlife. That's why you are familiar with the context in our region that most of our Muslim learners will go to the Madrasa schools because of the Balanced Education. Even in Indonesia, as what Pak Bahrul said, when we were there last month, they said that the students left the public school and went to the public madrasa. Because their parents see that it is not only fair for the students to go to the public madrasa, but it is also very fair.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

4.1.6 Resource Constraints and Infrastructure Gaps

Despite the curriculum's strength in the content and concept, its implementation faced logistical and infrastructural barriers. Capacity-building programs are seen as one of the most essential to ensure that teachers can deliver the integrated curriculum effectively. Infrastructure and the material resources are also limitations during the first year of operation of the BPM. Despite the efforts to secure an instructional materials and some technological tools such as smart TVs, these are not yet fully functional due to the incomplete installations and an inadequate utilities. The lack of adequate teaching and learning materials, especially for kindergarten learners, was also noted. The mentioned challenges hinder the full implementation of the integrated curriculum.

“There are a lot of things to improve in order for the public madrasa to become more developed and conducive for learning. Some factors to be considered is the infrastructure of the building. As of now, because the Minister really wants the public madrasa to open because he doesn't know when he will be able to leave his terminal, so it needs to be started...The building is not yet finished, but he saw something. The building is not yet installed with lights, although we can install water, but the lights are not installed. Although we bought learning aids that can help the children, like digital TV, smart TV, and I have a proposal to connect the internet for the children, but unfortunately, they were not able to install the electricity right away. We haven't been able to use it yet, so that is one thing that needs to be improved. As for the teachers, they still need to be improved, just like what I said, especially in the integrated approach of teaching...Learning materials are not enough, the learning kits of the children, especially in the kindergarten, are not enough...

even the school administrators need to capacitate themselves for more.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

4.1.7 National Policy Tensions and Constitutional Constraints

On the national level, the integration effort must navigate the legal and political framework of the Philippine Constitution, which it emphasizes the separation of the church and state. However, this has created some tensions. As Mocsin stated,

“The first challenge is the national, because as we know, the Philippine Constitution is secular... So for us, there should be no separation of church and state, so we Muslims, we do not believe in that kind of practice. So for us, there should be no separation of church and state. Because of that law, the balance and integration of the Islamic subjects becomes a challenge in Manila.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

Nevertheless, their dialogue with the national education authorities clarified that the integrated curriculum does not replace the K–12 program but it supplements it with the Islamic Studies and Arabic Language (ISAL) subjects. A compromise was achieved through dialogue with the national officials, who accepted the addition of the ISAL subjects provided that the K–12 curriculum was a preserved intact.

“But alhamdulillah, it was handled when they asked us, once we presented this to the national officials of the Department of Education, their comment was, “what did you do in the K-12 or solid curriculum? Did you neglect it or not?” So we said, “we did not neglect it, we just added Islamic Studies and Arabic Language subjects.” So they agreed.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

4.1.8 Legislative Advocacy and National Expansion

This collaborative understanding allows the curriculum to operate within the legal parameters while also addressing the religious identity of the Bangsamoro region. Moving forward, the integration process is gaining legislative support. According to Mocsin, there are a lot of efforts to pass the national laws in strengthening madrasah education in the Philippines, with senators reportedly supporting a law to strengthen madrasah education not only in BARMM but across the Philippines. This vision aligns with the broader educational equity goals, aiming to embed Islamic education more deeply into the national system.

“Actually, we are still waiting for the next one to agree with our indication for negotiation. But there are first steps. Some concerned Bangsamoro, BARMM or not, that they will pass a law, and then this one Senator will sponsor strengthening or strengthening the Madrasa schools in the Philippines, not only in BARMM but also in the Philippines. So that is a very

good development that God willing, will be passed and realized so that our Madrasas can be helped just like in Indonesia.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

4.1.9 Cooperative Relationship with National Education Authorities

Despite initial concerns, the relationship between MBHTE and the Department of Education has remained cooperative and productive. The K–12 framework remains untouched, and the integrated curriculum is presented as an enhancement rather than a replacement. This collaboration ensures that the curriculum operates within both national standards and regional aspirations.

“So far so good because the main concern of the national office is the K-12. That's why the good minister and his consultant, Pak Bahrul from Indonesia put in the Bangsamoro Education Code that there is adherence to the minimum competencies set by the national government and that is the K-12. That's why when we had a meeting, they asked us when we presented the Islamic Studies and Arabic Language (ISAL) curriculum, “what did you do to the K-12 curriculum? Did you change it?” We said, “we didn't change anything, we didn't add anything to the K-12 curriculum. So far so good. The relationship of the MBHTE and the Department of Education in the national office is good. There is no confusion.” (Mocsin, personal communication, 2025)

In summary, the integration of Islamic and national curricula in the Bangsamoro Public Madrasa represents a culturally responsive and pedagogically innovative reform rooted in both local aspiration and global best practices. While the curriculum design benefits from strong political backing, international benchmarking, and holistic educational goals, its success depends on critical factors such as teacher development, infrastructure, legal-policy coherence, and sustained institutional support. The integration process not only redefines Muslim education in BARMM but also contributes to the larger discourse on inclusive, values-based public education in the Philippines.

4.2 Challenges and Opportunities in Integration

This subchapter will answer the second research question: *What challenges and opportunities occur during the process of integrating between the Islamic and national curriculum?* The integration of the Islamic and national curriculum in the first accredited public madrasa under the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) in the BARMM Region presents a complex process that marked by both promising opportunities and significant challenges as well.

4.2.1 Challenges in Integrating Islamic and National Curricula

4.2.1.1 Infrastructural Deficiencies

One of the most prominent challenges in integrating Islamic and national curricula is the lack of basic infrastructure in the Bangsamoro Public Madrasa (BPM). The school operated in a borrowed senior high school facility, without electricity or running water, thereby creating a learning environment that was far from ideal. The school head and administrator noted,

“There was no electricity in the whole building of 20 rooms... Each classroom had a big television, but we were not able to use them because there was no electricity” (Principal, Personal Communication, 2025)

“The big issues is... the situation, no more power. Yeah, no electricity. So, it is number one to be... to one of the conducive to our classroom. So, that is the big issues. No power, no water can sustain to our daily needs here at school..” (Administrator, Personal Communication, 2025)

Additionally, the teacher highlighted that the absence of basic utilities restricts their ability to use digital teaching tools. Teachers were compelled to print learning materials and charge electronic devices at home. A regular teacher echoed this concern:

“We couldn’t use the TV because there was no electricity... Instead, we would give them PowerPoints, but we couldn’t do it...the instructional materials, we print them at home... we only use them at school” (Regular Teacher 1, Personal Communication, 2025)

These limitations not only disrupted instructional delivery but also restricted the integration of digital teaching tools. Additionally, these practical problems relate to the Indonesian madrasahs' difficulties when they first encountered the country's educational system, when the resource delivery fell behind policy changes (Sobirin et al., 2022). According to a study by Thelma et al. (2024), for the technology integration to be successful, educators must be professionally trained to use these tools and have access to technological resources. It can promote differentiated instruction, provide a variety of learning experiences, and give an access to a range of knowledge and viewpoints from across nations and cultures. Despite these difficulties, the instructional delivery continued due to the resourcefulness and the dedication of the teachers. Indeed, these constraints have prompted calls for targeted interventions.

4.2.1.2 Staffing and Teacher Workload

Staffing shortages and increased workload also presented major obstacles. Due to this, existing teachers had to take on multiple roles, stretching their capacities but also demonstrating a strong sense of commitment and resilience. The school administrator stated,

“Teachers... they are not complete, like me and my colleagues. So, there are many multitasking... in our course, activity, teaching” (Administrator, Personal Communication, 2025)

This issue was particularly pronounced for ISAL (Islamic Studies and Arabic Language) teachers who transitioned from ALIVE programs in public schools. In public schools, sometimes, teachers are accustomed to handling only one subject for one hour per day. However, in the public madrasa setting, Islamic Studies teachers must teach five subjects daily, thereby functioning as full-time educators. According to the principal,

“For the ISALs, since they came from a public school (ALIVE), the challenges for them were the time... In public school, they are used to teach for only one hour per day in one subject... Compared to public madrasas, they teach five subjects in one day. So, they become full-time” (Principal, Personal Communication, 2025).

This contrast in teaching responsibilities that necessitates a shift in the professional expectations and may lead to a possible fatigue, lower instructional quality, or even burnout if not addressed through a proper staffing and time allocation. According to Stoddart (2024), the multifaceted problem of a teacher burnout is characterized by the depersonalization, emotional fatigue and an absence of personal success. In addition to having an adverse effect on the teachers' mental and physical well-being, burnout compromises the efficacy of the educational system as a whole, which affecting the student learning outcomes and school stability.

4.2.1.3 Student Preparedness and Academic Diversity

The diversity in student preparedness, especially in Islamic subjects, emerged as a challenge to curriculum delivery. Many students lacked prior exposure to Arabic or Islamic education, particularly those who transferred from secular public schools. One ISAL teacher observed,

“The children who do not have an Arabic background... are really the ones who are struggling.” (ISAL Teacher, Personal Communication, 2025)

This disparity exists because the Public Madrasa is a relatively new initiative, and some students transferred from regular public schools that did not offer Arabic or Islamic education. To relieve this issue, the school implemented informal remedial teaching sessions during recess. However, students who were enrolled involuntarily by their parents exhibited lower motivation:

“We are conducting remedial teaching. Tutoring, that’s what we are doing... sometimes during recess time, so we also take a little bit time, like 5 minutes....actually, the students who were just forced by their parents struggled a bit” (ISAL Teacher, Personal Communication, 2025)

Moreover, this challenge was compounded by the absence of bridging programs for students unfamiliar with Islamic subjects. The ISAL teacher recommended, *“Implement bridging modules or transition classes to help them catch up in both the secular and Islamic aspect of the curriculum”* (ISAL Teacher, Personal Communication, 2025)

These findings underscore the importance of a differentiated instruction and the learner readiness in managing a dual curriculum model. Learners' developmental stages vary. Teachers must, therefore, work extremely hard in order to ensure that students show their accomplishments in a variety of ways. In order to successfully educate children, schools must consider their students' needs, interests, and readiness (Ismajli & Imami-Morina, 2018).

4.2.1.4 Curriculum Contextualization

Curricular contextualization proved to be a complex process. Teachers were required to align the national K–12 curriculum with Islamic teachings as mandated by the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE). The principal noted, *“They applied the regular curriculum from K–12. Then another adjustment for them, ma’am, because it needs to be contextualized... contextualized by the MBHTE BARMM.”* (Principal, Personal Communication, 2025)

This statement reflects the difficulty of aligning the national education standards with the religious teachings without compromising either of the system. The need for the contextualization suggests that the teachers must modify or supplement the curriculum in order to align with Islamic values while ensuring that the learning outcomes of the K–12 curriculum are met.

4.2.1.5 Instructional Time and Subject Overload

The integration of Islamic and national curricula also led to instructional overload for both students and teachers. The administrator described the time allocation per subject and the increasing number of subjects per grade level: *“In grade one... each subject is 40 minutes... grade three is eight subjects”* (Administrator, Personal Communication, 2025)

The ISAL curriculum alone consists of six distinct subjects, significantly expanding the overall workload. Unlike in regular public schools where ISAL is considered a single subject, in the Public Madrasa, ISAL consists of six distinct subjects. This broader scope may be overwhelming for some students, particularly those who were forced by their parents to enrol. According to the ISAL teacher,

“My workload personally, it’s okay” because of co-teaching arrangements, he acknowledged that “maybe the children are overloaded... because the subjects, it’s too many.” (ISAL Teacher, Personal Communication, 2025)

The density of the daily schedule challenged students' capacity to process and retain information effectively.

4.2.1.6 Policy and Implementation Gaps

From a policy and its implementation standpoint, the administrator pointed out a missed opportunity in the sequencing of the curriculum rollout. The suggestion was that integration should have begun at the earliest level of learning, which is in Tahderiyyah or Kindergarten, to ensure a smoother developmental progression. Starting at the preschool level, the administrator argued, would maybe allow the integration to be more cohesive and be better tailored to the learners' developmental needs.

“What should have been done before they implemented it, they should have started in kindergarten first, so they could see the... development can be seen in the tahdiriya up to the next grade...That’s my opinion,” she added, *“I hope the policy that they made should have started in the tahdiriya or kindergarten, then the following grade.”* (Administrator, Personal Communication, 2025)

Without this, the integration efforts may fall short in producing optimal learning outcomes, particularly when the children with different academic and religious backgrounds are enrolled without the foundational exposure to the integrated system. Moreover, the lack of a Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) budget during the first year further constrained the school’s operational capabilities.

“The biggest challenge was that they did not have MOOE. But, alhamdulillah, we were able to manage to get through it” (Principal, Personal Communication, 2025)

4.2.1.7 Assessment and Recognition Disparities

Another structural concern involved student recognition. In some instances, students excelling in secular subjects were not awarded honors due to lower performance in Islamic subjects.

“The problem, ma’am, is the children who are honor students in the secular subjects... they did not become honor students because they have lower grades in Islamic Subjects... Those students who study in traditional madrasas have an advantage over those who do not.” (Principal, Personal Communication, 2025)

This system created unintended inequities, particularly disadvantaging students new to Islamic education. This issue suggests that the integration can produce inequalities unless mechanisms are put in place to scaffold the learning in both domains, especially for the students that is new to formal Islamic education.

4.2.2 Opportunities in Integrating Islamic and National Curricula

4.2.2.1 Balanced and Holistic Learning Framework

Despite the challenges, the integration of curricula presented valuable pedagogical opportunities. The administrator described the curriculum as *“one that connects different areas of study... allowing [students] to engage in relevant, meaningful activities that can be connected to real life”* (Administrator, Personal Communication, 2025). The dual curriculum not only addressed academic goals but also nurtured the moral and spiritual development of the students. The administrator added, *“Balanced education. That’s what they liked,”* referring to the parents and the students’ favorable response.

4.2.2.2 Dual-Certified Teachers and Cultural Relevance

Teacher identity emerged as a key strength. What made this integration more seamless was the teachers’ background; many secular teachers were also trained in the Islamic education. The dual competency of the teachers significantly eased the delivery of the integrated content, allowing both the Islamic and national learning outcomes to be addressed with its coherence and cultural alignment. The principal explained:

“They are all Muslims... aside from being regular teachers, they are licensed teachers, ma’am. They were also Arabic teachers before. They were ALIVE teachers before. They passed the teacher’s licensure exam. So, it is easy for them... to integrate the subjects.” (Principal, Personal Communication, 2025).

The alignment between teachers’ professional and religious competencies allowed for a culturally authentic instruction and reinforced shared values between the school and its community.

4.2.2.3 Strong Parental and Community Involvement

The community and parents played a crucial role in sustaining the public madrasa. When the institutional support fell short, stakeholders stepped in. According to the administrator, *“Our GPTA officers... were the ones who provided the hose to go to the toilet... they were the ones who initiated to have that installed”* (Administrator, Personal Communication, 2025).

Parents also expressed satisfaction with the educational model, which they felt provided both the academic and religious instruction. The public madrasa provides an inclusive educational space for the children who may have previously felt alienated by secular institutions. As the principal noted, many parents were grateful for the madrasa's establishment, believing that it was more aligned with their children's needs. According to the principal, one parent reportedly shared,

“Our parents would say, ‘Ma’am, we are thankful that there are public madrasah here, because my son is not going to school properly... so now, I will let him enter here in public madrasa.’ (Principal, Personal Communication, 2025).

Indeed, the higher academic achievement and school progress are correlated with the involvement of parents, families, and the community in education. Students typically receive better grades, attend class more frequently, remain in school longer, and enroll in higher-level programs when schools, parents, families, and communities collaborate to encourage learning (Roekel, V. D., 2008).

4.2.2.4 Student Engagement and Attendance

Students responded positively to the dual curriculum, particularly those with intrinsic motivation. *“Those are the ones who were happy... because they get both knowledge in just one school”* (ISAL Teacher, Personal Communication, 2025). The administrator noted, *“Their attendance is commendable. They are there every day... That’s what motivates them”* (Administrator, Personal Communication, 2025).

Moreover, the school saw a higher student enrolment and a minimal absenteeism during its first year, which reflects the positive reception and perceived relevance of this educational model in the community. The principal observed: *“Our first year... Kinder to grade 3, we reached... 130 students... Compared to other schools... they didn’t reach 130”* (Principal, Personal Communication, 2025). This strong community response indicates a high level of trust in the public madrasa’s educational approach and opens possibilities for the future scaling and expansion.

According to the study of Van Roekel (2008), a strong school-family-community partnerships encourage higher educational aspirations and more motivated students. The study also point to parent-family community involvement as a crucial component in discussing the school dropout crisis. It also shows that the parent participation has an impact on minority students' academic achievement across all races, and this effect is evident for elementary and secondary school students, despite of the parents' educational background, family income, or educational attainment (Van Roekel, 2008).

4.2.2.5 Collaborative Teaching and Language Strategies

The co-teaching approach between ISAL and regular teachers supported curriculum balance. The regular teacher said, *"We are team teaching,"* (Regular Teacher 1, Personal Communication, 2025), explaining how the instructional responsibilities were shared effectively. Both sets of educators have designated time slots in order to ensure curricular coverage.

This can help to establish educational settings where education is both rigorous and flexible, tailored to the individual learning needs of each student. This is one of the benefits of co-teaching, as well as "using diverse areas of expertise to differentiate instruction, enabling smaller group instruction that is coherent, and providing a common instructional experience on which the co-teaching partners can reflect and make subsequent improvements" (Taşdemir & Yıldırım, 2017).

Additionally, in order to maximize understanding, the teacher explained that lessons are often delivered in the local mother tongue: *"We use Maguindanaon because that's what they can easily understand...even the English subject, we translate into Maguindanaon."* (Regular Teacher 1, Personal Communication, 2025). A similar approach is used by ISAL teachers who combine Arabic with Maguindanaon when appropriate.

4.2.2.6 Moral and Spiritual Development

The embedded Islamic practices in the school schedule contributed to the students' moral formation. The administrator shared, *"During prayer time, our children are there... they are given an allotted time, 15 minutes to perform the sala in Asar"* (Administrator, Personal Communication, 2025). This integration instilled a discipline and reinforced religious values. Teachers aspired to develop students who could become future community leaders, *"professionals who can be an imam in the masjid... give sermons or khutbah"* (Regular Teacher 1, Personal Communication, 2025).

4.2.2.7 Inclusive Educational Space

Finally, the public madrasah model offered an inclusive environment for the learners who might have otherwise felt alienated in the secular institutions. This inclusivity was particularly important for those students who had dropped out or struggled academically in other schools. *“Most of our pupils... have stopped for a long time... are a bit stubborn”* (Regular Teacher 1, Personal Communication, 2025). Yet within the madrasa framework, these students began to engage positively, benefiting from an approach that honored both their faith and academic potential.

4.3 Perceptions of Curriculum Effectiveness

This subchapter will answer the third research question: *How do the principals, administrators, teachers, and students perceive about the effectiveness of the integrated curricula so far?* This will help understand the perception of the school community with regard to the effectiveness, both perceived strengths and weaknesses of the integrated curricula.

4.3.1 Holistic Student Development Through Integrated Education

Stakeholders widely recognized that the integrated curriculum fosters the development of both academic and spiritual competencies. The administrator emphasized that the curriculum nurtures character formation rooted in Islamic values, stating, *“Of course, their skills are God-fearing. That’s their real skills there. We say, they really need to be educated”* (Administrator, Personal Communication, 2025). Similarly, an ISAL teacher explained that the program *“allows students to grow holistically, developing both their academic knowledge and spiritual values”* (ISAL Teacher, Personal Communication, 2025). This sentiment was echoed by Regular Teacher 1, who remarked, *“If they started studying with fear of God... at the same time, they are also learning secular education”* (Regular Teacher 1, Personal Communication, 2025).

Students also demonstrated appreciation for both dimensions of learning. Aliyah, a Grade 3 student, shared, *“I learned how to pray... I know how to read Arabic in cursive,”* while also managing secular subjects (Student Aliyah, Personal Communication, 2025). The curriculum’s dual-track model is seen as key to preparing students for both this world and the hereafter, a point reinforced by an ISAL teacher who noted it helps students *“learn something about living in this world and that they will be ready for the akhira”* (ISAL Teacher, Personal Communication, 2025).

4.3.2 High Levels of Teacher Dedication Despite Institutional Challenges

The success of the curriculum's early implementation is closely tied to the dedication of the teaching personnel. Teachers go beyond the scheduled hours and limited resources to support the student learning. As the ISAL teacher shared, *"Sometimes we get home at 7 o'clock,"* reflecting on the workload (ISAL Teacher, Personal Communication, 2025). The Curriculum Section Head also described teachers who *"get the children [during breaks], they have Halaqah, memorize the Qur'an, sometimes they teach about Islam"* (Mocsin, Personal Communication, 2025).

Even with the limited electricity and access to the instructional materials, teachers remain resourceful. Regular Teacher 2 shared, *"We don't have electricity... so we're only more on pictures. For example, we print them here at home"* (Regular Teacher 2, Personal Communication, 2025). The Administrator confirmed, *"What we do of course as a teacher is to be resourceful... but that is not enough because we don't have electricity"* (Administrator, Personal Communication, 2025).

4.3.3 Time Management as a Core Structural Challenge

A recurring issue across all participants was the intensity of the school schedule due to the dual curriculum structure. The Principal reported, *"We start from 7 o'clock to 5 o'clock. So that is purely a learning engagement... That is what both ISAL students and teachers adjust"* (Principal, Personal Communication, 2025). The ISAL teacher echoed this, stating, *"We really had a hard time adjusting... Because if we don't adjust, our curriculum, the public madrasa, won't be approved."* (ISAL Teacher, Personal Communication, 2025).

Even the students expressed fatigue. Aliyah, a Grade 3 student, admitted, *"Not [okay], but I can still go home,"* after long school days that sometimes extended to 6 or 7 p.m. (Student Aliyah, Personal Communication, 2025). Despite this, both teachers and students demonstrate strong resilience and commitment.

4.3.4 Strong Community Support Paired with Parental Awareness Gaps

Teachers and administrators highlighted high levels of parental support. *"Our parents are very supportive of the public madrasa,"* said Regular Teacher 1, noting that families appreciate having access to free Islamic and secular education (Regular Teacher 1, Personal Communication, 2025). However, the Principal also emphasized the need for better parental orientation: *"Since the public madrasa offers balanced education... parents need to know what the public madrasa programs are"* (Principal, Personal

Communication, 2025). Misunderstandings sometimes arise, especially when comparing school hours with regular public schools.

Effective school-parent community relationships are tightly incorporated with regard to the school's main mission and goals, rather than existing as standalone initiatives or an add-on activities. According to the research and fieldwork, the parent-school relationships helps enhance schools, help families, foster a community support, and boost the student progress and accomplishment (Van Roekel, 2008).

4.3.5 Curriculum Alignment and Integration Endorsed but Requires Refinement

There is widespread agreement that the integration of Islamic and national curricula is pedagogically appropriate. The Principal called it *“a very good program of MBHTE,”* and emphasized that families were enthusiastic: *“They are very happy because they are learning Arabic and secular subjects for free”* (Principal, Personal Communication, 2025). Similarly, the Curriculum Section Head described the integration as a fulfillment of Bangsamoro aspirations: *“This is the aspiration of the Bangsamoro people in the region”* (Mocsin, Personal Communication, 2025).

However, some issues with the curriculum level alignment and content difficulty were raised. Regular Teacher 1 expressed concern that ISAL materials may not be developmentally appropriate, saying, *“Sometimes if what is taught is high in the eyes, sometimes they can’t cope up”* (Regular Teacher 1, Personal Communication, 2025).

4.3.6 Infrastructure Gaps Undermine Educational Delivery

Despite pedagogical promise, significant infrastructure deficiencies, especially electricity and water, limit effective curriculum delivery. *“If only there was light, we would already have a TV... we won’t be using the chalkboard anymore,”* reported by the Administrator (Administrator, Personal Communication, 2025). Regular Teacher 2 added that the lack of electricity hindered the use of digital materials: *“We can’t do PowerPoint presentations or projectors”* (Regular Teacher 2, Personal Communication, 2025). Water scarcity further complicated daily operations: *“Unlike here, there is no electricity and no water”* (Regular Teacher 1, Personal Communication, 2025).

4.3.7 Calls for Policy Support, Staffing, and Professional Development

Participants consistently called for more systemic support. Teachers recommended continuous training: *“Just continuous training for both teachers. General subject teachers, and for us ISAL teachers,”* emphasized the ISAL teacher (ISAL Teacher, Personal

Communication, 2025). Regular Teacher 1, however, noted, *“Not even once”* had she attended a seminar since joining the public madrasa (Regular Teacher 1, Personal Communication, 2025). The Curriculum Head proposed a long-term policy solution: *“There is a licensure examination for modaris... patterned and modeled from Indonesia”* (Mocsin, Personal Communication, 2025).

Staffing was another concern. Regular Teacher 2 suggested, *“We’ll just add more teachers... At least, we’ll be able to do our role... We’ll be able to prepare our lessons well”* (Regular Teacher 2, Personal Communication, 2025).

The issue with regard to the professional development of teachers is present not only in the BARMM region but also in the entire country. In the Philippines, the policymakers are concentrating on enhancing the educational system's ability to support the innovation and reform. The improvement of the In-Service Training programs, which are intended to promote the development of the teachers professional skills, is one of the purpose of this project (Maguate et al., 2024). As stated in the Department Order No. 42, s. 2017, the Department of Education (DepEd) has acknowledged the significance of these programs in guaranteeing the provision of a high-quality education and in providing the teachers with the abilities and an information that is necessary to satisfy the requirements of the K–12 Program and the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). In order to ensure that the teachers are adequately equipped to manage the shifts in the demands placed on their students and the larger educational environment, this framework is designed to assist the successful implementation of the educational reforms and uphold a high teaching standards.

A number of issues still exist in spite of the systematic framework and the goal of the In-Service Training programs. Many of these programs continue to be a traditional and centralized, which frequently restricts their ability to adapt and respond to the changing demands of the educators. There may be a disconnect between the training given and the real needs of the educational setting as a result of a traditional In-Service Training program, with its incomplete attention to the quick changes and varied needs of the teachers. Teachers capacity to adjust to a new teaching strategies, developing technologies, and a shifting educational standards may be limited by the static characteristics of the professional development (Maguate et al., 2024).

4.3.8 Positive Student Perceptions Amid Learning Challenges

Students reported enjoying their school experience and appreciated both types of subjects. *“I learned a lot from this school, both Arabic and English subjects... but I like*

Arabic subjects more,” shared Nash, a Grade 2 student (Student Nash, Personal Communication, 2025). Yet, they also found some subjects — like Math and Filipino — difficult. *“Math, there are lots to solve... Filipino subject, it’s very hard to me,”* said Aliyah (Student Aliyah, Personal Communication, 2025).

Despite difficulties, students remained positive and engaged. *“Even if it’s hot, I still focus learning,”* Aliyah said, reflecting resilience (Student Aliyah, Personal Communication, 2025). Iyad added, *“I studied so I will overcome it, with the help of my teacher,”* indicating strong student-teacher relationships (Student Nash, Personal Communication, 2025).

4.4 Summary of the findings

In conclusion, the administrators, teachers, students, and school principal have all expressed their satisfaction with the Bangsamoro Public Madrasa, with its early adoption of the integrated Islamic and national curriculum. Although the curriculum is highly commended for its values-based and comprehensive approach, the full fulfillment remains hindered by the real-world issues like the infrastructure, time, teacher preparation, and scarcity of resources. Its perceived efficacy emerges from its cultural resonance and academic goals, making it a visionary model that is deserving of ongoing funding, encouragement, and improvement.

By applying the Dual Curriculum Theory by John Dewey and Socio-cultural Theory of Vygotsky, it is clear that the integration of the Islamic and national curricula in the Bangsamoro public madrasah is that it really embodies Dewey's vision of a holistic, experiential education through the Balanced Curriculum that fuses the secular and spiritual development. Additionally, it also reflects the view of Vygotsky’s Theory on the learning as a culturally and socially embedded, ensuring that the students engage in a meaningful, context-driven of learning processes. Moreover, it also reinforces the importance of the contextual relevance, teacher training, scaffolding, and a cultural tool in implementing a truly integrated curriculum. This theoretical lens validates the integration, that is not just as a curriculum innovation, but also as a transformative educational reform that aligned with the global theories of child development and holistic education.

Major Findings:

- The Curriculum and Development Section Head emphasized that the curriculum is contextualized to the Bangsamoro identity and it is aligned with the national standards while also promoting Islamic values.
- The principals and administrators recognized the importance of the integrated education for the moral and academic development of the learners, but they also highlighted the several challenges such as having inadequate infrastructure, resource shortages, and the lack of financial support in the first year of its operation.
- The teachers valued the integration for its spiritual and academic benefits, but also cited issues including the heavy workload, insufficient time allocation, and a lack of teaching materials and training for them.
- The students expressed an enjoyment in regards to learning both the Arabic and secular subjects. Most preferred Islamic subjects such as the Hadith and Qur'an, but they also acknowledged the challenges in subjects like Math and Filipino. Despite the long hours and limited facilities, students still remained motivated and eager to learn.

Indeed, the perception of the curriculum effectiveness, as seen through the eyes of the school community strongly supports both the Theory of Dewey's and Theory of Vygotsky.

Findings	Dewey	Vygotsky
Balanced curriculum (spiritual + academic)	Holistic, moral education	Culturally relevant learning
Teachers' dedication, long hours	Moral leadership; experiential teaching	Social mediation, scaffolding
Prayer, sermons, halaqah	Education as lived moral practice	Language and culture as tools
Use of local languages	Democratic, experiential curriculum	Cognitive development via linguistic diversity
Parent and community support	Education as a democratic act	Learning as a social-cultural process
Remediation and differentiation	Child-centered and flexible	ZPD and scaffolding for growth

Table 1.0 Perception of the Curriculum Effectiveness

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION, LIMITATION, AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

This study explored the implementation of the integrated Islamic and national curricula in the first Public Madrasah in Bangsamoro region, which is under the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE). It examined the perspectives of the curriculum developers, school administrators, teachers, and students in order to understand fully the effectiveness, challenges, and opportunities surrounding this dual curriculum model. Key areas of inquiry included, such as the goals and structure of the integrated curriculum, the effectiveness and its implementation challenges from the perspectives of the stakeholders, and the overall impact on the learners' educational experiences and development.

The integration of Islamic and national curricula is considered a highly relevant by all the stakeholders. It promotes a holistic development, such as in spiritual, intellectual, and moral in which is especially significant in the Bangsamoro context. While the curriculum is in place and functioning, its full implementation is hindered by the logistical constraints, lack of infrastructure, and the insufficient instructional support, which this shows the implementation gap of the Public Madrasah.

The school community such as the teachers, school leaders, and the curriculum designers are committed to the mission of the public madrasah. However, they require a stronger institutional support and a more capacity-building opportunities. With regards to the student's resilience, the learners are adapting well to the dual curriculum, in which they are showing eagerness to learn and appreciation for the Islamic teachings. But still, some face learning challenges that could be lessen with better resources and a differentiated instruction.

The integrated curriculum in the public madrasah offers a transformative educational model that addresses both the spiritual and the academic needs of the Muslim learners. With a sustained institutional support, investment in the teacher development, and improvements in school infrastructure, this curriculum model has the potential to significantly uplift the quality of the education in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region and could possibly serve as a model for a culturally responsive education in other Muslim communities or areas in the Philippines.

5.2 Limitation

This study might have offered insightful information about how Islamic and national curriculum were integrated at the Bangsamoro region's first public madrasah, several limitations must be noted.

1. Limited Number of Participants

Even though purposive sampling was employed to guarantee the relevance of the study, there were only nine participants overall such as the administrators, the principal of the school, teachers, and students which is still a small number. Because of this, the viewpoints might not accurately reflect the overall opinions that was found in the larger educational community of the public madrasah. It is possible that the difficulties and experiences discussed do not accurately reflect those other stakeholders who have also firsthand experience and knowledge with the curriculum integration.

2. Access and Time Constraints

Some of the stakeholders, especially the national curriculum developers or higher-level policymakers, were not interviewed due to difficulties with the scheduling and the limited access of the internet. Also, the limitations on time and the fact that the school was on summer vacation, the length and depth of follow-up interviews were limited. Moreover, since it was conducted online, the researcher was not able to visit the school to fully experience and see the situation of the public madrasah.

3. Infrastructure and Implementation Gaps

The madrasah was still working on setting up its entire infrastructure, such as the electricity, water, buildings and digital tools at the time of data collection. This made it more difficult to witness the integrated curriculum's complete adoption and long-term effects.

5.3 Recommendations

1. Infrastructure and Resource Development

It is important to ensure that the public madrasah have enough reliable electricity, clean water, and basic facilities to support the learning of the students. Also, provide more technological equipment (e.g., projectors, audio-visual tools) to enhance the teaching strategies. Lastly, it is important to prioritize and allocate sufficient MOE funding for the school activities, learning materials, facility maintenance and any other resources needed at school.

2. Curriculum Enhancement

The researcher also recommend to develop and distribute a contextualized instructional materials aligned with both the national and Islamic standards for each grade level.

Integrate the Islamic values across the secular subjects in order to strengthen the holistic education and reduce the cognitive dissonance among the learners.

3. Teacher Training and Recruitment

Additionally, conduct a regular professional development program focused on the curriculum integration, contextualized instruction, and inclusive pedagogy for both the ISAL and regular teachers. Hire additional teachers to distribute the teaching loads effectively and to allow more time for the lesson planning and material preparation.

4. Stakeholder Involvement and Community Engagement

Strengthen the parental involvement and the community partnerships to support the vision of the public madrasah. Launch some awareness campaigns to help promote the benefits of the integrated education so that many students will be willing to study in the public madrasah, and gather feedback from the local communities, and parents as well.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

Strengthen the monitoring mechanisms to carefully track the implementation, the learner progress, and the teacher performance. Use some evaluation data to inform the continuous improvement in the curriculum delivery and school management.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Research Permit

Ref. No : 151/Dek.FIP/UIII/UM.02/4/2025
Attachment : -
Subject : Request for Research Permit

Depok, April 25, 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Assalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.

We hereby certify the following student:

Name : Sairah Millor Mangulamas
Student ID Number : 04212320011
Faculty : Faculty of Education
Study Program : MA in Education

is conducting research for her thesis with the following details:

Thesis Title : Harmonizing Islamic and National Curricula: A Qualitative Study
of the First Public Madrasah in the Bangsamoro Region in the
Philippines
Research Location : Cotabato City, Philippines
Research Duration : $\pm$ 1 month

We respectfully request your assistance in granting research permission to the student. Thank you
for your kind attention and cooperation.

Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.,

Kind Regards,
Dean of the Faculty of Education



Faculty of
Education

Prof. Nina Nurmila, PhD

Appendix 2. Research Instrument

Research Question 1: "How does the integration process of the Islamic and national curriculum in the first accredited madrasah under the Ministry of Basic, higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) in the Bangsamoro region?"

For Administrators (Curriculum and Development Section Head)

No	Source/reference (complete, including pages)
1	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 195)
2	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
3	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
4	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
5	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 195)
6	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 196)
7	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
8	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 196)
9	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
10	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)

Items (the original question from the references)

1. What role does your Ministry play with regard to Islamic Integrated school education?
2. Is the curriculum taught in the Islamic integrated schools well structured?
3. What are the objectives of the Islamic integrated schools? How can these objectives be achieved in a multi-cultural/religious environment?
4. Is the workload for learners combining Islamic integrated and formal education fair?
5. Do the Islamic Integrated schools have enough Teaching/Learning resources?
6. What do you think is needed to be done in order for integration to be successful?
7. What challenges does the Islamic integrated curriculum face? How can these challenges be overcome?
8. How do you think the learning environment of Islamic Integrated schools could be improved?
9. How can the Islamic integrated curriculum in the school be improved in order to ensure its relevance.
10. What relationship exists between the Islamic integrated schools and the public/government schools?

Adopt/adapt

1. What is your role in the integration process of the first public Madrasah in the Bangsamoro region?
2. How did you structure the curriculum used in the school?
3. What are the objectives of integrating the Islamic and national curriculum, and how can these be achieved in a diverse region, such as the Bangsamoro Region?
4. Do you think learning the Islamic and national curriculum is fair for the learners?
5. Do you have enough and necessary teaching and learning materials in the school?
6. In your opinion, what is needed for the integration process to become successful?
7. So far, what challenges have you faced while integrating the Islamic and national curricula?
How did you overcome it?
8. Is there a need for improvement in the school's learning environment?
9. How can the integration of the Islamic and national curricula be improved to ensure the relevance of curriculum integration?
10. How was the relationship between the MBHTE and the Department of Education upon integrating the public Madrasah?

Research Question 2: "What challenges and opportunities occur during the process of integrating between the Islamic and national curriculum?"

For Principals

No	Source/reference (complete, including pages)
1	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 189)
2	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 189)
3	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 189)
4	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 189)
5	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 189)
6	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 190)
7	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 190)

For Teachers

No	Source/reference (complete, including pages)
1	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 191)
2	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 191)
3	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 191)
4	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 191)
5	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 191)
6	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 191)
7	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 191)
8	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 192)
9	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 192)

For Administrators

No	Source/reference (complete, including pages)
1	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
2	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
3	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
4	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
5	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
6	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)

Items (the original question from the reference)

1. For how long have you been a head teacher in an Islamic Integrated school?
2. Do you have enough teaching/learning resources/materials in your school?
3. How do you compare the Islamic Education curriculum and the national primary curriculum in terms of acquisition of Knowledge, Skills and attitudes?
4. Have you experienced any conflict between the Islamic education and national curriculum in your school? If yes, what was the nature of the conflict and how did you deal with it?
5. Are the teachers in your school adequately trained and qualified?
6. Do pupils enjoy learning Islamic subjects compared to secular ones?
7. What recommendations would you make which can improve on the teaching and learning of Islamic Education in the integrated schools?

Items (the original question from the reference)

1. What are the objectives of the school?
2. What efforts does the school make to achieve the objectives?
3. What is the curriculum offered in the Islamic integrated school? (type, number and content of subjects taught)
4. What is the workload for learners combining Islamic integrated and formal education?
5. What is the workload for teachers combining Islamic integrated and formal education?
6. What is the main teaching language used in the school? (Other languages)
7. What extra measures need to be taken to ensure both curricula are covered effectively?
8. What are the attitudes of learners and the community towards full integration of religious education into the formal education system?
9. What kind of strategies and policies can be implemented to improve the education system in the integrated school?

Items (the original question from the reference)

1. How do you perceive the importance of the Islamic integrated education?
2. What are the major issues or challenges faced by Islamic integrated schools?
3. What strategies or policies can improve the Islamic integrated education?
4. Do the schools enhance social development of the community?

5. Do the schools develop respect the need for harmonious co-existence?
6. Do they develop desirable moral/ethical and religious values?

Adopt/adapt

1. How long have you been a principal in this school?
2. Does this school have enough teaching and learning materials?
3. How do you differentiate the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes using Islamic and national curricula?
4. What challenges have you encountered integrating Islamic and national curricula in this public madrasah? How did you handle and find a solution to it?
5. How was the recruitment of the teachers in this school?
6. Which subjects did the students enjoy the most, the Islamic subject or the secular one?
7. What would you suggest and recommend to improve teaching and learning using Islamic and national curricula?

Adopt/adapt

1. What are the main objectives of this public madrasah?
2. How do you achieve the objectives of the school?
3. What are the curricula used in this public madrasah?
4. How was the learning progress of the students with the use of Islamic and national curricula? Are they able to cope up?
5. How was the teaching experience of the teachers with the use of Islamic and national curricula? Are they able to cope up?
6. What is the language used in the teaching process?
7. How do you ensure that both curricula are covered well in each grade, and this school?
8. How was the reaction of the learners and parents with the integration of Islamic and nation curricula in this public madrasah?
9. In your opinion, what possible strategies and policies that should be added and implemented in order to improve the education system of public madrasah?

Adopt/adapt

1. In your opinion, how important it is to integrate the Islamic and national curricula in this public madrasah?
2. So far, what big issues and challenges has this school encountered?
3. State possible strategies and policies to help improve the integration of Islamic and national curricula.
4. How was the social development of the community since the integration of the public madrasah?
5. How does the school maintain harmonious co-existence in the community?
6. Does the school maintain to develop an ethical and religious values?

Research Question 3: "How do the principals, administrators, teachers, and students perceive about the effectiveness of the integrated curricula so far?"

For Principals

No	Source/reference (complete, including pages)
1	Hussein, O. F. (2016, p. 85)
2	Hussein, O. F. (2016, p. 85)
3	Hussein, O. F. (2016, p. 84)
4	Hussein, O. F. (2016, p. 87)
5	Hussein, O. F. (2016, p. 87)
6	Hussein, O. F. (2016, p. 87)

For Teachers

No	Source/reference (complete, including pages)
1	Hussein, O. F. (2016, p. 89)
2	Hussein, O. F. (2016, p. 92)
3	Hussein, O. F. (2016, p. 92)
4	Hussein, O. F. (2016, p. 92)

For Students

No	Source/reference (complete, including pages)
1	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 193)
2	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 193)
3	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 193)
4	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 193)
5	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 193)
6	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 193)
7	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 193)
8	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 193)
9	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 193)

For Administrators

No	Source/reference (complete, including pages)
1	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
2	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
3	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 194)
4	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 195)
5	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 195)
6	Sheikh, A. S. (2013, p. 195)

Items (the original question from the reference)

1. How many Islamic subjects does your school offer?
2. How many secular subjects does your school offer?
3. Do you have teachers who are only trained on the secular subjects but also teach the Islamic subjects and vice versa?
4. What is your opinion on dualism and implementation of Islamic Integrated Curriculum?
5. Which factors do you consider as the major barriers to the implementation of Islamic Integrated curriculum?
6. What recommendations do you suggest for improving the Islamic Integrated curriculum?

Items (the original question from the reference)

1. Do you teach Islamic subjects while you were only trained on secular subjects?
2. What is your opinion on dualism and implementation of Islamic Integrated Curriculum?
3. Which factors do you consider as the major barriers to the implementation of Islamic Integrated curriculum?
4. What recommendations do you suggest for improving the Islamic Integrated curriculum?

Items (the original question from the reference)

1. Is the school providing teaching and learning materials to learners?
2. Do you enjoy attending the Islamic integrated school? If not how can learning in school be improved?
3. What do you like about the Islamic integrated school?
4. What don't you like about the Islamic integrated school?
5. Do you feel over burdened by learning both curricula (Islamic and secular)?
6. Which kind of activities do you enjoy? Are these activities available in the school?
7. Which subject(s) in the Islamic curriculum do you enjoy learning most? Why?
8. Are their subjects in the Islamic curriculum that you find too difficult? Which one's?
9. What challenges do you facing in attending both Islamic and secular schools? How can these challenges be overcome?

Items (the original question from the reference)

1. Are Islamic integrated schools adequately provided for in funding?
2. Do they develop literacy, numeracy, creativity and communication skills?
3. Do the schools develop creativity and critical thinking?
4. Do you carry out regular monitoring of these schools?
5. Do you evaluate teachers only in formal curriculum or the Islamic education one also?
6. Do you think Islamic Integrated schools system is the way to go in Muslim majority areas?

Adopt/adapt

1. How many Islamic subjects does the public madrasah offer?
2. How many secular subjects does the public madrasah offer?
3. Are there any of your teachers who teach both Islamic and secular courses despite having only secular knowledge and vice versa?
4. What can you say about integrating Islamic and national curricula in the public madrasah?
5. What are the main obstacles to implementing Islamic and national curricula?
6. Any recommendation to improve the integration of Islamic and national curricula in the public madrasah?

Adopt/adapt

1. Do you teach secular subjects while you were only trained on Islamic subjects? Or vice versa?
2. What can you say about using and integrating Islamic and national curricula in the public madrasah?
3. What are the main obstacles to implementing Islamic and national curricula?
4. Any recommendation to improve the integration of Islamic and national curricula in the public madrasah?

Adopt/adapt

1. Does the school provide the learning materials to the students?
2. How was the experience of attending the public madrasah? Is it fun, or are there still needs for improvement?
3. What do you like in the public madrasah?
4. What don't you like in the public madrasah?
5. Is it too much for you to learn the islamic and secular subjects?
6. What are the activities you enjoy the most in the school?
7. What subjects do you enjoy the most, both the islamic and secular?
8. What subjects do you find difficult to understand, both the islamic and secular?
9. What challenges have you encountered in the public madrasah? How did you overcome it?

Adopt/adapt

1. How was the situation of the school in terms of providing fundings?
2. What skills did students develop at school?
3. Do they develop creativity and critical thinking skills at school?
4. How do you monitor the progress of the school?
5. How do you evaluate the teachers?
6. Do you think the public madrasah needs to be integrated into the Bangsamoro region?

Appendix 3. Transcription Analysis

I am Mocsin. I was designated as the Curriculum and Development section head of the director general of Madaris education. I was assigned by the Minister of the MBHTE to personally supervise the first-ever Bangsamoro Public Madrasah in the Philippines.

(For Research Question 1)

What is your role in the integration process of the first public madrasa in the Bangsamoro region? My role in the public madrasa is, as I have said a while ago, I was tasked by the Minister and by my Director General to personally supervise the operation of the public madrasa in Cotabato City. I was assigned to oversee the progress and development of the public madrasa. I helped the Administrator, Mona (School Head), so that the public madrasa can operate properly.

That is my role there.

How did you structure the curriculum for the public madrasa? How did it start? Actually, the curriculum structure was patterned and modelled in Indonesia. Before the development and implementation of the public madrasa, we went to Indonesia to benchmark with their curriculum there and how they manage the public madrasa and so on and so forth.

Actually, me and our team, along with Pak Bahrul Hayat, we went to a (Insan Cendekia). We went to many places to benchmark the curriculum. The structure of our curriculum here is what we call a Balanced Curriculum. Balanced in the sense that the learners will acquire knowledge for the world and the knowledge for the future. That is the aspiration of the good minister, Sir Muhajir Iqbal, for the Bangsamoro learners to have a balanced education. There is a saying in the Qur'an, that if you study this for the world, do not forget the future in the afterlife.

You mentioned, Sir, that you visited Indonesian schools.

How many Indonesian schools did you visit as a benchmark of this public Bangsamoro madrasa? During our visit in Indonesia, we visited five schools, including public madrasa. We also visited Pesantren. I forgot the name. We also visited Insan Cendekia and School in Istiqlal Mosque. We also visited five more schools. And some of the school have Muadallah, from the other country.

What are the objectives of integrating the Islamic and national curriculum and how can this be achieved in this diverse region such as the Bangsamoro region? The primary objective of having the balanced curriculum in the Bangsamoro region is for our learners to have a balanced education. They will have knowledge for the world and knowledge for the future. That is the main objective of having this kind of balanced curriculum.

In order to achieve and implement that, we have to use the integrated approach in teaching. If you are familiar with the integrated approach in delivering the learnings inside the classroom, if you are teaching a subject, for example science, you are teaching science but you are integrating the Islamic concept on science.

For example, the water cycle. Although you are teaching science, there are concepts in the Quran and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW that will be integrated in the teaching. You will say that this is a blessing from Allah to us that we are being given water that does not run out because this is what he said in the Quran. And so on and so forth.

For example, in the teaching of Fikhi, you are teaching ablution or cleanliness, tahara, and you are integrating science in your teaching. So by that means, you are teaching one subject but the competencies are multiple. Although the time is limited, the knowledge that you get is complete.

But **that's why one of the recommendations that I recommend** is that we have to orient and have to have a training with the Bangsamoro Public Madrasa teachers and associates to acquire this integrated approach in teaching. You will not be taught this if you only have a little knowledge of science and religious subjects. So fortunately, our teachers here at Bangsamoro Public Madrasa, the regular teachers or the permanent teachers, are also ustads and ustadza.

They happened to pass a licensure examination for teachers, so they became professional teachers. But there are also other ustads, aside from them, that they do not teach the Quran.

What they teach is secular subjects or general subjects in Indonesia. Their partner ustads are the ones who really teach ISAL subjects. But if the ustads are absent, they can teach those subjects because they used to teach ALIVE in their government.

So, do you think that learning the Islamic and national curriculum is fair for the learners? So much fair in the side of the Muslim. The good Minister and even as a parent, for example me, I really want my children to learn the worldly skills and their preparation for the afterlife. That's why you are familiar with the context in our region that most of our Muslim learners will go to the Madrasa schools because of the Balanced Education.

Even in Indonesia, as what Pak Bahrul said, when we were here last month, they said that the students left the public school and went to the public madrasa. Because their parents see that it is not only fair for the students to go to the public madrasa, but it is also very fair.

So in your opinion, what needs to be improved in order for this public madrasa to become more successful? There are a lot of things to improve in order for the public madrasa to become more developed and conducive for learning. Some factors to be considered is the infrastructure of the building. As of now, because the Minister really wants the public madrasa to open because he doesn't know when he will be able to leave his terminal, so it needs to be started.

The building is not yet finished, but he saw something. The building is not yet installed with lights, although we can install water, but the lights are not installed. Although we bought learning aids that can help the children, like digital TV, smart TV, and I have a proposal to connect the internet for the children, but unfortunately, they were not able to install the electricity right away. We haven't been able to use it yet, so that is one thing that needs to be improved.

As for the teachers, they still need to be improved, just like what I said, especially in the integrated approach of teaching. Learning materials are not enough, the learning kits of the children, especially in the kindergarten, are not enough, and even the school administrators need to capacitate themselves for more.

But alhamdulillah, the biggest problem of the MOE is that this year, there is already one. Last year, there was a struggle, but this year, it is already open, there is already support, there is already an MOE.

Since you are involved with the integration, what are your main challenges integrating the Islamic and national curricula in the school? The first challenge is the national, because as we know, the Philippine Constitution is secular. Secular means there is a separation of church and state, so we Muslims, we do not believe in that kind of practice. So for us, there should be no separation of church and state. Because of that law, the balance and integration of the Islamic subjects becomes a challenge in Manila.

But alhamdulillah, it was handled when they asked us, once we presented this to the national officials of the Department of Education, their comment was, *“what did you do in the K-12 or solid curriculum? Did you neglect it or not?”* So we said, *“we did not neglect it, we just added Islamic Studies and Arabic Language subjects.”* So they agreed.

So what did they do in order to improve this concern that our Bangsamoro Public Madrasa has? Actually, we are still waiting for the next one to agree with our indication for negotiation. But there are first steps. Some concerned Bangsamoro, BARMM or not, that they will pass a law, and then one of the Senator will sponsor strengthening or strengthening the Madrasa schools in the Philippines, not only in BARMM but also in the Philippines. So that is a very good development that God willing, will be passed and realized so that our Madrasas can be helped just like in Indonesia.

So how is the relationship of the MBHTE and the Department of Education in this integration of the Public Madrasa? So far so good because the main concern of the national office is the K-12. That's why the good minister and his consultant, Pak Bahrul from Indonesia put in the Bangsamoro Education Code that there is adherence to the minimum competencies set by the national government and that is the K-12. That's why when we had a meeting, they asked us when we presented the Islamic Studies and Arabic Language curriculum, *“what did you do to the K-12 curriculum? Did you change it?”* We said, *“we didn't change anything, we didn't add anything to the K-12 curriculum.”*

So far so good. The relationship of the MBHTE and the Department of Education in the national office is good. There is no confusion.

(For Research Question 3)

So within the school, do you have not just Muslim students but do you also have Christian students? As for the moment, since the majority of the population in Cotabato City were Muslim, so as for the moment, there are no Christians enrolled in the public madrasa here in Cotabato City. But it doesn't mean that because it is a Public Madrasa, we are not open to non-Muslim learners. The public madrasa is open to all learners, whether you are Christian, Lumads, IP's or Muslim. So it is open to all, there is no discrimination because in the Bangsamoro Education Code, we have our principle of inclusivity, so all tribes need inclusion regardless of their faith.

So how is the situation of the school in terms of providing funding? Last time, the Administrator headed by the school head, Mona and I, and there were also some help from MBHTE, we were able to survive. We were able to survive because there was no MOE because the school was newly established, there was no budget, but thank God, this opening last January, there was a budget, there was an MOE (Maintenance Operation and Expenses), MOE, the school has a budget. So the school head will not have a hard time running the school, especially when it comes to financial matters.

So how do you monitor the progress of the school? Actually, we have close supervision of the school since it is just near the office. So early in the morning, I am there, I bring my wife, so that is the way I monitor them.

So there are also monitoring, IS, Instructional Supervision that our office does, and little by little, we ask the parents how they are doing. So thank God, most of their feedback is okay when it comes to the learnings of the children. So there are some challenges because the foundation of the children in Grade 3 to Grade 2 in Arabic is already open, so they are struggling in studying Arabic Language and Islamic Studies.

But Alhamdulillah, there are teachers who are really committed and passionate in teaching. For example, if there are no classes, there are vacant times, so they get the children, they have Halaqah, memorize the Qur'an, sometimes they teach about Islam.

So may I know, as you can remember, the other teacher's feedback with regards to this public madrasa? Most of it, I don't know if we can consider it negative or positive, because they say that the time is a bit long, because from 7:20, the child is already there, they leave at 4:30, but that's okay, aside from the lack of parents, it's okay as long as they are secure there.

Secondly, there are some teachers there, especially the ISAL Asatids, sometimes they leave after teaching in the school, so they saw that, why are they leaving? But we noticed that, so Alhamdulillah, it's okay. As for the other feedback, it's a bit positive, one of the parents I talked to said, it's easier for the children in the public madrasa to learn Arabic from ISAL.

So that's their comment, they said that if you teach your children Arabic, you should go to the public madrasa, because it's easier for them to learn Islamic Studies and Arabic language.

So their other comments are on the facilities, it's understandable because we didn't stop the facilities, there are some that are closed, especially the CR (comfort room/ toilet), one of the CR there didn't function well, so the parents commented on that, but we will find a way to open it.

How do you evaluate the teachers? Yes, there is an instructional supervision that was done, and in Cotabato City, there is an RPMS that is being said, where there is tracking that it is indicated the performance of each teacher, according to the result of the monitoring and evaluation done by the supervisors and the school head. So they have an IPCRF (Individual Performance, Commitment and Review), where you can see the development and progress of the teachers in their teaching, and there is also an office CRF.

So do you think that the public madrasa, it was a good idea that the public madrasa was integrated in the Bangsamoro region? Yes ma'am, aside from the aspiration of the minister, the good minister, and also this is the aspiration of the Bangsamoro people in the region. It is hard to leave how the character of the child will be, how the teacher will know you, how the beloved prophet will know you, so it should not be lost. For the Bangsamoro people in the Bangsamoro region, this is a very good opportunity to have this kind of education, a balanced curriculum that we can see in the Bangsamoro Public Madrasa. So this is a good opportunity for our children to study and we can teach our children a balanced education, the world and the future.

So before ending this, what can you say about the one-year experience of the Bangsamoro Public Madrasa? What strategies and policies needs to be implemented in order to become the school more successful? When it comes to our experiences, our experience in the first operation was not that smooth. That is what we said to ourselves, that if only other people are placed here in the Public Madrasa as the school head, it will really be a failure, because if you add all the expenses in your pocket, it will not be a joke.

We struggled a bit, but we need to have a lot of means on how to save money for the operation of the Madrasa and you need to have a lot of friends to talk to to help with the operation of the Madrasa. Now there are policies, when it comes to policies and recommendations, there are policies that have already started, but we are waiting for the response of the national government, the civil service commission. There is a licensure examination for modaris that is already in the plantilla position of the public madrasa and it was patterned and modelled from Indonesia. If it passes, Alhamdulillah, the public madrasa will have its own division and eventually the public madrasa division office will have its own selection and hiring processes.

So, that is one of the big policies that should be implemented because it has already been written but we are waiting for the response of the civil service commission. The power of the civil service commission is no longer a problem. It's okay with them but we still need to talk to the national government. Once they approve it, we will have an examination for

our ISAL teachers and whoever will pass there, they will be placed in the permanent plantilia position of the Bangsamoro Public Madrasa. For the meantime, the teachers and even the school head were only given and borrowed by the Cotabato's division office. So, my tendency and time will come that they will pull out from that position.

So, if that happens, I hope that the position of the MBHTE plantilia position will be approved so that they will be placed there in exchange for those who were only borrowed by the cotabatos division office.

So, in short, the first year experience of the public madrasa is not that good? In terms of financial, ma'am, it's not that good. What we are talking about is not that good. There are some good teachers who also struggle. But what we are saying here is that it's good, ma'am. Actually, it's inspiring if what you are thinking is jihad. They will say that what you are giving there is jihad. However, you will really struggle because if your teacher will have a seminar for three days, you will have to look for money to pay their accommodation, their food in the hotel. If there are things to buy, clothes, you will have to.

So, that's what I'm saying. But I'm not saying that it's ugly or not good. It's good if your intention is also jihad. Actually, we spent hundreds of pesos in the first operation of the public madrasa. But it's good for us, ma'am, because at least our money can be used for something good. So, I can still say that it's good, but it's not smooth.

So, any closing remarks with the whole process, with the whole integration of the public madrasa? Inshallah, good luck to us.

So, are you looking forward to not just until grade 4, but inshallah to have a secondary school? Our aspiration is to have and to replicate public madrasa in the entire region. And inshallah, our aspiration also is to replicate public madrasa in the entire Philippines.

Not only in the Bangsamoro region, but in the whole Philippines. Because they will see, ma'am, that this is the right education and quality education that our constituents here in the Philippines should learn. Because we want our children to graduate with morals and character. That's what we want. And also to be God-fearing above all.

I think that's where our interview ends.

Thank you very much. May Allah bless you.